



**Mississippi Community College Board**  
**Office of Adult Education**  
**3825 Ridgewood Road**  
**Jackson, MS 39211**  
**601-432-6518**

**Multi-Year Request for Proposal (RFP)**

**INSTRUCTIONS & GUIDELINES**

**Fiscal Years 2026 – 2030**

<b>RFP Coordinator</b>	<p>All communication regarding this RFP <u>must</u> be made through the Adult Education and High School Equivalency State Director.</p> <p><b><u>Name:</u></b> Beth Little  <b><u>Contact Information:</u></b> <a href="mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu">adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu</a>  <b><u>Title:</u></b> State Director, Adult Education and High School Equivalency</p>
<b>Virtual Bidders Conference</b>	<p><b><u>Date:</u></b> February 14, 2025  <b><u>Time:</u></b> 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  <b><u>Link:</u></b>  <a href="https://itsmsgov.zoom.us/j/85994022158?pwd=eKGrgv04aQAIPOFWVhbWu9RBOt3bMs.1">https://itsmsgov.zoom.us/j/85994022158?pwd=eKGrgv04aQAIPOFWVhbWu9RBOt3bMs.1</a>  <b><u>Password:</u></b> 835660</p>
<b>Submitted Questions Due</b>	<p>All questions <u>must</u> be submitted using the MS RFP Questions Form 26.30 found at <a href="https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities">https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities</a>.</p> <p>Forms must be emailed to <a href="mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu">adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu</a> by:  <b>March 10, 2025, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time.</b></p>
<b>Proposal Submission</b>	<p>Proposals <u>must</u> be received by the Office of Adult Education by:</p> <p><b>March 31, 2025, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time.</b></p> <p>Applicants must submit three (3) complete copies of the RFP package.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One (1) electronic copy emailed in PDF format to <a href="mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu">adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu</a></li> <li>• Two (2) paper copies bearing original signatures in BLUE INK</li> </ul> <p>Mail Paper Copies to: Mississippi Community College Board  Office of Adult Education  <b>Attn: Nikitna Barnes</b>  3825 Ridgewood Road  Jackson, MS 39211</p> <p>Proposals not submitted to the Mississippi Community College Board, Office of Adult Education by the aforementioned deadline will not be considered for contract award.</p>

The applicant understands the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. To the best of the Office of Adult Education's (OAE) knowledge, the information provided is accurate. The OAE does not warrant such accuracy and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying application. By submitting a proposal, responders expressly agree to the State procurement terms.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

**State of Mississippi  
Mississippi Community College Board  
Office of Adult Education**

FY 2026-2030 Competitive Grant Application for  
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)  
(WIOA, Sec. 231, Sec. 225 and Sec. 243)

The State of Mississippi is seeking proposals to provide adult education and literacy programs, activities and services, including Integrated Education & Training Programs, which will improve adult education and literacy in Mississippi.

A copy of the Request for Proposal (RFP), as well as the Question & Answer Summary and all amendments related to this RFP, can be obtained at the following website:  
<https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

A Virtual Bidders' Conference will be held on **February 14, 2025, from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm.**

Link: <https://itsmsgov.zoom.us/j/85994022158?pwd=eKGrgv04aQAIPoFWVhbWu9RBOt3bMs.1>

Password: 835660

Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., local time on March 31, 2025. Applicants must submit three (3) complete copies of the RFP package.

- **One (1) electronic copy emailed in PDF format to [adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu](mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu)**
- **Two (2) paper copies bearing original signatures in BLUE INK**

Mail Paper Copies to: Mississippi Community College Board  
Office of Adult Education  
**Attn: Nikitna Barnes**  
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## Section I: Introduction

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### A. Purpose

The Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), Office of Adult Education (OAE), as required by the [Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#) is conducting a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) to award multi-year funding to eligible agencies for the provision of WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) services. These adult education and literacy programs, activities and services are defined in this RFP document.

This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the provider(s) will be selected and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Mississippi (State) and the awarded applicant(s). It is the purpose of Mississippi's Adult Education program to provide adult education and literacy services that also align with the goals in the [2024 Combined State Plan](#) and encourage the growth of educational opportunities, and where applicable, to ensure career, citizenship and college readiness for all adults.

### B. Background

On July 22, 2014, the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) was signed into law to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). WIOA requires the alignment of workforce, education and economic development systems to support access to high-quality, comprehensive and accessible workforce services for all individuals, including those with significant barriers to employment. Adult Education and Literacy (Title II) is identified as a core program in the WIOA. The core partners are listed below:

WIOA Required Core Partners:

- WIOA Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs (MS Department of Employment Services (MDES))
- **WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Literacy Program (MCCB, OAE)**
- WIOA Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (MDES)
- WIOA Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Program (MS Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS))

In Mississippi, Title II is administered by the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), Office of Adult Education (OAE). Since the passage and implementation of WIOA, adult education has been identified as an important element of workforce development systems nationwide. The OAE has worked collaboratively with core partners and local adult education providers to address WIOA requirements and ensure that adult education and literacy is an integral component of the Mississippi workforce system.

### C. Mississippi Combined State Plan

WIOA requires each state to submit a State Plan to the U.S. Secretaries of Labor and of Education, outlining the state's four-year workforce development strategy as it pertains to that state's workforce development system. Each state must have an approved plan in place in order to receive federal funding for WIOA core partners.

Mississippi opted to submit a Combined Plan. The plan includes the four required state programs, along with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance (UI), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (JVSG), and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The main focus of the plan is to improve the economic opportunities of all job seekers, especially those with low skills.

The Mississippi Combined Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) focuses on creating an integrated workforce development system that aligns services to enhance employment opportunities for residents while meeting employer needs. Central to the strategy is a career pathway model that supports individuals in gaining necessary skills and credentials, particularly in high-demand industries. The plan emphasizes streamlined processes, digital connectivity among partner agencies, and targeted support for vulnerable populations, including displaced workers and low-income individuals. Additionally, it prioritizes data-driven decision-making and performance metrics to ensure program effectiveness and continuous improvement, ultimately aiming to boost workforce participation and equip residents for success in the evolving job market.

