# Annual Program Report
## Cover Page

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|---|---|
| Program Name: | Adult Education |
| Institution or Organization: | Doña Ana Community College |
| Address: | 3400 South Espina |
| City: | Las Cruces |
| County: | Doña Ana |
| Zip: | 88003 |
| Main Phone: | 575-527-7540 |
| Website: | https://dacc.nmsu.edu/academics/departments/adult-education/index.html |
| Social Media: | https://twitter.com/DACCNMSU |
| | |
| Workforce Region(s) Served: | Southwestern |
| New Mexico Counties Served: | Doña Ana |
| Submission Date: | 9/1/2024 |
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Andrew J Burke

September 12, 2024

**Signature of the Chief Executive Officer or Designee**          **DATE**

**Andrew J Burke, Interim Chancellor**

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# New Mexico Adult Education Local Program Annual Report 2023-2024

## Section I. Program Narrative Report

**Directions**: *Answer each of the following questions. As you complete your narrative, include program data and/or research on which you base these practices as appropriate to answering the questions. Answers should be single-spaced.*

1. Describe your program briefly. Include the services you provide under WIOA Title II and the student population you serve. You may reference AEFLA allowable activities from WIOA Sec. 203 (https://wioaplans.ed.gov/node/37896.) Allowable activities that are specifically related to WIOA Sec. 243 (IELCE) or WIOA Sec. 225 (Corrections) are covered in this report template in Section VII and Section VIII, respectively.

### Services

- **English Language Proficiency**: We provide courses for English as a Second Language learners that cover speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.
- **High School Equivalency (HSE) Certificate**: We provide two paths to earning an HSE certificate: 1) preparing learners for the GED or HiSET exams, and 2) the National External Diploma Program (NEDP). Both paths focus on building critical skills in reading, writing, math (including arithmetic, algebra, and geometry), science, and social studies/civics/health.
- **Integrated Education and Training**: While our integrated education program options are currently limited, in FY24, we offered a Building/Construction Trade (BCT) course.
- **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education**: This program combines workforce and career pathways with English language proficiency courses, supporting English language learners in their roles as parents, workers, and citizens.

## Population Descriptors
### Achievement Level upon Entry
#### High School Equivalency

ABE (NRS Levels 1, 2) — HSE Prep (NRS Levels 3, 4) — HSE Ready (NRS Levels 5, 6)
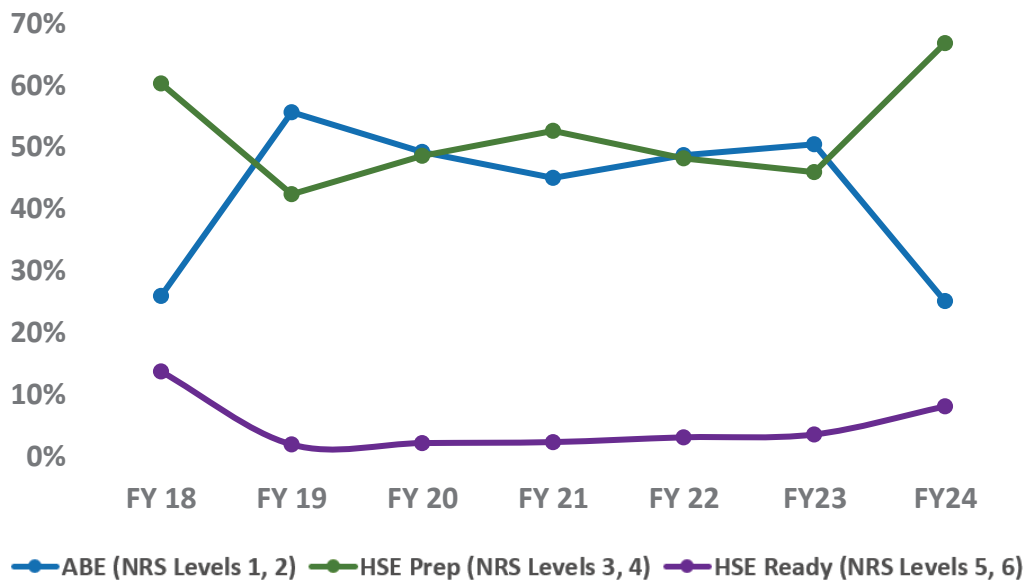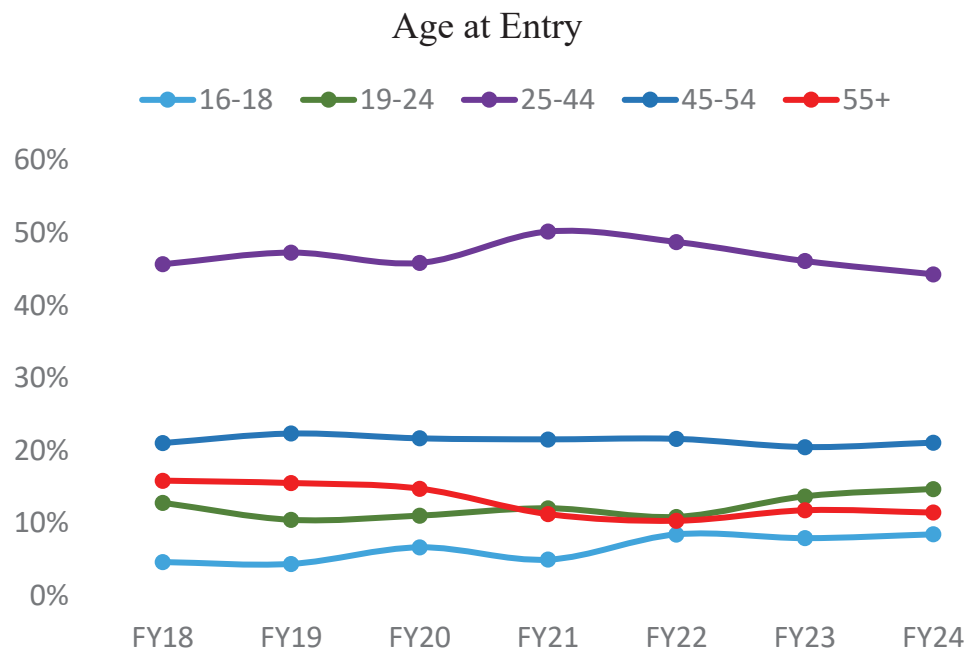
Over the past seven fiscal years, achievement levels for High School Equivalency learners have had some variance with an overall 11% increase in HSE Prep.

