# Virginia Adult Education Narrative Report 2017-2018

## State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)

In program year (PY) 2017-2018, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education used leadership funds to support a cooperative agreement with the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) at Virginia Commonwealth University to support both required and permissible state leadership activities. In particular, the VALRC provided support for the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) Sec. 223(1)(a) “Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan,” 223(1)(b) “Establishment or operation of a high quality professional development program,” and Sec. 223(1)(c) “Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers.”

The objectives of the VALRC cooperative agreement respond to the *WIOA Combined State Plan for the Commonwealth of Virginia* by supporting implementation of three key priorities: 1) standards-based instruction, 2) integrated education and training and workforce preparation for career pathways for learners at all skill levels, and 3) technical assistance for meeting performance targets and improving program design. These priorities correspond to both required and permissible state leadership activities.

Priority activities for PY2017-2018 by the VALRC included:

* Supporting standards-based instruction based on the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS);
* Providing on-site and online professional development workshops, institutes, courses, and meetings;
* Planning and hosting a July 2018 combined statewide professional development conference (replacing separate conferences) for 400 adult education practitioners in all areas of program practice: program management, adult basic and secondary education, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), community-based literacy organizations (CBLOs), correctional education, National External Diploma Program (NEDP), and Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP, an alternative secondary program);
* Providing on-site and online technical assistance, with an emphasis on technical assistance for standards-based instruction, integrated education and training, and distance education;
* Maintaining websites that serve as clearinghouses of vetted adult education resources and ensuring Section 508 accessibility of all websites and resources;
* Maintaining a toll-free GED® helpline;
* Managing a learning management system for tracking the professional development hours of AEFLA funded adult educators;
* Disseminating a quarterly electronic newsletter and a wide variety of printed and online publications; and
* Hosting state-wide professional learning communities (PLCs) and electronic communication channels, including a listserv open to all adult education practitioners, which is used to communicate professional learning opportunities as well as disseminate cross-partner agency communications.

### Online and On-Site Training

Training and professional development sessions for program managers and directors from all program types was provided to over 1,000 adult learning professionals. Virtual professional development delivered via webinars and unfacilitated online tutorials continued to be a growing delivery method in PY2017-2018, providing services to hundreds of additional participants. VALRC professional development activities are managed using the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Learning Center learning management system, which is available to all state agencies free of charge. Highlights of VALRC’s PY2017-2018 training accomplishments are below.

* Facilitated on-site training was requested by regions based on needs for program improvement. Training provided in PY2017-18 included:
  + Contextualized Reading and Contextualization in Action
  + Grant Writing
  + Implementing Programming Using the IET Blueprint
  + Certified Nursing Assistant Math
  + Introduction to English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS)
  + Using the ELPS for Instruction and ELPS for Transitions
  + Standards-Based Instruction for Adult Learning: Learner Engagement
  + Career Pathways
  + Beyond EFL: Designing for Various Measurable Skill Gains
  + Planning Work Worth Doing: Applying the CCRS Key Shifts to   
    English/Language Arts/Literacy Instruction
  + GED® Roadshow with Math Professional Learning Communities
  + College and Career Readiness and Workforce Preparation
* Offered six- and eight-week facilitated online professional development courses on topics such as ESOL basics, managing multilevel classes, reading, numeracy, writing, and learning disabilities. Self-paced, unfacilitated courses provided fundamental knowledge of the CCRS, instructional strategies for contextualized instruction, and implementing career pathways.
* Provided assessment certification and certification renewal for TABE 9/10 assessment and the facilitator and materials for BEST Plus 2.0 certification training.
* Renewed an agreement with the Department of Corrections and conducted trainings at their request.
* Continued hybrid training (on-site and online components) for new NEDP assessors and guidance for NEDP program startup; held bimonthly PLCs for NEDP instructors.
* Hosted bi-monthly Regional Program Manager webinars with VDOE focusing on timely topics for program improvement and provided archived recordings and transcripts to accommodate all required participants.
* Facilitated ten workshops for the annual Virginia Adult and Continuing Education Annual Conference (VAACE) on topics such as GED® High Impact/CCRS/Virginia Placement Test Crosswalk, Outreach Strategies, Observing Standards-Based Instruction, CCRS in Action, IET Blueprint for All Skill Levels, and Introdution to English Language Proficiency Standards.
* Presentated at state and national conferences for the Consortium for Research on Educational Assessment and Teaching Effectiveness, Workforce Professionals Academy, National College Transition Network, Metropolitan Education Research Consortium at VCU, and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