#### **D. Role of the MCCB, OAE**

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) is strategically shaping its plan to administer the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 – Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). The OAE as the pivotal agency responsible for overseeing the allocation of funds to eligible providers and ensuring program and performance oversight. The overarching objective is to propel adult education and literacy services throughout the state, aligning with the goals outlined in the State Plan. The role of the OAE is to:

- a. Manage and distribute federal and state funds, provide leadership and technical assistance related to adult education and literacy instruction and offer High School Equivalency (HSE) testing throughout Mississippi;
- b. Strive to ensure the availability of high quality adult education programs in which individuals may earn high school credentials, improve English language skills, prepare for the workforce, and prepare for postsecondary education and training programs;
- c. Ensure alignment of adult education and literacy activities with core programs and one-stop partners to support the Mississippi Combined State Plan;
- d. Provide high quality professional development to improve instruction, including essential components of reading instruction and dissemination of models and promising practices;
- e. Provide technical assistance to providers based on research-based instructional practices, local one stop responsibilities and effective use of technology;
- f. Monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education activities in the State.

The OAE intends to fund eligible providers through this competitive grant application process to establish local adult education services aligned with the goals of the Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway Combined State Plan and goals of the OAE. As part of the application process, applicants are required to establish collaborations with partners who can assist in the delivery of quality comprehensive educational services and access to a comprehensive workforce development system for adult learners.

#### **E. Grant Opportunities**

An eligible applicant may apply for Section 231, 224, and/or 243 funds. Applicants may apply for each section individually or in any combination.

- a. Adult Education & Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), WIOA, Section 231
- b. Corrections Education & Other Institutionalized Individuals WIOA, Section 225
- c. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), WIOA, Section 243

Applicants will be required to offer instruction at ALL educational functioning levels (EFL) (Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education and English as a Second Language), based on identified needs of the adult learner and the area served. Programs must also prepare adult learners for and support them in achieving successful transition to postsecondary education and training or employment. (State Requirement)

The applicant understands the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. To the best of the OAE's knowledge, the information provided is accurate. The OAE does not warrant such accuracy and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. By submitting a proposal, responders expressly agree to these State procurement terms.

## **F. Authorization and Funding for Adult Education in Mississippi**

Federal administration and funding of adult education is authorized under WIOA, Title II: Adult Education and Literacy. The state administration and funding of local adult education providers in Mississippi is authorized under MS Code 37-35-1. Funding to grant recipients is determined through a competitive grant application process. Continuation of funding is based on successful delivery of adult education services to the target population and the achievement of annual performance targets. Grant recipients that do not meet grant requirements risk loss of funding at any point in the grant period. Applicants are advised to note the rigorous level of program administration and program accountability required under WIOA.

All funding is pending availability of projected Federal and State funds and MCCB approval.

- Federal – WIOA, Title II, AEFLA
- State – MS Code 37-35-1

The MCCB, OAE is accepting proposals from eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State by establishing or operating programs to provide a comprehensive service model for adult education and literacy services, including programs that provide such activities concurrently.

## Section II: Grant Overview

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### A. Eligibility to Submit Proposals

An organization must be considered an eligible provider to receive federal adult basic education funding. An “eligible provider” is defined as an organization that has **demonstrated effectiveness** in providing adult education and literacy activities. These organizations **may** include, but are not limited to (WIOA Title II Section 203(5); 34 CFR 463.23) a (an):

- a. local educational agency;
- b. community-based organization or faith-based organization;
- c. volunteer literacy organization;
- d. institution of higher education;
- e. public or private nonprofit agency;
- f. library;
- g. public housing authority;
- h. nonprofit institution not described in (a) through (g) of this section and has the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals;
- i. consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in (a) through (h) of this section; and
- j. partnership between an employer and an entity described (a) through (i) of this section.

An **eligible provider** must demonstrate past effectiveness by providing performance data on its record in improving the skills of eligible individuals, in particular, individuals who are basic skills deficient in the content domains of reading, writing, mathematics, and English language acquisition. An **eligible provider** must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training, per federal regulations 34 CFR 463.24.

- a. **Eligible Providers** can demonstrate past effectiveness in two ways:
  - i. An **eligible provider** that has been **previously** funded under Title II of the Act must provide two (2) consecutive years (State Requirement) of performance data in **Table 2.1 and Table 2.2** to demonstrate past effectiveness in the areas listed above. (Section III, Application).
  - ii. An **eligible provider** that has **not been previously** funded under Title II of the Act must provide two (2) consecutive years (State Requirement) of performance data in **Table 2.3 and Table 2.4** to demonstrate its past effectiveness in serving basic skills deficient eligible individuals, including evidence of its success in achieving outcomes listed in the WIOA Title II AEFLA Federal Requirements. (See federal regulations 463.24). (Section III, Application).

### Consortium Applicants

Each consortium member must meet the eligibility criteria as outlined above. Consortium members must complete either: **Table 2.1 and 2.2 OR Table 2.3 and 2.4, individually** (Section III, Application).

Additionally, a Risk Assessment will be completed by the OAE for each eligible application prior to awards being finalized.

Note: Pre- Award Risk Assessment Tool can be found at <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.



## B. Grant Award Period

WIOA Section 225, 231 and 243 funds allocated to eligible local providers are awarded through this competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process via multi-year grant contracts.

The OAE is seeking cost-efficient proposals to provide services, as defined in this RFP, for the contract period defined in the table below. Please note the dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, to comply with all procedural requirements associated with this RFP and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

Following the initial term of the contract and subject to continued availability of funding, the OAE retains the right to fund the grant recipient for up to four (4) consecutive fiscal program years. The exercise of grant renewals after the first year of funding will be made on a program-by-program basis. Renewals will be contingent on the grant recipient's ability to successfully implement the terms of the grant and demonstrated effectiveness as determined by outcomes. The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from this RFP, is defined as follows:

Period	Start Date	End Date
Initial Period of Performance	July 1, 2025	June 30, 2026
Renewal Period #1	July 1, 2026	June 30, 2027
Renewal Period #2	July 1, 2027	June 30, 2028
Renewal Period #3	July 1, 2028	June 30, 2029
Renewal Period #4	July 1, 2029	June 30, 2030

## C. Direct and Equitable Access

All applicants will receive direct and equitable access as required by WIOA Section 231 (C). The competitive grant process ensures:

- all eligible providers will have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants;
- the same grant announcement and application processes are used for all eligible applicants in the State;
- all applicants must respond to the same thirteen (13) federal considerations.

## D. Scope of Services to be Provided

Grant recipients must use the Title II funds to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible learners, including programs that provide such activities concurrently.