# New Mexico Adult Education Local Program Annual Report 2023-2024

## English as a Second Language
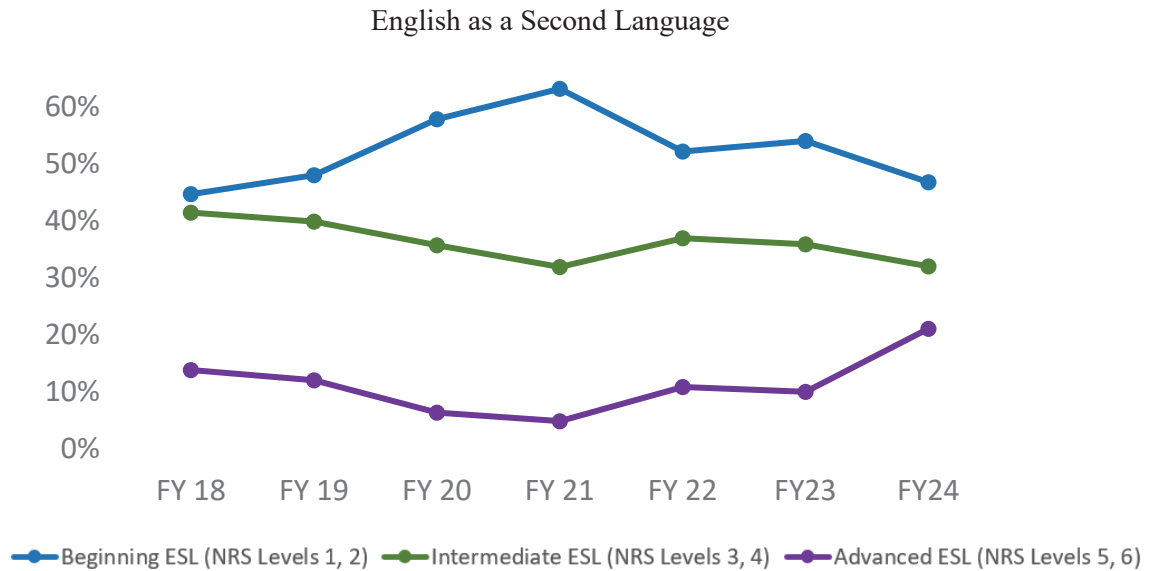


Over the past seven fiscal years, achievement levels upon entry for English as a Second Language learners has also shown some variance. Beginner level enrollment follows a near bell-shaped curve with a 5% rate of change from FY18 to FY24. There has been a -23% change for intermediate ESL learners and a 53% increase for advanced ESL learners overall.

## Age at Entry



Over the past seven fiscal years, the enrollment trend for 16-18-year-olds has increased by 82%, while enrollment for 25 – 54 year-olds has remained fairly steady.

By paying attention to these trends, we can better design and launch a targeted recruitment campaign. Comparing our enrollment demographics with county-wide data will help us align our efforts more effectively. Additionally, as we assess our community's post-pandemic recovery, we can explore how the barriers faced by our learners may have shifted due to COVID-19 and the recovery process.

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2. Highlight any significant changes in staffing, programming, target populations or goals since the last report. **In particular, if you have experienced staffing challenges, please describe them here and how you have been able (or not) to address them**. If you are a new director, please consider including a summary of your personal goals and priorities as a leader.

We failed to meet our FY23 outcomes, which led to a year of rigorous data analysis and program evaluation. We thoroughly reviewed our administrative structure, data collection methods, staff capacity, and available resources. Additionally, we engaged in professional learning opportunities centered on leadership skills and change management. Our comprehensive analysis guided us to concentrate on two key areas, detailed below.

A. **Administrative Infrastructure**: Recognizing the limitations of relying on part-time temporary staff, we conducted an assessment in spring 2022 to review staffing requirements and the financial implications of our existing infrastructure. The objective was to transition from a part-time temporary (PTE) model to a full-time employment (FTE) model, ensuring consistent and dedicated support for our program's operations. A crucial step in this transition was refining the administrative framework, which included streamlining processes and clarifying role definitions. During FY23, we successfully added eleven full-time positions.
   - Five of the new full-time positions were filled by long-time, loyal staff members who were promoted to higher-paying job classifications within the DACC structure.
   - Four part-time employees were promoted to full-time positions, with one serving as a proctor on the Data, Evaluation, and Assessment team and three as enrollment coaches on the Student Services team.
   - One instructor was promoted from part-time to a full-time position as an HSE instructional coordinator.
   - One employee was recruited from outside the DACC community to fill the position of IET Instructional Coordinator.

B. **Continuous Program Improvement**: In the spring of 2024, our leadership team engaged in a three-day session with Dr. Katya Backhaus, the Data Administrator from the New Mexico Higher Education Department. We analyzed trends in our enrollment, achievement, assessment, and attendance data, and compared these trends with other programs throughout the state. The detailed results of this Continuous Program Improvement experience are outlined in Section III: Evaluation of Program Effectiveness.

   This experience has since been developed into a model for the Continuous Program Improvement Institute, which NMAEA, in partnership with NMHED, is implementing as a professional learning opportunity for all AEFLA programs in the state. Three of our staff members have been instrumental in planning this institute for FY25.

3. Characterize the current status of your programming with respect to in-person classes and hybrid or distance learning. How is your program evolving in this respect? What is planned for the 2024-2025 program year? How do you intend to keep incorporating digital literacy, distance learning, and considerations about digital equity into your program practices?