### Publications and Communications

During PY2017-2018, the VALRC maintained seven websites, four listservs, various outreach channels, and a provider directory with contact information for adult education programs around the state. *Update on Adult Education*, a new podcast series, was initiated, focusing on agency partnerships under WIOA. Hosted websites include:

* [Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center](http://www.valrc.org) – www.valrc.org. The Professional Learning and Program Leadership pages includes links to resources and training by topic.
* PluggedInVa – *(no longer available July 2023)*
* GED Virginia - https://gedva.vcu.edu/
* The Virginia IET Blueprint - *(no longer available July 2023)*
* IEL/Civics Gateways for Teachers - http://www.valrc.org/gateways
* CivicsIt Up! - *(no longer available July 2023)*
* Facts and Statistics for Adult Education and Literacy in Virginia and U.S. - *(no longer available July 2023)*

Publications and communications produced by VALRC include:

* [YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/user/resourcecenterva) - https://www.youtube.com/user/resourcecenterva
* [*Progress* newsletter](http://valrc.org/about/progress.html) - *(no longer available July 2023)*
* [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Virginia-Adult-Learning-Resource-Center/333037475357) - https://www.facebook.com/pages/Virginia-Adult-Learning-Resource-Center/333037475357
* [Twitter](http://twitter.com/#!/VAELN) - http://twitter.com/#!/VAELN
* *Update on Adult Education* Podcast Series - *(no longer available July 2023)*
* Virginia Adult Education and Literacy Network Listserv (VAELN)
* The GED® Helpline, which provided assistance in finding a testing site or adult education classes and in how to obtain test transcripts.

### Integrated Education and Training (IET) and Career Pathways

Professional development for integrated education and training (IET) and workforce preparation for career pathways continued with the development and refinement of the three-tiered Virginia IET Blueprint. This Blueprint is based on the PluggedInVA model of IET and aligns adult education and literacy activities with core WIOA requirements and workforce development partner priorities. Unlike the original PluggedInVA model, which focuses on learners who test at the adult secondary level, the three tiers accommodate learners at all literacy levels: Pathways (literacy to intermediate), Workforce (intermediate levels), and Career (adult secondary). The IET Blueprint includes learning competencies for each level and modules within each level; a curriculum framework for integrating career awareness with academic instruction; programmatic guidance on structuring IET programs; resources and guidance for partnerships and One-Stop activities; and a process for engaging with partners using a sector strategy approach.

A curriculum for the Pathways tier of the IET Blueprint is being developed to teach the top six professional soft skills that employers expect of all employees, even those at the entry level, and regardless of students’ literacy skills. Pathways tier lessons adhere to the CCRS with activities that include reading, writing, speaking, listening, numeracy, and digital literacy practice in context of the workplace. Each unit of this curriculum takes six to eight weeks to complete. Unit One: Communication in the Workplace and Unit Two: Safety in the Workplace are now housed on the IET Blueprint website.

The IET Blueprint website has been expanded to include sections on employer engagement and funding and partnerships. A map of IET programs in Virginia, using Tableau software, is being developed as a resource for program planning and best practice design. The outline of the Blueprint has been shared with WIOA partners that are also funding various PluggedInVA programs in community colleges through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) research project, a U.S.Department of Labor-funded Disability Employment Initiative grant project, the Trade Adjustment Act, and philanthropic-funded workforce training programs. The statewide Business Solutions Team will share this resource to promote its use as a consistent model and source of technical assistance.