### 1. Adult Education

The purpose of the adult education and literacy grant program (WIOA Sec. 222(a)(1)) is to enable local adult education providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy services throughout the state to further the vision and goals as outlined in the Mississippi Combined State Plan and WIOA in order to:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency;
- Assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain the education and skills necessary to becoming full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their family;
- Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma or its equivalent and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including career pathways;
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in
  - Improving their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English; and mathematics skills; and
  - Acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibilities of citizenship;



- e. Provide educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals who are likely to leave the correctional facility within five years of participation in the program, including academic programs for:
  - i. Adult education and literacy activities;
  - ii. Special education;
  - iii. Secondary school credit;
  - iv. Integrated education and training;
  - v. Career pathways;
  - vi. Concurrent enrollment;
  - vii. Peer tutoring; and
  - viii. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.
- f. Provide Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program (WIOA Sec. 243(a) to:
  - i. Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and
  - ii. Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

## **2. Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway (State Requirement)**

Adult Education (AE) services play a key role in establishing and conducting the Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway. In collaboration with the SWIB, the OAE developed and implemented the Smart Start Course, including curriculum development and exit criteria, with minimum assessment scores required for completion. The Smart Start Course prepares participants for middle-skill level employment. Participants will develop job skills needed for their careers, learn and practice good work habits and effective communication skills necessary for successful employment.

**Funded programs will be required to implement requirements of the Smart Start Course and individuals, who are basic skills deficient, lack a high school diploma or need to become work-ready will have the opportunity to participate in this pathway.**

Individuals enrolled in the Smart Start Course have the opportunity to earn a **Mississippi Smart Start Credential** issued by the MCCB.

More information about the Smart Start Course is available at:

<https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

## **3. Target Population (Eligible Individuals)**

Funds received by local providers under this grant contract are to be used to establish and operate programs that provide adult education and literacy services to learners meeting the statutory definition of an “**eligible individual**” as defined in WIOA.

## **4. Allowable Activities:**

### **a. Section 231, AEFLA**

Funding made available and awarded to eligible providers under this grant contract are used to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. Eligible providers can provide one or any number of the following adult education and literacy activities.

**Adult Education And Literacy Activities.**—The term “adult education and literacy activities” means programs, activities, and services that include

- adult education,
- literacy,
- workplace adult education and literacy activities,
- family literacy activities,
- English language acquisition activities,
- integrated English literacy and civics education,
- workforce preparation activities, or
- integrated education and training.

**b. Section 225, Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals**

Up to 20% of funding made available to Mississippi under Section 222(a)(1) may be used to fund programs for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals as described in Section 225. The OAE will award funds under Section 225 using the same process and timeline as described in this grant application.

The funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs for:

- adult education and literacy activities;
- special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- secondary school credit;
- integrated education and training;
- career pathways;
- concurrent enrollment;
- peer tutoring; and
- transition to re-entry initiatives and other postrelease services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency that is using assistance provided under this section to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

All assurances and requirements described in this contract will apply to grantees funded under Section 225.

Local corrections/institutionalized classes must have the support of the warden and other administrative officers, and have the following available (State Requirement):

- a. At least six hours of classroom instruction must be made available per week, allowing for sufficient instructional time for meeting the post-assessment policy.
- b. During instructional time, the correctional facility must dedicate an adequate space conducive to learning. The space should have a low-noise level, adequate lighting, a comfortable temperature and appropriate furnishings.
- c. Inmates (students) should have access to instructional material for additional study outside of the classroom setting.

**c. Section 243, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)**

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education refers to the use of funds provided under WIOA Section 243 for English Language learners. A program of instruction

funded under WIOA, Section 243, which includes education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. It includes instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and civics education, and may include workforce training. In addition, the program must be provided in combination with an Integrated Education & Training Program.

Applicants may apply for Section 243 IELCE funds under this application process through the submission of additional application responses specific to Section 243 requirements. Section 243 funds are allocated and accounted for in a separate funding stream.

## **E. Personnel and Staffing**

Adult education programs must be able to comply with all of the requirements of the state and federal grants. Programs are required to maintain certain program staffing to ensure the quality of grant administration; supervision; data collection, entry, and reporting; student support; and instruction. All staff must be properly qualified to fulfill the duties listed in their written job description through training, education, or experience and must complete required training and professional-development activities.

To ensure quality of programs and performance requirements, the OAE recommends the following minimum staff to support the adult education program:

- a. Adult Education Director/Administrator (1)
- b. College and Career Navigator (1) (based on student enrollment/need)
- c. Mentor/Lead Instructor (1) (based on student enrollment/need)
- d. Instructors: Full-time and/or part-time Instructors (10:1 student teacher ratio minimum per class)
- e. Academic Assistant (based on student enrollment/need)
- f. Data Manager and/or Data Specialist/Intake Specialist (1) (based on student enrollment/need)

## **F. Standards and Instruction**

The OAE is committed to providing standards-based instruction through evidence-based researched strategies. The [College and Career Readiness Standards](#) (CCRS) should be the basis of lesson planning, classroom activities, assignments, and classroom assessments. Standardized assessments should be used to measure success in building essential skills and knowledge included in our standards.

Adult education instructors must have a thoughtful plan, with clearly articulated methods, as to how they will sequence lessons, use instructional materials, and design learning activities. Lesson plans and instructional strategies should make career awareness and workforce skills a central context for learning. Instructors must be able to adjust the plan in response to the needs of their students, including those with learning differences. Best practices related to instruction suggests the following:

- a. classes tailored to students' needs, preferences, skill levels, etc.;
- b. varied methods of instruction (including small groups, computer activities, etc.); and
- c. a high degree of instructor-student and student-student interaction.

Therefore, a balanced mix of instructional methods is important in managing the classroom. Each participant has preferences regarding how he or she learns best (working with a large group, small group, alone, with a tutor, etc.). Learning style inventories and questionnaires may help to determine student preferences. These preferences should be taken into consideration when organizing classes.

## G. Professional Development (State Requirement)

The OAE offers a variety of professional development (PD) throughout the program year to raise the level of expertise of Mississippi's adult educators through continuing learning opportunities. Program directors shall ensure program's compliance with the PD requirements set by the OAE. Each year program directors and instructors are required to complete annual in-service PD. Completing the annual requirements re-qualifies the directors and instructors to serve Mississippi's adult population.