   In the summer of 2023, we introduced asynchronous classes, where instructors met one-on-one with learners weekly and held office hours. Recognizing the value of face-to-face (F2F) learning while accommodating learners facing barriers to attending scheduled F2F and synchronous online classes, this format was designed to support motivated learners aiming to enhance their English language skills and advance in critical reading, writing, and numeracy.

   For FY25, we are launching a three-week digital literacy course at the start of each new term. This initiative is expected to enable learners to earn micro-credentials in various modules of the NorthStar curriculum, further enhancing their digital skills and educational outcomes.

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4. List and provide a *brief* description of current partnership arrangements your program has with other agencies or organizations for the delivery of adult education & literacy activities, including support services. For each partnership listed, indicate level of formality: formal or informal. A **formal** partnership involves a written agreement between the partners (MOA or MOU) to specify roles and expectations and generally govern the relationship, while **informal** partnerships involve some form of ongoing and consistent mutual support and regular communication, but the relationship isn't formally governed by a written agreement.

    DACC has fostered an informal partnership with Las Cruces Public Schools and Hatch Valley Public Schools to offer ESL adult education services for parents. Additionally, a formal partnership has been established with Lutheran Social Services to provide ESL classes specifically tailored for Afghan refugees. Informal collaborations also exist with several departments at Doña Ana Community College, including Workforce Training, Community and Career Education, Early Childhood Education, Advanced Technologies, Student Accessibilities, and Avanza, enhancing our educational outreach and support services.

5. For the first time, your program was required to submit a Program Professional Learning Plan for the 2023-2024 program year (due by September 8, 2023). In that Plan, you described how your program intended to comply with NMHED-AE's Professional Learning Policy and identified your program's professional learning priorities. Please review your Professional Learning Plan for that program year and reflect here upon the outcomes of that Plan in 2023-2024:

    a. What were your PL priorities in 2023-2024 and generally speaking, how did you address them?

    Here are our top three priorities and the corresponding professional learning experiences we implemented for our staff. Each priority is accompanied by its specific goal and the list of professional learning opportunities in which our staff participated:

    1. *The program will make progress towards meeting our achievement outcomes, goals, and objectives of our grant agreement.*

       Promoting lifelong learning is a core value of our program, and it is essential that this is reflected in our internal practices. To support this, we provided the following professional learning experiences for our employees:
       - ✓ *DACC & NMHED's Continuing Program Improvement Data Retreat*: Four program leaders attended this data retreat. Results of the retreat are explained in detail above in Section II, question 2 of this report.
       - ✓ *LEAD Institute*: Four administrative program leaders participated in this six-month training. We designed a Leadership In Action (LIA) plan to address our failure to reach our achievement outcomes.
       - ✓ *National External Diploma Program (NEDP) Training*: Two new staff were trained and two staff attended this training for review.
       - ✓ *TESOL*: one instructor attended this conference.
       - ✓ *NMAEA Instructor Institutes*: 12 instructors attended these institutes.
       - ✓ *Training from the Back of the Room* (TBR): More than half of our part-time instructors have been certified completers of this training.
       - ✓ *Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Annual Conference*: eleven instructors and nine administrative staff attended this conference.
       - ✓ *Scaffolding & Differentiation*: insert name and trainer information.
       - ✓ *Chair Academy*: Two staff participated and completed this year-long training.
       - ✓ *American Evaluation Association Annual Conference*: three employees participated in this conference.
       - ✓ *National Workforce Education Conference*: The director participated in this conference.
       - ✓ *Achieving the Dream Annual Conference*: Our academic advisor/career navigator participated in this conference.

       ✓ *Coalition of Adult Basic Education*: five program leaders participated in this conference.

We introduced a paid stipend for instructors to compensate them for participating in these trainings. Additionally, we have embarked on a path to convert all instruction to align with the research-based best practices covered in these trainings. This approach ensures that our educational offerings are both effective and current.

2. *The program will establish strong partnerships that include a referral system with WIOA partners*.
   - ✓ We instituted weekly meetings with WIOA core partners for the Youth (out of school) and adult dislocated service providers and created a referral process. However, maintaining these scheduled meetings proved challenging due to conflicts and staff turnover among the WIOA service providers.

3. *The three IET program components (Adult Education, Workforce Technical Training & occupational training) are offered concurrently and contextually to adult learners*.
   - ✓ *NMHED, Propel, and NMAEA Integrated Education and Training Annual Institution*: three administrative program leaders and five division staff attended this institute.
   - ✓ We hired our IET Instructional Coordinator who started Aug 1, 2024.
   - ✓ We faced challenges in establishing the new classification for the IET Instructional Coordinator position, which took six months to finalize.

b. What were the most impactful PL experiences in which you and your staff participated, and why? How did they change your program's practice or outcomes, if at all?

The NMHED, Propel, and NMAEA Integrated Education and Training Annual Institute proved to be the most impactful professional learning for our program. Over the past seven years, we struggled to sustain efforts in Integrated Education and Training (IET) and career pathways. However, we gained momentum in for two key reasons:

1. *Seven division staff attended*. The networking opportunity proved extremely helpful. One of the goals of our division is to integrate services, designing a common enrollment form, inter-division referral processes, and financially supporting learners through Snap E & T reimbursements and other workforce and career pathway funding for wrap around and emergency assistance. We were able to develop a plan for a series of IETs beginning with launching the Commercial Driver's License IET.
   - ➢ The seven staff gained a cohesive understanding of the requirements of an IET.
   - ➢ We created a survey to poll our learners to assess their interest in potential IETs.
   - ➢ We dedicated one part-time instructor to train and assess our learners and begin to develop the curriculum.
   - ➢ We investigated other CDL IETs around the country.
2. *We established a bi-weekly planning meeting*.

c. What were your main successes and challenges in implementing your PL Plan?
   - Due to hiring delays, we had extra funds available for professional learning. However, moving forward, we anticipate that this funding will not be available unless we can secure an increased allocation from NMHED.
   - In June, we utilized the "Training from the Back of the Room 4C" lesson planning template to redesign our onboarding program for adult learners. This approach helped us enhance the structure and effectiveness of our introductory courses.

d. Do you feel your program was able to implement the NMHED-AE Professional Learning Policy? Based on your experience in 2023-2024, what assistance or support might you need to implement the policy and your plan in the future?