### Ensuring High Quality Professional Development and Website Resources

VALRC continued to use the evaluation instrument created in PY2016-2017 that elicits feedback for Guskey level 1 and level 2 for professional development on-site and online events. In PY2017-2018 the VALRC response rate averaged 65 percent. The goal for PY2018-2019 is to raise the response rate to at least 80 percent. This will be accomplished by assigning accountability for preparation, dissemination, and collection of evaluations to facilitators; returning to paper-based evaluations for face-to-face training; and sharing evaluation data with facilitators within 30 days of training and discussing necessary changes for programming improvement. Overall, Gusky level 1 results (learner satisfaction) were consistently high, above 4 on a 5-point Likert scale. Gusky level 2 results, customized to each session’s objectives, varied, but averaged above 3.5 on a 5-point Likert scale. Lower scores included comments about lengthy resource documents and pace of courses or sessions. Facilitators will review these items to determine if adjusting the content or pacing is necessary. Most participants were able to describe how they would integrate the training into their instruction or work activities. A facilitator’s guide is being developed and an annual virtual facilitator/trainer meeting is planned for PY2018-2019 to discuss expectations, including the need to collect evaluation responses and review for improved training.

To assure quality resources for standards-based instruction and integrated education and training, VALRC developed two rubrics to be used both internally and externally.The rubrics provide a baseline for discussion of how well resources align with requirements for either IET instruction and programming and/or SBI instruction and programming. Rubric One is intended for books, websites, and online resources such as PDFs and downloadable documents that focus on professional development for adult education; Rubric Two is intended for face-to-face and online professional development activities for adult education. VALRC is using these rubrics for all new resources, whether recommended by staff or submitted by practitioners using a Google Submission Form. An introductory presentation on the purpose and use of the rubrics was conducted at the July 2018 state conference.

To assist programs in evaluating their own program professional development needs and plans, VALRC used the federally-developed LINCS *State Leadership Self-Assessment* tool to develop guidance for professional development evaluation, incorporating goal setting, data analysis, and program planning. This guidance was piloted with a local program team for feedback. Two video tutorials were developed and posted to the Continuous Program Improvement section of the VALRC website and shared with program managers during a bi-monthly webinar.

As part of Virginia’s support of distance education, a team comprised of state and VALRC staff has joined the IDEAL Consortium meeting and communities of practice and is jointly leading the distance education effort. The team has conducted a survey of publishers of approved curricula to solicit information about product updates or retirements and initiated a new round of program submissions by program managers. A review panel of practitioners representing a cross-section of program types was established in order to review the submissions and update the Approved List of Distance Education Curriculum. The integration of technology in education was requested frequently as a technical assistance need and is being addressed in the PY2018-2019 VALRC work plan.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

A significant effort by VDOE in PY2017-2018 was the launching by the state office of a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process, fulfilling the requirement of WIOA Sec. 223(1)(d). The phases of the process were modeled on the monitoring process described in the federal Uniform Guidance. In October of 2017, the office began the process of reviewing regional and local program data and fiscal performance for PY2016-2017. The information was analyzed quantitatively and an assessment of risk was determined for each funded program. In December, each program received this information in the form of a risk rubric detailing programperformance, accountability, fiscal, and grant management data for PY2016-2017. Concurrent with the development of the risk rubrics was the distribution of a program self-assessment survey. The survey was designed to give programs an opportunity to document their leadership and management processes and to assist the VALRC and state office staff to target technical assistance to programs. Telephone conversations with each program manager and selected staff in all 30 of the funded programs were held in December of 2017 to discuss their program concerns and technical assistance needs.

The identification of programs to receive a federal program monitoring on-site review was determined by the risk assessment analysis The combination of program risk and a rotation system is used to produce an annual monitoring schedule. Programs identified to receive on-site monitoring visits were notified of this in mid-February. In March, in preparation for upcoming on-site monitoring visits, teams of reviewers, including peer reviewers (regional program managers), who would travel throughout the state performing established monitoring responsibilities, were established, and training was delivered to the peer reviewers to prepare them for their specific roles as members of the team.

Between April 16 and June 7, 2018, five regional adult education programs received an on-site monitoring visit. Each visit included document reviews to demonstrate compliance with federal and state requirements in the areas of staff qualifications and professional development, data management, financial management, regional administration, and instructional quality; staff interviews; teacher and student focus groups; classroom observations; interviews with the Local Workforce Development Board Director or representative, or One-Stop Center Operator; and an exit interview with the regional program manager, regional program specialist, and school district superintendent or community college president or representative to present the team’s preliminary findings.