Annual Professional Development Requirements	
Full-Time Staff	30 hours
Part-Time Staff	20 hours
Support Staff	10 hours

Local professional development is an integral and required component of grant-funded adult education programs. Professional development participation is key in ensuring that federal and state policies and procedures are executed, state initiatives are implemented, and instructional best practices are learned and incorporated in the classroom. Professional development opportunities are provided to instructors and staff to ensure job preparedness and to support student needs.

To meet the professional development requirements of the grant, a local education program will:

- a. Develop an annual Professional Development Plan which identifies local/state professional development events that will support key program goals;
- b. Provide local professional development to ALL faculty (part-time and full-time) and program staff (leadership, administrative, data management, transition specialist, etc.);
- c. Participate in OAE professional development offerings as appropriate and/or deemed mandatory by the agency; and
- d. Track and document all professional development activities including:
  - i. Sign-In Sheets;
  - ii. Agenda;
  - iii. Handouts; and
  - iv. PowerPoint Presentation.

## H. Alignment with Local Workforce Plans

A function of LWDB, identified under section 107 of the WIOA, is to coordinate local workforce activities with education and training providers, including providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA. The coordination of education and training activities includes the review of applications for providing adult education and literacy activities submitted to the MCCB, OAE for funding under Title II.

WIOA requires each eligible, seeking applicant to describe how services proposed in the application will align with applicable local workforce development plan(s), including the items shown below:

- a. The degree to which the Title II application responds to regional needs as identified in the Local Workforce Plan;
- b. The degree to which the Title II application responds to serving individuals in the community identified as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals who have low levels of literacy skills or are English language learners;
- c. The extent to which the Title II applicant's proposed activities and services demonstrate alignment to the strategies and goals of the Local Workforce Plan;

- d. The extent to which the Title II applicant's proposed activities and services demonstrate alignment to the activities and services of the one-stop partners, including providing access to adult education services through the one-stop system.

Mississippi has four workforce development regions. Each workforce development region is operated by a local board of directors representing the counties and communities within each region. Adult Education programs must demonstrate alignment between activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under Section 108 of WIOA, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners.

### **Mississippi Workforce Regions**

#### **Central Mississippi Planning and Development District**

P. O. Box 4935, Jackson, MS 39296

Phone: 601-981-1511, Contact: Robin Parker

Local WIOA Plan: <https://cmpdd.org/workforce/>

#### **South Delta Planning and Development District**

P. O. Box 1776, Greenville, MS 38702

Phone: 662-335-6889, Contact: Mitzi Woods

Local WIOA Plan: <https://sdpdd.com/workforce-development/>

#### **Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District**

Twin Districts Workforce Area

700 Hardy Street, Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Phone: 601-545-2137, Contact: Patricia Morrison

Local WIOA Plan: <https://smpdd.com/economic-workforce-development/>

#### **Three Rivers Planning and Development District**

P. O. Box 690, Pontotoc, MS 38863

Phone: 662-489-2415, Contact: Terry Treadway

Local WIOA Plan: <https://trpdd.com/workforce-development/>

### **I. Local Workforce Development Board Review of Title II Applications**

The OAE shall conduct the process to ensure eligible applications for funds under WIOA Title II are submitted to the appropriate LWDB for review according to WIOA requirements. Please see below for a summary of the responsibilities for each entity:

#### **The OAE shall:**

- a. conduct a compliant and competitive Title II grant application process with a timeline that allows for LWDB review of eligible applications;
- b. develop and implement a process, including a template to gather comments, for LWDB to review applications and submit such reviews and comments back to the OAE;
- c. evaluate all eligible applications, using the grant application evaluation considerations and factors as described in this document, including those pertaining to local plan alignment, and award Title II funding accordingly;

#### **Eligible Applicants shall:**

- a. respond to the grant application, address all requirements, and adhere to timelines;
- b. identify the workforce region(s)/area(s) for the proposed service area and access the applicable local Workforce Plan(s);
- c. address in the application how the Title II services proposed will align with the Local Workforce Plan(s) as described above;
- d. submit completed grant application to the OAE according to instructions in this document.

**Local Development Boards shall:**

- a. ensure Local Workforce Plan is readily and easily available to eligible applicants;
- b. review all eligible applications, comment on alignment to the Local Workforce Plan, and provide recommendations to promote further alignment;
- c. submit comments and recommendations to the OAE using the provided template and within the required timeframe.

**J. Adult Education as a Required One-Stop Partner**

WIOA aligns workforce development, education and economic development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers. WIOA provides for a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system. The vision of a one-stop system under WIOA is to provide all participants, including those with barriers to employment, access to high-quality services in their communities to find jobs, build basic educational or occupational skills, earn postsecondary certificates or degrees, or obtain guidance on how to make career choices.

Adult education is a required one-stop partner and will be co-located in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers that provide access to the services of the Combined Plan programs and other partners in each of the four local workforce development areas. These agreements may include a comprehensive referral system and shared customer-base, shared system costs and co-location when appropriate, and other shared services to ensure access to information and services that will lead to positive employment outcomes is available to all participants.

**K. Funding and Distribution**

Consistent with the approved WIOA Mississippi State Plan, adult education and literacy (WIOA Sec. 222(a)(1)) grant awards, will be distributed based on literacy needs, according to the American Community Survey, in the Local Workforce Development Areas.

The MCCB, OAE will fund, at a minimum, one (1) grant per workforce area. Applicants may elect to serve an entire workforce area or selected counties within a workforce area. Applicants must serve entire county(ies) and must ensure all county residents have access. If an applicant elects to serve more than one workforce area, an explanation must be provided.

The MCCB, OAE will not use less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants under section 231. Grant recipients shall not expend more than five percent of federal ABE funding to administer the grant under Title II. In cases where five percent is too restrictive to allow for federal administrative activities, the recipient may negotiate with the OAE to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for non-instructional purposes. The Administrative Cost Negotiation Form can be found at: <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

**As required by WIOA, funding is prioritized for the following applicants:**

- a. who have demonstrated effectiveness in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially; with respect to eligible individuals, who have low levels of literacy;
- b. whose services are aligned with local workforce strategies, priorities, and partners; and
- c. whose services are responsive to the needs of persons with barriers to employment.