- We are able to implement NMHED-AE Professional Learning Policy.
- Due to the size of our program, additional funding is required to support professional learning. Historically, professional learning opportunities were not equitably offered to all staff. While it's often more cost-effective to bring professional learning opportunities directly to our program instead of sending staff to state, regional, or national conferences, the networking opportunities provided by these conferences are invaluable and cannot be replicated locally.

## Section II. Core Indicators of Performance 2023-2024

Please enter the following information regarding enrollment, assessment rates and core indicators of performance for your program and use this information for answering the narrative prompts in Section III.

| Measurement | FY23 | FY24 |
|---|---|---|
| Number of NRS participants in PY 2023-2024 (Table 4, last row of column B) | 781 | 768 |
| Number of reportable individuals in PY 2023-2024 (Table 2A, last row of column AD) | 739 | 663 |
| Post-testing rate (Table 4B, last row of column B to number of NRS participants minus number of ABE Level 6 students from Table 4, column B) | 46% | 58% |

| Performance Measure | PY 2023-2024 Negotiated Level of Performance | PY 2023-2024 State Goals | Program Performance 2022-2023 | Program Performance 2023-2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measurable Skill Gain, MSG (Table 4, Grand Total of last column) | 33.5% | 42% | 30.3% | 45.31% |
| Credential Attainment Rate (Table 5, last row of column G). If last row of column B is 0, input N/A | 26.0% | 32% | 0% | 100% |
| Employment Second Quarter After Exit (Table 5, first row of column G) | 24.0% | 42% | 35.86% | 35.92% |
| Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit (Table 5, second row of column G) | 25.0% | 42% | 31.44% | 40.73% |
| Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit (Table 5, third row of column G) | $3,750 | $4,500 | $3,900 | $4,858.75 |

# Section III. Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

**Directions**: *Answer each of the following questions. Ground your answers in your data. Answers should be single-spaced.*

In the spring of 2024, our leadership team spent three days with New Mexico Higher Education Department's Data Manager to analyze trends in our enrollment, achievement, assessment, and attendance data comparing those trends to other program throughout the state. In the following sections, I will lay out what we learned, our conclusions, and decisions based on our analysis.

1.  Discuss your retention rate and its changes compared to PY 2022-2023 based on your data for NRS and non-NRS participants. Make sure to include the discussion of reasons for the trend.

    As represented in the Annual Retention Rate figure below, retention has exhibited a decline since FY20. Through our work with Dr. Backhaus this year, we *learned* that our retention rate was artificially lowered due to the use of our DACC LACES portal for student registration. Learners were being registered before they had a sincere intention of participating in our program. We *concluded* the use of the portal was registering learners who were not serious about enrollment and consequently, was placing an undue burden on our staff to assess learners prematurely. To address this, we *decided* to overhaul our enrollment process to ensure that only learners that demonstrate interest are registered. This change is expected to provide a more accurate measure of retention and reduce the amount of staff time and resources spent on managing assessments.

    **Annual Retention Rate**

    | | |
    |---|---|
    | FY24 | 54% |
    | FY23 | 52% |
    | FY22 | 53% |
    | FY21 | 67% |
    | FY20 | 76% |
    | FY19 | 75% |

2.  Present an overview of your efforts to increase post-testing rates including strategies that you used. If your post-testing rate is below 50%, required by the NM Adult Education Assessment Policy, explain the reasons and plans for improvements.

    Assessment guidelines recommend that learners be post-tested between 40 and 60 hours of attendance. In FY23, the average hours of attendance between pre and post assessments exceeded this recommendation, reaching over 100 hours. By FY24, this average had decreased to 63 hours, following the implementation of various interventions aimed at encouraging learners to post-test within the recommended timeframe. In analysis of assessment data, we *discovered* that during a targeted 10-week period in October-November 2023, we achieved an average of 18 learners per week completing their post-tests. Outside of this intensive period, the average fell to between 8 and 10 learners per week.

During the focused 10-week period, we actively managed attendance through weekly reviews with the leadership team. We utilized three exported views from the LACES system, which provided comprehensive data on attendance, assessment, and enrollment. We categorized learners based on their attendance hours, specifically targeting those approaching 40 hours, those exceeding 50 hours, and those exceeding 70 hours.

For learners nearing 40 hours, we communicated directly with both the learner and the instructor to schedule a post-test during their usual class time. For those who exceeded 50 hours, we implemented a stricter measure by revoking their access to our learning software, which, for ESL learners, effectively meant they could not attend their online classes. For learners surpassing 70 hours, we issued a mandatory requirement that they must post-test before being allowed to resume attendance. These measures were aimed at ensuring timely post-assessment and maintaining compliance with the recommended assessment guidelines.

The intensive review of attendance, assessment, and enrollment data during the 10-week period proved to be very resource-heavy, making it unsustainable for continued use. In response, we modified our approach early in the spring semester by experimenting with a new incentive: offering a $10 Starbucks gift certificate. Although this did not increase our overall assessment rate, it resulted in a slight decrease in the number of learners who failed to keep their scheduled post-test appointments.

We *concluded* that a multi-faceted approach was necessary to achieve the desired outcomes and efficiently use our staff time. Despite the challenges and resource demands, our efforts were successful. As shown in the figure below, we surpassed post-testing levels of the past six years and returned to pre-COVID levels.

Looking ahead, our challenge is to further increase our post-testing rate to meet NMHED's goal of 60% for FY25 and strive to reach the national average of 70%. This will require continued innovation and possibly revisiting resource allocation to sustain and build on our current success.