Upon completion of the site visits, VDOE staff developed preliminary reports based on the results of the visits. The reports contained site-visit protocol criteria that were met; site-visit protocol criteria that were not met; required corrective action for unmet criteria, including deadlines; and staff comments and recommendations, if applicable. The VDOE sent the final version of the reports to the superintendents or community college presidents and the regional program managers. This final version served as the official site-visit evaluation report.

All of the official site-visit reports contained corrective action items. The programs are required to address these items by the established deadline(s), which vary depending on the nature of the action required. While VDOE will work with the program to address any corrective action items, the burden of effecting change rests with the program. The site-visit evaluation file is considered closed when the program no longer has any pending corrective action. When VDOE closes a file, it will send a letter to the superintendent or community college president and the regional program manager confirming that the file has been successfully closed.

## Performance Data Analysis

In 2017-18, the state met the negotiated Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) target rate of 43 percent. Virginia exceeded the target rate in six of eleven educational functioning levels (EFLs). The 43 percent MSG rate represents a nearly two percentage point increase in MSG over the previous year. While the additional means to record an MSG were implemented this year (gains outside of the subject of record, for example), this improvement can also be partially attributed to a greater percentage of students being post-tested. The state average rate of post-testing students in PY2017-2018 was 57.5 percent, up from 54 percent in PY2016-2017. This is significant because it was a consistent theme in technical assistance and monitoring tools and represents an improvement in management practices at the classroom level.

While MSG attainment increased in Virginia, enrollment declined by 1,112 students in PY2017-2018, or nearly six percent from PY2016-2017. Understanding demographic and employment trends in the state has been of great interest for all workforce development partners. Virginia has a very strong economy overall, but the economy is quite different in various regions. This Virginia Employment Commission report from July, 2018 shows the overall unemployment rate at 2.9 percent; the unemployment rates for workforce regions range from as high as 4.6 percent in workforce region 1 (Southwest Virginia) to as low as 2.0 percent in region 12 (Arlington/Alexandria). Many rural communities are seeing population declines as families leave for opportunities in the urban areas, as demonstrated with American Community Survey data in a presentation to the state Board of Workforce Development. Where the economy is growing and labor markets tightening, the state is seeing a lowering of entry level work requirements. For example, in the commercial truck driving business, students can now be hired upon completion of the occupational credential, without completion of a high school equivalency. Together, these labor market trends compete for student enrollment and retention.

Having the performance data completed and analyzed in October allowed the state office to share state and regional program performance with local and regional programs in a timely fashion. The data were discussed at the October 2018 Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee meeting, shared as a recorded tutorial and *Progress* newsletter article, and examined for possible solutions in a November technical assistance webinar. Persistent areas of weakness, including declining enrollment and a below state average MSG attainment rate among ABE levels three and four, have been the focus of technical assistance interventions. An Innovation Challenge Grant program was initiated with 2016-2017 reallocation funds. Ten awards were made to programs that proposed intensified efforts, focused on improved outcomes. The demonstrated results were shared in a presentation at the state conference and in a *Progress* article, and a new round of Innovation Challenge Grants are planned with PY2017-2018 reallocation funds.

In PY2018-2019, in order to address areas of weak performance, several programs have volunteered to work with the Educational Testing Service in their field test of a low-intermediate diagnostic reading assessment and accompanying instructional materials. Program managers have committed to a study circle project to have fresh conversations about enrollment and program design, drawing on the research studies, *Critiquing Adult Participation in Education.* Programs are also focusing on how to maximize the GED® Prep Connect database to support adults engaging in self-study.

## Integration with One-Stop Partners

In PY2016-2017, the state delegated the roles and responsibilities for addressing One-Stop requirements under 34 CFR part 463, subpart J, to the regional program managers and their fiscal agents. Those programs worked closely with their local workforce development boards (LWDB) and One-Stop operators to coordinate services, identify regional workforce needs, and facilitate access to adult education services through the One-Stops. Virginia has over 50 comprehensive and affiliate One-Stop service locations in the 15 workforce regions. In PY2017-2018, 20 regional programs contributed to their One-Stops either in direct funds or in-kind contributions toward infrastructure or by program personnel working on-site in accordance with the MOU established at each participating One-Stop. Many programs offer adult education classes on-site within the One-Stop. State staff also participated on monitoring visits to comprehensive and affiliate centers and have participated in statewide efforts such as an Accessibility in the One-Stops Taskforce for cross-agency training and will continue to do so in PY2018-2019. Visits to the local One-Stop and interviews with workforce partners is an integral component of the on-site monitoring protocol to understand the level of cooperation between the adult education and other One-Stop partner programs.