According to Title II Section 241(a), funds made available for adult education and literacy activities under Title II must **supplement**, and not **supplant** other state or local public funds expended for adult education and literacy activities. Supplement, not supplant means the federal funds are intended to augment or increase, not replace, monies that would have been used if the federal funds had not been available.



**L. Match Requirement (State Requirement)**

Applicants must demonstrate a match of 25% of the funds requested. Federal funds may not be used for matching funds. Matching funds may include both in-kind and cash matches. The matching funds can come from state dollars, local-dollars, private dollars, or in-kind support.

**M. Time and Effort Reporting**

Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Sec. 200.430) requires time distribution records must be maintained for all employees whose salary is paid in whole or in part with federal funds or is used to meet a match or cost share requirement for a grant. Time and effort reporting is a federal compliance requirement and is almost always requested and reviewed by federal auditors when grants are under review.

**N. Available Funding**

The OAE anticipates making multiple awards as a result of this RFP process. Award amounts will depend upon available funding.

The OAE reserves the right to award grant funds in amounts different than the applicant's budget request and the suggested award amount. Such adjustment may be based on how the proposed budget and budget narrative will cover program expenses and whether the requested amount is appropriate, proportionate to the participants served, based on previous performance, (State Requirement) and is necessary, allocable, reasonable and allowable.

Listed below are the suggested award amounts for each county served in Mississippi. This allocation was determined by the American Community Survey 5 year estimate for Adults Age 18-64 without a High School Diploma or HSE. Eligible providers may also use their allocation to serve those in correctional or institutionalized settings, as needed, per federal regulations 34 CFR Part 463.61(a).

<b>Programs to be Funded:</b>
<b>Adult Education &amp; Literacy Activities: WIOA Section 231</b>
<b>Corrections Education &amp; Other Institutionalized Individuals: WIOA Section 225</b>
<b>Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education: WIOA Section 243</b> Funds provided for Integrated English literacy and civics education, in combination with integrated education and training activities.

**O. Financial Management**

All awarded funds will be allocated on a cost-reimbursement basis. All grantees will be reimbursed for expenditures, as approved, by requesting reimbursement through the MCCB web-based financial budgeting system. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted monthly and all documentation must be available upon request.

Grant recipients shall ensure auditable and adequate records are maintained which support the expenditure of all funds received through a contract with the MCCB, OAE. Grant recipients will submit to periodic fiscal audits, adhere to assurances and will submit to periodic program review, monitoring, and/or technical assistance on-site visits.

**P. Allowable Expenditures**

Those costs that are necessary, reasonable and allocable as permitted by EDGAR, Uniform Grant Guidance, and permitted by WIOA Title II, WIOA Title II Rule and Joint Rule are allowable. Funding must be used to support the development, planning, and operation of comprehensive adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals in the proposed service delivery area.



Examples of allowable expenditures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. **Administration Costs.** There is a five percent (5%) limit on administrative costs. An eligible provider receiving a grant or contract under this part may consider costs incurred in connection with the following activities to be administrative costs:
  - i. Planning;
  - ii. Administration, including carrying out performance accountability requirements;
  - iii. Professional development;
  - iv. Providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans, including promoting co-enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate; and
  - v. Carrying out the one-stop partner responsibilities described in [§ 678.420](#), including contributing to the infrastructure costs of the one-stop delivery system.

The five percent (5%) cap for administrative costs include any and all administrative costs from the other agencies in the partnership/consortium as well as any indirect costs (e.g. rent and utilities, accounting expenses, expenses shared by other parts of the program).

Note: Special Rule for Local Administration Costs Limits (refer to Section 233 of WIOA):

In cases where the cost limits described in subsection (a) are too restrictive to allow for the activities described in subsection (a)(s), the eligible provider shall negotiate eligible agency (OAE) in order to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for administrative purposes.

- b. **Salary and Benefits.** Full- and part-time personnel, necessary for program activities and providing direct services to reportable individuals, including career services, instruction orientation, advising, and other activities.
- c. **Instructional Materials.** Purchase of standards-aligned curriculum materials, including educational and instructional software, and equipment necessary for and used in AEFLA programming by instructors and learners. This does not include general purpose equipment, such as furniture. Any equipment purchased with AEFLA funds should be labeled and inventoried.
- d. **Assessments that are approved in the MS Assessment Policy.** Assessments are used for determining if a reportable individual is basic skills deficient and is eligible for services.
- e. **Professional Development Activities.** This includes the registration and travel related to all local and state sponsored activities to attend and participate in professional development activities. All professional development related registration and travel must be included in administrative costs as federally defined.
- f. **Indirect Costs.** Those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. It may be necessary to establish multiple pools of indirect costs to facilitate equitable distribution of indirect expenses to the cost objectives served. Indirect cost pools must be distributed to benefitted cost objectives on basis that will produce an equitable result in consideration of relative benefits derived. For Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), the term facilities and administrative (F&A) cost is often used to refer to indirect costs. (2 CFR 200)

## Q. Unallowable Expenditures

Examples of unallowable expenditures include, but are not limited to, the following:

6. Capital improvements which add permanent value;
6. General purpose equipment; (e. g. furniture, microwaves, air conditioning, appliances)

- 6. Incentives of non-educational value;
- 6. Food-related expenses;
- 6. Scholarships and student aid costs;
- 6. Lobbying;
- 6. Gifts for instructors or students;
- 6. Entertainment;
- 6. Graduation expenses;
- 6. Travel for anything other than approved adult education business;
- 6. Life insurance, dental insurance and other benefits other than those listed as allowable above;
- 6. Expenses for anyone other than adult education staff.

## **R. Equipment (Purchase, Inventory, Disposal)**

Grant recipients must have written policies and procedures for purchasing and expenditures to support allowable activities. All equipment purchases must be consistent with the requests in the approved budget. Inventory is subject to periodic program review and monitoring. Programs will respond in a timely manner to any request for information from the OAE.

All equipment purchased with adult education funds shall remain the property of the State of Mississippi and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Mississippi Department of Finance Administration (DFA), through the life and disposition of said property. If equipment purchased with federal funds becomes unusable, equipment may be disposed in accord with local policies/procedures. If the equipment is no longer needed, the OAE office will assign the equipment to another Mississippi AEFLA program. It will be the responsibility of the two local grant recipient to complete the transfer.