**Annual Post-Test Rates**

| | |
|---|---|
| FY24 | 58% |
| FY23 | 46% |
| FY22 | 44% |
| FY21 | 50% |
| FY20 | 44% |
| FY19 | 57% |
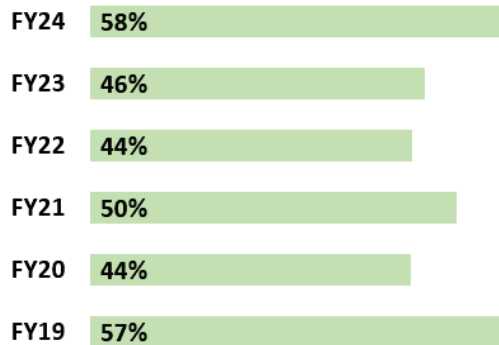
3. Analyze how your program performed relative to the negotiated levels of performance and state goals. For each performance indicator, discuss whether your program met, exceeded, or fell short of these negotiated target levels and state goals. Please reflect on the reasons and support your answers with data.

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| PI | Performance Measure | FY24 OCTAE Negotiated Performance | Program Performance FY24 | OCTAE Result | FY24 State Goals | Program FY24 | NMHED State Goal Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Measurable Skill Gain, MSG | 33.5% | 45.31% | **Exceeded** | 42.0% | 45.31% | **Exceeded** |
| 2 | Credential Attainment Rate | 26.0% | 100% | **Exceeded** | 32.0% | 100% | **Exceeded** |
| 3 | Employment Second Quarter After Exit | 24.0% | 35.92% | **Exceeded** | 42.0% | 35.92% | Not Met |
| 4 | Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit | 24.0% | 40.73% | **Exceeded** | 42.0% | 40.73% | Not Met |
| 5 | Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit | $3,750 | $4,858.75 | **Exceeded** | $4,500 | $4,858.75 | **Exceeded** |

The employment and median earnings performance indicators (PIs 3, 4, & 5) are assessed after an adult learner completes our program. These outcomes are determined through a statewide match with the Department of Labor, supplemented by our staff directly reaching out to learners who qualify for this performance indicator. Our program's influence on these specific measures is indirect and tends to manifest over a longer period.

Although we exceeded the performance levels negotiated by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE), we fell short of the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) state goals for PI 3 and 4. This discrepancy may be more reflective of the efficacy of our staff outreach efforts rather than the actual outcomes achieved by our students. Placing a higher priority on these outcomes and allocating more staff resources to improve outreach could enhance our performance on these measures.

**The true impact of our efforts will be more accurately measured as we expand our Integrated Education and Training (IET) and career pathway offerings and two division-wide career navigators. These courses are designed to have a more direct influence on learners' employment success by providing them with the skills necessary for economic mobility.**

As learners gain these competencies, we expect to see improvements reflected in their sustained employment and earnings. Enhancing our program offerings in these areas will likely lead to better alignment with performance indicators related to employment outcomes.

4. For all indicators for which your program failed to meet the negotiated targets and/or state goals, discuss your strategy to improve outcomes,

We plan to implement a more rigorous campaign to complete our follow-up surveys, which are crucial for assessing the long-term impact of our programs on learners' employment and earnings. Having full-time staff on board will be instrumental in successfully carrying out this campaign, as they can dedicate the necessary time and resources to ensure thorough follow-up and accurate data collection. This strategic approach will help us improve our understanding of program outcomes and refine our strategies for enhancing learner success.

5.  Consider your performance data from the last and previous program years. Discuss overall trends.

## Performance Data FY19 – FY24

| Fiscal year | NRS Participants | Non-NRS Participants | Retention Rate | % MSGs* | % EFL** Gains | % Post-Tested |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2018-19 | 1204 | 411 | 75% | 45% | 76% | 57% |
| 2019-20 | 1213 | 381 | 76% | 36% | 79% | 44% |
| 2020-21 | 622 | 305 | 67% | 40% | 77% | 50% |
| 2021-22 | 746 | 665 | 53% | 35% | 77% | 44% |
| 2022-23 | 781 | 710 | 52% | 30% | 65% | 46% |
| 2023-24 | 768 | 663 | 54% | 45% | 72% | 58% |

\*MSG = Measured Skill Gains, aka Achievement
\*\*EFL = Educational Functional Level Gain on Post-tests

During our annual review with NMHED Data Administrator, Dr. Katya Backhaus, in July 2023, we gained valuable insights into the critical relationship between post-testing and learner achievement. We *discovered* that our low Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) and achievement rates were largely due to insufficient data collection and inadequate and delayed post-testing.

We *concluded* that our post-testing processes needed to change in order for us to meet our program goals and outcomes. It seemed the only way to influence post-testing behavior was to offer an incentive *for* and consequence *for not* post-testing. However, there seemed to be an inherent risk in a strategy such as that. We were filled with doubt – would our enrollment drop? Would that create anxiety with our learners? Was it better for learners to learn about their achievement successes or be disenrolled because they failed to post-test?

We *decided* to trust the data *and* trust Dr. Backhaus's analysis. We implemented the post-testing strategies described above in Section II, question 2.

As shown in the Performance Data FY19-FY24 figure, our success is clear: The higher our post-test rate, the greater the MSG and Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gains. Dr. Backhaus was instrumental in helping us implement the interventions we established during FY24, and the data clearly reflects the success of these efforts. Moving forward, our challenge will be to sustain and further enhance these efforts in the current fiscal year.

6.  Describe how your program currently uses data to improve the quality and efficacy of services provided. *Be specific*. Describe strategies you intend to use in the coming year to promote continuous improvement.

    **The most significant change we made in FY24 was implementing a weekly data review, which allowed us to quickly pivot when we observed changes in learner behavior.**

    For FY25, we will continue these data analysis processes as outlined in the previous sections. This continuity will help our new staff acclimate to these procedures and further embed a data-informed culture within our team. Our goal is to maintain a routine that is agile enough to respond in real time to shifts in learner behavior, ensuring that we can adapt and support our learners effectively as their needs evolve.

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## Section IV. WIOA Partner Activities, Career Services, and Training Services

For this section we will be asking about working with WIOA Partners, alignment with LWDB plans, infrastructure agreements, one-stop responsibilities, and career and training services.