In the continuation awards made to Section 231 AEFLA recipients in PY2017-2018, applicants identified the contributions budgeted to the LWDBs and submitted current Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA). As MOUs and IFAs are renegotiated or updated, regional program managers submit them to the state office. Virginia instituted a common template for both the MOU and IFA to be used by each local workforce region, and 2017-2018 has been a transition year to implement the new format.

Technical assistance is being provided to program managers regularly through bi-monthly webinars and periodic calls and communications on how to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as One-Stop partners. The topic of these presentations have included partnership development, coordination of services in light of the Career and Training Services reporting guidelines, and statewide efforts on serving employers. In January 2018, Virginia launched a branding initiative to implement the “Virginia Career Works” brand for the One-Stop partners; this effort has been ongoing throughout the year involving online and in-person events, signage updates across the state, branded materials made available for workforce partners, plenary speakers at conferences, cross-agency training, and a new system-hub website. These efforts reinforce the message that all partners are working within a single One-Stop workforce development system.

## Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program (AEFLA Section 243)

The VDOE held a competition in 2017, with grant applications due March 1. Fourteen applicants were selected to be recipients of a three-year IELCE award, which required participation in technical assistance focusing on planning and implementing IET strategies. Local education agencies serve as fiscal agents for seven of the programs, community colleges for three, and community-based literacy organizations for the remaining four. Most of the IELCE programs are clustered in the high-immigrant population areas of Northern Virginia, Richmond, Charlottesville, and Williamburg, and three are in the rural agricultural processing centers of the Shenandoah Valley and Eastern Shore.

All IELCE programs were required to offer at least one IET pathway to students. In PY2017-2018, IET programs were offered in information technology, trades, transportation, hospitality, education, and healthcare occupations. Credentials earned included CompTIA A+ Certification, HVAC Journeyman, Class A Commercial Driver’s License, ServSafe Food Protection Manager, Guest Service Gold, and Certified Nursing Assistant.

Incentive funding was available to applicants based on the projected number of students served in IET programs. In PY2017-2018, there were 2,693 IELCE participants statewide, 193 of whom participated in IET programs, and 170 of those who completed the program. In the PY2018-2019 continuation applications, awarded in July 2018, programs requested incentive funding to serve 310 IET participants, a jump of 61 percent over last year.

The VDOE offered a significant amount of technical assistance in PY2017-2018 on the topic of IELCE and IET requirements, including the requirement to prepare and place IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and expanding recruitment strategies to draw more foreign-born professionals. The IET Planning Tool, a graphic organizer that contains all of the elements for a compliant IET, was developed and used to support this technical assistance through a recorded tutorial, virtual meetings with providers, conference presentations, and frequent technical assistance calls. The advance planning that completing the tool requires has guided programs to plan not only their own programming activities, but to secure commitments and cooperation from occupational training and employer partners and to document the labor market value of the credentials offered. The tool also provides timely insight on the type of technical assistance necessary for the VDOE and VALRC teams to provide.

**Performance Results:** Programs are leveraging the IET Planning Tool submission requirement to create strong employer partnerships for guaranteed interviews or reverse career fairs for IET students, secure involvement with employment placement professionals such as One-Stop partners or community college Career Coaches for all students, and to analyze more closely the labor market information from their LWDB.

**Challenges and Lessons Learned:** IELCE programs have reported that students who are eligible to work in the United States are already employed and many are not interested in earning entry-level credentials in other fields. Programs are responding by creating new partnerships and expanding recruitment strategies to find eligible participants already in or interested in occupational pathways. Another challenge is the language barrier presented by the credential assessments. Programs are asking for technical assistance on instructional techniques to assist English language learners to prepare for these assessments and on increasing the academic rigor of their language teaching through incorporation of the ELPS.

In PY2017-2018, IELCE programs became more established within the workforce development system, having developed referral and coordination arrangements with local partner programs.