An inventory list of all equipment purchased with adult education funds must be maintained. Equipment records must include:

- a. description of the property;
- b. serial number or other identification number;
- c. funding source of property;
- d. who holds the title, if applicable;
- e. acquisition date;
- f. cost of the equipment;
- g. location;
- h. use and condition of the property; and
- i. any disposition or transfer should be documented.

## **S. Facilities for the Program**

The eligible provider shall provide suitable American Disabilities Act compliant space conducive to adult learning for the local literacy program. The facility shall include office space(s), adequate classrooms for instruction and separate space for orientation and testing. The learning environment must be in good condition and properly maintained. (State Requirement)

## **T. Responsiveness to Technical Assistance and Monitoring**

It is the legal and fiduciary responsibility of the OAE to provide technical assistance and compliance monitoring of the grant. Eligible providers are expected to be responsive to the OAE's technical assistance efforts, which may include meetings, workshops, and trainings. As recommendations arise from technical assistance, eligible providers are expected to implement, follow through and communicate in a timely manner.

As indicated, the OAE will be conducting compliance monitoring of all implementation activities. The compliance monitoring includes, but is not limited to, fiscal budgets and expenditures, instructional practices, programmatic outcomes, partnerships, data security and integrity, and operational

effectiveness. A risk assessment tool will be used to evaluate risk factors identified by the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR § 200.331) and Section 221(1) of WIOA. Monitoring takes place on-site and/or virtually.

## U. Monitoring

Fiscal and compliance monitoring is conducted throughout the year to determine compliance with federal and state requirements. Monitoring will consist of:

- a. **Data Reviews:** The OAE conducts frequent and ongoing data reviews using the designated statewide OAE data management system. Areas of review include overall performance and outcomes, assessment data, attendance, and compliance.
- b. **Monitoring Visits:** The OAE has established a monitoring schedule for all programs. During site-visits, compliance team members meet with program directors and/or staff, observe classroom instruction, tour facilities, and meet with stakeholders (optional). Areas of concern are addressed with the program director either through informal feedback or, in some cases, a formal plan.
- c. **On-Site Program Reviews:** Programs identified for review will be evaluated on the quality of instruction, adherence to policies and procedures, and the overall quality of program administration. A formal written report will be provided, and each program will be asked to respond to areas that need improvement.

One hundred percent (100%) of AEFLA funded programs will be monitored annually through the use of Desktop Monitoring. The OAE monitoring program is risk-based; however, all recipients will receive an on-site monitoring visit at least once every three years.

Programs are identified for on-site monitoring through a comprehensive risk analysis based on the following factors:

- a. Desktop monitoring results;
- b. Need to verify data quality and program expenditures;
- c. Consistent low performance on NRS indicators in several categories;
- d. Prospective noncompliance with grant requirements identified through review of programmatic and fiscal reports, or ongoing communications with the program;
- e. Unresolved audit findings;
- f. Ongoing lack of progress in resolving required actions from a prior monitoring visit;
- g. Significant staff turnover in the program; and
- h. Recent or newly establish programs.

## Record Retention

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-Federal entity records pertinent to a Federal award must be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report or, for Federal awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, from the date of the submission of the quarterly or annual financial report, respectively, as reported to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity in the case of a sub-recipient. Federal awarding agencies and pass-through entities must not impose any other record retention requirements upon non-Federal entities. The only exceptions are the following:

- a. If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action taken.
- b. When the non-Federal entity is notified in writing by the Federal awarding agency, cognizant agency for audit, oversight agency for audit, cognizant agency for indirect costs, or pass-through entity to extend the retention period.
- c. Records for real property and equipment acquired with Federal funds must be retained for 3 years after final disposition.

- d. When records are transferred to or maintained by the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity, the 3-year retention requirement is not applicable to the non-Federal entity.
- e. Records for program income transactions after the period of performance. In some cases recipients must report program income after the period of performance. Where there is such a requirement, the retention period for the records pertaining to the earning of the program income starts from the end of the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in which the program income is earned.
- f. Indirect cost rate proposals and cost allocations plans. This paragraph applies to the following types of documents and their supporting records: Indirect cost rate computations or proposals, cost allocation plans, and any similar accounting computations of the rate at which a particular group of costs is chargeable (such as computer usage chargeback rates or composite fringe benefit rates).
  - 1) ***If submitted for negotiation.*** If the proposal, plan, or other computation is required to be submitted to the Federal Government (or to the pass-through entity) to form the basis for negotiation of the rate, then the 3-year retention period for its supporting records starts from the date of such submission.
  - 2) ***If not submitted for negotiation.*** If the proposal, plan, or other computation is not required to be submitted to the Federal Government (or to the pass-through entity) for negotiation purposes, then the 3-year retention period for the proposal, plan, or computation and its supporting records starts from the end of the fiscal year (or other accounting period) covered by the proposal, plan, or other computation.

## V. Accountability and Performance Measures

WIOA, Title I, Section 116, establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of states and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the core programs. The National Reporting System (NRS) is the accountability system for the federally-funded, State-administered adult education program.

Accountability and reporting for Mississippi's adult education and literacy funding addresses two sets of reporting criteria. One set represents the federal accountability measures, identified in Section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as the Primary Indicators of Performance. The other represents state reporting criteria, which are focused primarily on state priorities such as industry-recognized and high school equivalency credential attainment. Both criteria are described below.

**Under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, there are six primary indicators of performance.**

1. **Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
2. **Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit:** The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit).
3. **Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit:** The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
4. **Credential Attainment:** The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a

recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

5. **Measurable Skill Gains:** The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) is a key indicator in the NRS and provides a measure of a participant's interim progress towards a credential or employment. The joint ICR identifies five types of gain that may be used to determine whether a participant has completed an MSG. Adult education participants may complete an MSG using two of the five types of gain described below. Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gain and attainment of a secondary school diploma. (See NRS Technical Assistance Guide, [www.nrsweb.org](http://www.nrsweb.org))

### 5 Types of Measurable Skill Gains Under WIOA:

1. **EFL Gain (MSG types 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d).** There are four ways to assess EFL gain: through pre- and posttesting, attainment of credits or Carnegie Units (not applicable in MS), entry into postsecondary education or training, and passing a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency examination.

- i. **Pre- and posttesting (MSG type 1a).** Local programs assess participants at intake to determine their educational functioning level (EFL). There are four levels for adult basic education (ABE), two for adult secondary education (ASE), and six levels for English as a second language (ESL). Each level is comprised of a set of skills and competencies that participants at that level can do in the areas of reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening, and functional and workplace areas. Using these descriptors as guidelines, programs determine the appropriate initial level at which to place participants using a standardized assessment approved in the State assessment policy for use in National Reporting System (NRS). The program decides the skill areas in which to assess the participant based on the participant's instructional needs and program requirements.