1. Fill out the chart for common career and training services applicable to AEFLA programs. *For definitions of career and training services, how to calculate these costs, and other guidance, **please read** the appendix to this report template. **Do not** fill this out without reading the entire appendix carefully. **Do not** skip this section.*

| Career and Training Services Applicable to AEFLA | Category of Service | Total Number of Participants Who Received This Service | Total FEDERAL FUNDS Expended for This Service, *Excluding* Administrative Costs, for Program Year 2023-2024 | *Average* FEDERAL FUNDS *Expenditure* per Participant, *Excluding* Administrative Costs |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outreach, intake, and orientation information | Career Service | 1141 | $103,819 | $91 |
| Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive services needs | Career Service | 705 | $54,692 | $72 |
| Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services. | Career Service | 670 | $15,892 | $42 |
| Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of provider. | Career Service | 630 | $31.783 | $51 |
| Provision of information on availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals (including child care; child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and CHIP; SNAP benefits; EITC; assistance under TANF, and other supportive services and transportation) | Career Service | 630 | $31.783 | $51 |
| **Total:** | | | $237,969* | |
| Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs | Training Service | 8 | State IET funds were used for our IET | NA |

**\*Enter this total in Question 1 in Section IX as well.**

2. Describe specific activities and strategies your organization has implemented to partner with the Local Workforce Development Board and your local One Stop staff / operators.

   Establishing effective coordination with the local Workforce Development Board and One Stop Operator presented ongoing challenges for our program this past year. The One Stop Operator regularly convenes partner meetings, offering a platform for core partners and other stakeholders within the one-stop system to collaboratively discuss upcoming initiatives, streamline processes and procedures, and shape a unified vision for implementing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services in our region.

   I found it particularly challenging to attend these meetings consistently. To address this, I delegated attendance to other staff members, who then reported key insights during our leadership meetings.

   A key and evolving avenue for collaboration is the development of career pathway programs and our IET programs within the region. We are actively working with Core WIOA partners to establish innovative mechanisms that braid funding sources, enhancing our ability to support these programs effectively.

3. Each of the 4 workforce regions in New Mexico (Northern, Central, Eastern, Southwestern) must develop and implement its own Local Area Plan every four years. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) websites with links to Local Plans can be found here: https://www.dws.state.nm.us/en-us/Workforce-Boards. How did your program align adult education and literacy activities in 2023-2024 with your Local Area Plan? What's working well? What are your biggest challenges?

   One challenge we encountered was the frequent turnover of staff among the WIOA core partners. To address this, we implemented weekly meetings to review referrals and track the progress of dually enrolled learners. However, these meetings were difficult to arrange due to our lack of awareness regarding WIOA staff changes. Despite these challenges, when the meetings did occur, they proved effective in coordinating our efforts. It's clear that we need to sustain and enhance our collaborative efforts.

   Another challenge lies in our understanding of how incentives and device distribution work for WIOA participants. We are often informed that there is insufficient funding to provide devices, and learners frequently report that they are not receiving the incentives they were promised. These cross-communication misunderstandings highlight the need for both parties to gain greater clarity on each other's processes to ensure smoother collaboration and better support for our learners.

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## Section V. Career Pathways Activities

For this section, please describe how the program has developed its Career Pathways service delivery model and supported related career pathway activities during the 2023-2024 program year.

1. To what degree is career planning and advising structurally built into your Adult Education program for the students who want and need it? Please be specific.

   - Due to unanticipated delays with NMSU hiring processes, we were unable to hire our full-time IET Instructional Coordinator during FY24. Due to our inadequate staffing, this has proved to be an ongoing weakness for our program.
   - After participating in the IET Institute, we established a weekly meeting with our IET planning team to develop and refine the necessary structure and processes.
   - We have introduced a participant evaluation for our onboarding classes, which surveys our learners to gather their interests and aspirations related to career pathway activities.

2. Did your program offer any Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs this year? If yes, please provide a number of IET students that your program served in PY 2023-2024 (Table 11, first row of column B)    5

3. What percentage of your NRS students participated in IET programs    .6% (use 2 and number of NRS participants from Section II)

4. Enter MSG rate of your -IET participants    40% (Table 11, sum of first 5 rows of column G)

5. Discuss successes, challenges, and lessons learned from IET programming this year.

   Regrettably, we faced capacity constraints that limited us to offering a single Integrated Education and Training (IET) class during the fiscal year. The challenges we encountered this past year include:

   - We struggled to identify our learners' interests, which made it difficult to recruit students for our classes.
   - Collaborating with technical training partners proved challenging, with follow-through being a significant issue. However, we found more success in the latter part of the year when the new director of our division took the lead in this effort.
   - Due to capacity constraints, designing the IETs, especially the Single Set of Learning Objectives, proved challenging. This difficulty stemmed partly from our limited understanding of the process. However, the IET Institute this spring helped clarify many of our questions.

   With our IET Instructional Coordinator on board, we expect to tackle and potentially solve these challenges during FY25.

## Section VI. Curriculum and Instruction

1. Please describe your program's orientation and onboarding process. Make sure to include the timeline of when the initial assessments are administered.

   Throughout FY24, we transformed our onboarding and orientation procedures by implementing a new 12-hour format. This format was spread over eight hours, with two key components: four hours dedicated to career advising and four hours focused on program-specific insights. The final four hours were allocated to pre-testing.

   Despite our efforts to enhance the orientation process, we realized the need to reconsider our onboarding goals. At its core, we want to build a community of learners. Our aim is for our learners to:
   - Be familiar with our software,
   - Complete a pre-test,
   - Be familiar with the wrap-around services offered through DACC,
   - Experience career exploration activities.

   After a thorough evaluation, we realized that the current configuration wasn't comprehensive enough to equip our adult learners with the necessary knowledge and tools to transition smoothly into our classes.

   Recognizing the inherent complexity of our online software, the nuanced program requirements, and the need for consistent attendance to achieve meaningful learning gains, we set out to restructure our onboarding classes. In the spring of 2024, we began this process by collaborating with instructors to redesign the curriculum, aiming to create a more immersive orientation experience.

2. Describe how your program's schedule and components promote adequate intensity and frequency of instruction in order to support participants' achievement of substantial learning gains.

   ESL adult learners follow a structured schedule with eight hours of weekly instruction, attending 2-hour sessions four days a week to steadily improve their English proficiency. Meanwhile, HSE adult learners focus on either math or English, dedicating four hours per subject each week, with classes held twice a week for 2-hour sessions.