**Performance Results:** Two programs included a member of their LWDB on their adult education advisory board and eleven participated monthly with their LWDB in various roles, including as committee members and board members. Ten programs have established MOUs with their local One-Stop center and six offer classes at the center. Many coordinate job search and career counseling for all students through on-site hours by workforce professionals from the One-Stops. An executive director of one of the CBLOs was recently appointed to the Virginia Workforce Development Board.

**Challenges and Lessons Learned:** IELCE programs have reported that title I agencies have deemed many IELCE IET students ineligible for title I support of the training component of an IET program due to immigration documentation status or household income. This leaves fewer options for supporting related occupational training tuition and credential assessment costs. While title II funds can be used for tuition if other options are not available, credential assessments cannot be covered and can remain a barrier.

## Adult Education Standards

Committing to full implementation of standards-based instruction (SBI) by July 2019 was a key principle in the 2017 competitive RFP. The *Technical Assistance Roadmap for Standards-Based Instruction Implementation*, released in November of 2017, defines “full implementation” of SBI and provides technical assistance in the key areas of program design, instruction, and professional development. Implementing SBI for adult education in Virginia continued in PY2017-2018, with the overall goal of planning, coordinating, and implementing SBI for all eligible providers in the state using the CCRS and the newly-introduced ELPS, focusing on key instructional practices that result in increased student engagement and achievement and continuous improvement of instruction. To support this goal, the VALRC led several efforts through the program year, which are listed below.

* Produced a narrated introductory video to the *Roadmap*, housed on the VALRC website.
* Held and recorded three introductory webinars on the classroom observation tool from the Standards-in-Action project for application to English Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, and ESOL, as well as created fillable classroom observation tools.
* Created and facilitated on-site trainings described on page 2.
* Consulted with ESOL specialists in Illinois and Minnesota in the decision to replace the Virginia ESOL standards with the ELPS. Developed and facilitated face-to-face workshops to introduce the ELPS to practitioners and developed a four-week facilitated online course, *English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Educators*. Participated in an International TESOL panel that explored states’ transitions to ELPS.
* Created facilitator support materials for inquiry-based PLCs and provided assistance by phone to programs with PLC questions, and highlighted the work of PLCs in the June, 2018 issue of *Progress*.
* Finalized the work of the CCRS curriculum framework advisory team in developing curriculum framework materials and began work with a contractor to create a digial curriculum framework database.

Technical assistance on SBI is expanding in PY2018-2019 to include a focus on program design and leadership; emphasis on observation; more in-depth on-site and online instructional training; and creating self-paced, on-demand modules to orient and train new instructors and managers.

## Programs for Corrections Education and Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals (AEFLA Section 225)

During PY2017-2018, there was no methodology in place for matching the recidivism rate for criminal offenders or released individuals served in programs with Section 225 funds. However, the Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC) has published state definitions and formulas for setting the state rate of recidivism of re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration at intervals of 6, 12, 18, 24, and 36 months. In 2017-2018, the state also analyzed the recidivism rate for “state responsible offenders” who served their entire sentence in local jails, a setting that is more likely to have had educational services funded through the adult education program than through the VDOC. A recent recidivism report indicates that half of the total number of individuals released from incarceration in Virginia in 2017 were those who were housed in local and regional jails; the reincarceration rate for this population was 25.6 percent for the FY 2013 cohort. Through PY2017-2018, the state strengthened the partnership with VDOC in order to share professional development offerings and support professional networking.

Regional programs funded for PY2018-2019 are offering educational services in local and regional jails, community institutions, and community re-entry programs. In addition to assisting individuals to earn a secondary credential, innovations proposed include enhancing workforce readiness curricula and career and technical opportunities for incarcerated individuals, expanding access to educational technology resources, and strengthening collaborations with local re-entry councils, employers, and other community partners to serve individuals upon release.

Supported with state funds, by January 1, 2018 all local and regional correctional facilities converted to computer-based high school equivalency (HSE) testing except one; that facility will continue with paper-based HSE testing until June 30, 2019. All incarcerated individuals have continued access to HSE testing in 30 facilities. In PY2017-2018, of the 367 individuals who completed taking all four parts of the GED® test, 297 earned a secondary credential, an 81 percent pass rate which is slightly above the GED® national pass rate of 79 percent.