After a number of instructional hours as required by test publisher assessment administration procedures, the program conducts follow-up assessments of participants to determine whether they have advanced one or more EFL levels or are progressing within the same EFL level. Gain in any subject area on the posttest compared to pretest is permitted. The State has discretion to establish the standardized assessment method used within the State and procedures for progress assessment and must develop a written statewide assessment policy describing assessments and procedures. All assessments and procedures must conform to standard psychometric criteria for validity and reliability.

- ii. **Completion of Carnegie Units (MSG type 1b).** *(Not applicable in Mississippi)*
- iii. **Entry into a postsecondary education or training during the program year (MSG type 1c).** EFL gain is also counted for participants who enter into a postsecondary education or training program. Entry must occur by the end of the program year.
- iv. **Passing a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency examination (MSG type 1d).** States may report an educational functioning level gain for participants who pass a subtest on a State-recognized high school equivalency examination.

2. **Attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (MSG type 2).** Participants may complete an MSG by attaining a secondary school diploma while



enrolled or after exit. The participant must obtain the diploma by the end of the program year.

3. **Secondary or postsecondary transcript (MSG type 3).** For students who complete a minimum of 12 hours per semester, or for part time students a total of at least 12 credit hours over the course of two completed consecutive semesters during the program year, report an MSG for a postsecondary education transcript or report card that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards.
4. **Progress Toward Milestones (MSG type 4).** Report an MSG for participants who had a satisfactory or better progress report towards established milestones from an employer or training provider who is providing training (e.g., completion of on-the-job training (OJT), completion of one year of a registered apprenticeship program, etc.).
5. **Passing technical/occupational knowledge-based exam (MSG type 5).** Report an MSG for participants who successfully passed an exam that is required for a particular occupation, or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

Note: For adult education (WIOA Title II) participants, secondary or postsecondary transcripts (MSG type 3), progress toward milestones (MSG type 4), and passing technical/occupational knowledge-based exams (MSG type 5) can be used to document MSG **only for participants in IET or workplace literacy programs.**

6. **Effectiveness in Serving Employers:** WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) requires the Departments to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The State adult education program has an important role in collecting and reporting data under this indicator. That is, the State adult education program should provide Title II performance data to the State agency responsible for reporting the State's performance for the indicator. If the State adult education program cannot determine retention with the same employer through a data match, the State adult education program should provide data for those Title II participants who were employed in the second and fourth quarters to the State Agency responsible for reporting on the indicator, for the purpose of determining whether the participants were employed with the same employer in both quarters.

All applicants will be required to use the OAE system which is a secure, web-based data management system that collects student demographic, participation, and outcome measures, including performance results as identified in the National Reporting System (NRS). This system is provided by the OAE. Local providers not meeting state targets for performance measures will be required to implement actions and strategies designed to improve performance. If adequate progress toward improved performance is not made, the provider will be required to implement a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and is at risk for having funding withheld, reduced or eliminated. For PY 2025-2026, the following performance indicators are set by the OAE. Local programs will be notified when future performance indicator targets are set.

Performance Indicators:	PY 2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	58.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	59.5%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4,200
Credential Attainment Rate	41.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	56.5%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable

## W. Assessing Quality

Mississippi adult education providers are evaluated programmatically and fiscally for compliance to federal and state requirements. Desk monitoring of all funded providers is conducted by the OAE staff throughout the program year and includes an analysis of local performance data, professional learning plan, technology integration status, and annual programmatic and fiscal reporting. Technical assistance is provided as necessary. In addition, each provider's status regarding collaboration with WIOA core partners and alignment with LWDB Plan is reviewed. A risk assessment tool is used to select providers annually for a comprehensive compliance review, using an intensive process that includes onsite monitoring, observation of program operations, interviewing of staff and physical auditing of records. See [2 CFR 200.332\(c\)](#). The **Pre-Award Risk Assessment Tool** is located under Grant Opportunities at: <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

Grant recipients are expected to meet contract requirements and assurances, and provide the services as described in the approved application. Grant recipients not meeting contract requirements and assurances and/or not providing the services as described in the approved application will be placed on corrective action plans and risk loss of funding.

## X. Data Privacy Requirements

All grant recipients must comply with the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g; federal regulations 34 CFR Part 99), a federal privacy law administered by the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA protects the privacy of enrolled participants' education records and afford parents and eligible individuals certain rights to inspect and review education records, to seek to amend these records, and to consent to the disclosure of personal identifiable information (PII) from education records. The general rule under FERPA is that PII from education records cannot be disclosed without written consent.

Individuals applying for or receiving services must be informed in writing their personal and confidential information will:

- a. be shared only among the WIOA core program partner staff and subcontractors;
- b. be used only for the purpose of conducting an employment data match and further disclosure of personal confidential information or records is prohibited; and
- c. not be shared among WIOA core partners if the individual declines to share personal confidential information or records. Declining to share will not impact eligibility for services.

## Y. Federal Considerations

The thirteen considerations below and described in WIOA, Title II, Sec. 231 (e) are federal factors required to be considered to evaluate applications and determine funding decisions.

1. The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to:
  - a. Regional needs as identified in the local workforce development plan; and
  - b. Serving individuals in the community who were identified in such plan as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals:
    - i. Who have low levels of literacy skills; or
    - ii. Who are English language learners;
2. The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities;
3. The past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals who have low levels of literacy, and the degree to which those



improvements contribute to meeting the state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in section 116;

4. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under section 108 of the Act, as well as the activities and services of the American Job Centers (WIN) One-Stop partners;
5. Whether the eligible provider's program:
  - a. Is of sufficient intensity and quality, and based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and
  - b. Uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction;
6. Whether the eligible provider's activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice;
7. Whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services and delivery systems, including distance education, in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;
8. Whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;
9. Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high-quality professional development, including through electronic means;
10. Whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, LWDBs, WIN Job Centers, job training programs, social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, in the development of career pathways;
11. Whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with federal, state, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;
12. Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance; and
13. Whether the local area in which the eligible provider is located has a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs.