   During our weekly data review, we noticed that a significant number of our returning students were not making adequate progress, which raised concerns. While our ESL Educational Functional Level (EFL) gains are relatively strong, our HSE achievement levels appear to be lower.

   At our Continuous Program Improvement retreat with Dr. Backhaus, we decided to "shake up" our HSE program. We requested a comparison of our outcomes with those of programs that had a similar number of HSE learners to identify areas for improvement.

   After returning from the retreat, we delved deeper into the attendance and performance data of our HSE students. We discovered that many learners who performed poorly on our achievement test, the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), were still able to pass the GED or HiSET exams. This led us to reevaluate our onboarding program and our implementation of the National External Diploma Program (NEDP). We decided that all HSE learners should take the GED Ready test and complete the NEDP practice module during onboarding. If a learner scored sufficiently on the GED

Ready, we would encourage them to take at least one exam. Following this, we would place them in an appropriate HSE course to further develop the skills needed to pass the remaining exams.

3. What other programmatic elements and wrap-around services support student success and address barriers to learning (e.g. the use of technology, career navigation services, etc.)? You may have discussed your use of distance learning in Section I. Add any additional relevant information about how you provide distance learning and address digital literacy and equity in your programs and/or plan to do so.

   During onboarding, students are introduced to modern tools through our online portal and assessments. Staff adhere to guidelines from OCTAE, NRS, DRC, and the state for remote testing, with assessments conducted both remotely and in person. However, reliable internet access and technology for taking assessments remain challenging for some adult learners. TABE Locator, TABE Class E, and TABE assessments are supervised by proctors.

   Our coursework is available in-person and both synchronously and asynchronously through Zoom. All class materials are accessible online and in-person. We connect adult learners to wrap-around services within DACC and the broader community for additional support. A notable success of these services occurred in the fall of 2023 when one of our learners lost his home in a fire and struggled to find temporary housing. Avanza, DACC's wrap-around services department, stepped in to secure and fund a hotel room, and we provided a device so he could continue his classes without interruption.

   For learners facing obstacles and/or learning difficulties, we offer referrals to DACC Student Accessibility Services and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), a WIOA core partner. Our curriculum also includes essential topics such as digital literacy, internet safety, and digital citizenship. Instructors utilize tools like Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp for effective communication.

   As technology continues to play a growing role, adult education must evolve accordingly. With funds from our vacant salary positions, we purchased pivoting cameras for hybrid classes and 60 student computers for the Southern County campuses. These computers will be used to teach digital literacy and advanced skills necessary for postsecondary education and the workforce.

4. **Describe precisely how your program aligns instruction to the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and/or the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS).** Please include information on required curriculum and resources available to support instruction and the implementation of CCRS/ELPS. If you do not align your curriculum and instruction to these standards, please let us know, as it will help us plan professional learning opportunities and technical assistance for the state.

   Classes are grouped by levels based on TABE scores and NRS testing levels.
   - Reading lessons are designed to reflect core components, tailored to each student's literacy level. Writing instruction emphasizes the connection between reading and writing, focusing on text analysis, personalization, and idea manipulation. HSE learners use Essential Education, while ESL learners use Burlington English to supplement direct instruction.
   - –The math curriculum includes Essential Education and instructor-created digital content. Classes meet for four hours per week, with an additional two hours on our digital platform. Lessons build on foundational concepts and are aligned with the support provided by Essential Education.

- –English language acquisition covers basic to advanced levels, with Burlington English, our ESL digital platform, reinforcing classroom instruction. Speaking skills are developed through discussions and practice in formal and consultative registers.

Our instruction aligns with Common Core State Standards and English Language Proficiency Standards, emphasizing content-rich nonfiction, evidence-based reading, writing, and speaking, as well as engagement with complex texts and vocabulary. This approach empowers adult learners in language acquisition, critical reading, writing, and numeracy skills.

5.  Discuss any theoretical frameworks or research that you, as an AE program director, find compelling and which you actually use to inform your program design, your curriculum development, your leadership/management practices, or your staff trainings.

    Adult learners bring rich experience, clear purpose, and defined goals to their education. A successful program prioritizes these needs while also focusing on academic content, fostering a collaborative discovery of knowledge. In this approach, learning becomes a meaningful, generative process where new and prior knowledge intertwine to create new meanings. This represents a shift from passive reception to active pursuit. My approach is learner-centered, guided by evidence-based practices and critical reflection, drawing inspiration from educators like Paulo Freire, Jane Vella, Jack Mezirow, bell hooks, and Stephen Brookfield.

    My leadership style combines predictive project management with consensus building. Predictive management is guided by key questions: If we take this action, what are the likely outcomes? What issues might arise? What significance do these outcomes hold? This collaborative process allows us to anticipate both intended and unintended consequences, reducing the need for reactive efforts later and freeing up more resources for adult learners. It's about addressing the root causes of issues as much as fixing the problems themselves.

    Consensus leadership involves engaging staff in exploring and resolving issues. While this approach is time-intensive and requires careful listening and concise communication, the benefits of reaching agreement—or near agreement when unanimous consensus isn't possible—are well worth the investment. In consensus, accepting a solution differs from fully agreeing with it, but it fosters a shared commitment to action. I've found the methods outlined in *Liberating Structures* by Henri Lipmanowicz and Keith McCandless particularly valuable for managing through consensus.

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## VII. Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE) Activities

For this section, if the program received IELCE funding for 2023-2024, please describe IELCE activities and services provided by the program this fiscal year.

(If your program does not receive IELCE funding, just indicate N/A).

1. Please indicate the number of IELCE students (12+ hours) served (Table 9, first row of column B):

   309

2. Enter MSG rate of IELCE participants (Table 9, first row of column G) __52.50%____

3. Indicate the percent of participants achieving IELCE outcomes (Table 9, Column E to number of IELCE participants from 1)

   - Achieved Citizenship Skills ___0%____
   - Voted or Registered to Vote ___0%____
   - Increased Involvement in Community Activity ___0%____

4. Input the number of IELCE students that participated in IET programs ___0_____

   (Drill down to IELCE students from Table 9, first row of column B. Then **add** Table 11 and find number in first row of column B)

5. Enter % of IELCE students that participate in IET programs using data from 1 and 4. ___0%_____

6. Describe your program's efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with providing access to integrated education and training activities using data.

   While our instructors incorporated civics and community engagement lessons and activities, we failed to collect outcome data from our IELCE and IET learners. This shortfall was primarily due to our inability to hire and onboard our IET Instructional Coordinator. To address this, we plan to implement periodic surveys for IELCE and IET students throughout their instructional journey with us, allowing us to track and confirm outcomes more effectively.

7. Describe how your program is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency as described in WIOA section 243(c)(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.

   We are currently enhancing our operational framework by establishing a comprehensive referral and case management system. We expect our instructional coordinator, along with our career navigator/advisor, to develop and implement this system. This will help us facilitate seamless co-enrollments across all DACC partners and community-wide. The IET Institute played a crucial role in unifying our division around a common vision for IETs and career pathways.

8. Describe how your program is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions as described in WIOA section 243(c)(2) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.

   The insights we gained from the NMHED IET Institute this spring underscored the importance of a design process that begins with thorough research and assessment. This strategic approach lays the groundwork for fully understanding the complex interactions between regional workforce dynamics, the specific needs of adult learners, and the resources available to support them.

   In the past, our IET programs at DACC often focused more on the program's capacity rather than being deeply rooted in the actual needs of our learners. This realization has highlighted a critical area for our growth and development. In the coming year, we are committed to addressing this disparity. While we will continue to support some IET programming based on our current capacity, we recognize the importance of shifting our focus toward conducting intensive research and assessment. This will be followed by the careful design and planning of program goals and learner experiences that genuinely align with the needs of both businesses and adult learners.

   By adopting this research-driven approach, we aim to capture the true spirit of IET programming—one that is profoundly learner-centered and responsive to the ever-changing demands of the workforce.

9. Regarding WIOA Section 243 activities, please describe any problems or questions and technical assistance or professional development needs you and/or your staff have. Please be as specific as possible.

   Reflecting on our experience during the NMHED IET Institute, I found it to be an invaluable opportunity that significantly shaped my perspective on implementing robust IET programming. The theory behind IET programming is incredibly expansive, with the potential to drive economic mobility for our learners. However, the practical implementation of such programming has proven to be a considerable strain on our administrative and instructional capacity. Educating staff, instructors, learners, and partners about the many moving parts, requirements, and restrictions of this type of programming is a time-consuming process.

   While our program adapted quickly and successfully to meet OCTAE outcomes and NMHED goals, we lacked the resources necessary to fully implement IET programming. Specifically, we were unable to visit successful IET programs or explore the insights and best practices of other successful initiatives—research activities that will be vital to our future success.

   As we onboard new team members, I am optimistic that we can integrate these strategies and effectively implement our CDL IET program, following the research and assessment guidelines established by the NMHED IET Institute.

## VIII. Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals

For this section, if your program served incarcerated or other institutionalized individuals as defined in WIOA Sec. 225, please describe the activities and services provided by this fiscal year.

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(If your program did not provide these types of services in 2023-2024, just indicate N/A).

1.  Please indicate the number of Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals students (12+ hours) served (Table 10, column B).

2.  Enter MSGs for Sec. 225 participants (Table 10, first row of column G) _____

3.  Describe your program goals and activities for serving this student population as well as any transition activities that allow for students to continue receiving services upon release.

4.  Regarding WIOA Section 225 activities, please describe any problems or questions and technical assistance or professional learning needs you and/or your staff have. Please be as specific as possible.

## IX. Fiscal Survey
PLEASE REVIEW AND FILL OUT THIS SECTION IN ITS ENTIRETY. ALL DONATED COSTS MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION

1.  Please provide the total amount of expenditures from Section IV of FEDERAL FUNDS used during the 2023-2024 fiscal year to provide Career Services.  If no federal funds are used for Career Services, please enter $0 here.

    $237,969

2.  Please indicate the amount your program contributes to the Local One-Stop through the IFA. If the amount is $0, please indicate that as well.

    $0

3.  Please indicate FY 2023-2024 Total hours contributed – Volunteer Tutors

| Total hours contributed | Fair Market Value per Hour | Total |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |

4.  Please indicate FY 2023-2024 hours contributed – Volunteer Admin (Receptionist/Front Desk)

| Total hours contributed | Fair Market Value per Hour | Total |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |

5.  Please indicate FY 2023-2024 hours contributed – Board of Directors (Organizational Development)

| Total hours contributed | Fair Market Value per Hour | Total |
|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |

6.  Please indicate total fair market value of donated supplies and materials. (e.g., books)

7.  Please indicate total fair market value of donated equipment.

8.  Please indicate total fair market value of donated IT infrastructure and support.

Please estimate the Total indirect, in-kind expenses donated by your institution. This refers to all types of space, infrastructure, and instructional support. For space cost calculations, you can 1)

estimate your institution's fair market rental value per square foot per month, or 2) you can provide the institution's building renewal and replacement allocation (and cite the source document). At a minimum, please indicate the approximate square footage of donated space (for NMHED to calculate at an average rate).

1. Please indicate square footage of donated space (all space your program uses that you do not have to pay fees for use)

| Square footage of donated space | Fair Market Value per Square foot | Total |
|---|---|---|
| 21,747 | $5.75 | $125,045 |

**Alternate option**:

Please indicate institution's building renewal and replacement allocation

Please cite the source document for the amount:

## IX. Fiscal Survey (Continued)

### A. Additional grants, funding from partnerships, etc.

1.    Please list other sources of support and their contributions for FY 2023-2024.

| Source | Amount |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

### B. Program Income Activities

2.    Please indicate the amount of PROGRAM INCOME generated from your program for the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Please list the PROGRAM INCOME EXPENDITURES below:

| AEFLA allowable activity | Amount |
|---|---|
|  |  |
|  |  |
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