## **Z. Grant Assurances**

The eligible provider accepts overall responsibility for ensuring grant funds are expended in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)/Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), and other statutes applicable to the execution of a federally funded workforce/education program. The applicant must sign and submit the Grant Assurance form found at: <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

The Grantee accepts overall responsibility for ensuring grant funds are expended in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)/Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), and other statutes applicable to the execution of a federally funded workforce/education program. The grantee gives assurances to the OAE that:

1. The Grantee agrees to manage funds prudently and maintain fiduciary control of federal and state monies in compliance with:
  - a. Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR); and
  - b. Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit requirements for Federal Awards - 2CFR 200.
2. The Grantee will agree to supplement and not supplant other State or local public funds expended for adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II.
3. The Grantee agrees that funding provided by the Agency, pursuant to this contract, is provided on a reimbursement basis. Amounts requested for reimbursement must be based upon the actual expenses within the approved budgets. The grantee assures that funds will be used only for financial obligations incurred during the grant period.
4. The Grantee will only charge the grant for the proportionate share of the costs of fringe benefits for personnel whose duties are divided between this grant and other activities.
5. The Grantee assures that funds will only be expended on eligible activities outlined in the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act as defined in the MS Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined plan and in the Adult Education Program Guidelines.
6. Costs associated with the HSE tests, test administration, proctoring, travel, or any other activity relating to the actual HSE test process, are not allowable and cannot be reimbursed by the federal or state grant. The only allowable costs are those associated with test preparation (e.g. instruction, materials for instruction, practice tests).
7. The Grantee understands that food and beverage is not an allowable expense with federal and state dollars.
8. The Grantee will follow the State of Mississippi, Department of Finance regulations for all travel.
9. Grantee will follow 2CFR §200.318 (Procurement Standards) through §200.327 (Contract Provisions).

10. The Grantee will comply with all provisions of the OAE Program Guidelines for Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs.
11. The Grantee will appoint a full-time (30+ hours / 75% time) Program Director of adult education services for the specified Service Delivery Area. Waiver for requirement of full-time Program Directors may be applied for under conditions outlined in EDGAR section 75.511. A decision on whether to grant the waiver will be determined by the Agency.
12. The Grantee assures ALL Adult Education instructors, and the Program Administrator/Director will have a minimum of a four-year degree from an accredited college or university (State Requirement).
13. The Grantee will submit a budget modification request prior to any material change affecting the purpose, administration, organization, budget, or operation of an approved project.
14. The Grantee agrees to maintain Time and Effort Reports or Semi-Annual Certification forms for all federal and state-funded employees. These reports must be signed by the employee and the supervisor.
15. The Grantee will give the grantor agency or access to all records or documents related to the grant, including the submission of reports as may be required.
16. The Grantee will comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) Act of 1974.
17. The Grantee will provide state and/or local matching expenditures at a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) of AEFLA federal funding per year. (State Requirement)
18. The Grantee agrees to adhere to the Records Retention Schedule, which stipulates that records must be maintained for a period of **current program year plus 3 years** after the final reporting period for the grant. See 2 CFR 200.334.
19. The grant award is for a five-year period (July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2030) and must be renewed through a formal application process each fiscal year the Grantee agrees to operate classes. The Grantee understands that **classes may not be closed for more than two-consecutive weeks without written approval from the OAE**. Request & written approval must be received at least 45 days prior to the date of closing. This includes continuation into the new fiscal year (State Requirement).
20. The Grantee will schedule all students a minimum of eight hours of instruction per week (State Requirement).
21. The Grantee will provide the Smart Start Pathway Course and assure all participants meet the requirements of the course.
22. The Grantee assures that the program will:
  - a. utilize qualified administrative personnel and instructional staff;

- b. provide guidance and counseling services;
  - c. provide year-round instruction as feasible;
  - d. develop effective recruitment and retention strategies; and provide adequate ADA and 504 accessible facilities, equipment, and materials meeting student needs.
23. The Grantee assures that the state-approved standards for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and the Mississippi College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards are used throughout the duration of the grant. (State Requirement)
24. The Grantee will provide local professional development for staff and faculty and assure participation in state-provided professional development meetings as appropriate and deemed mandatory by the agency.
25. The Grantee assures all program staff assigned to administer state-approved assessments obtain initial, ongoing, and/or refresher training as required and defined in the OAE policy and procedures manual for adult education.
26. The Grantee assures state-required program data, including students' social security numbers as feasible, will be entered into the OAE data management system for data matching purposes.
27. The Grantee assures that National Reporting System (NRS) of Adult Education data quality standards will be met, including academic performance, HSE, and transition goals.
28. The Grantee assures requests for reimbursement with supporting expenditure back-up documentation and appropriate agency signatures shall be submitted **monthly** to the MS Community College Board, unless specified otherwise.
29. The Grantee assures that receipts and expenditures of all funds associated with adult education will be documented, accounted for, and available for review as required by the OAE.
30. The Grantee agrees to implement activities to meet or exceed the Mississippi Adult Basic Education primary indicators of performance and other measures.
31. The Grantee will organize an advisory committee of citizens from its defined service area with representation from each county and adhere to the guidelines as specified by the Agency (State Requirement).
32. The Grantee will coordinate with other WIOA partners to ensure non-duplication of service(s) and align activities to the Local Workforce Development Plan for WIOA providers, collaborate to provide supportive services, and partner to promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs.
33. The Grantee will work collaboratively with other adult education local grantees within a given Local Workforce Development Region to negotiate One-Stop infrastructure cost, and other shared costs.
34. In accordance with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), the Grantee will implement specific measures to remove barriers to success and participation in the program's services.

Specific consideration will be given to persons who may experience a barrier based upon factors such as gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

35. Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education (IELCE) grantees are required to record the students' secondary goals of "Achieve Citizenship Skills and/or Achieve U.S. Citizenship" into OAE data management system and track the completion of these goals (IELCE applicants only).
36. The Grantee also agrees to: (State Requirement)
  - a. take responsibility for performance that does not meet the standards designated by the OAE;
  - b. write program improvement plans when designated by the OAE; and
  - c. participate in an onsite comprehensive evaluation/monitoring visit once every five (5) years, unless risk assessment evaluation results recommend earlier intervention.
37. The undersigned officer understands failure to comply with the above policies and/or requirements may result in a reduction and/or termination of subsequent AEFLA funding.
38. The Grantee certifies that, to the best of his/her knowledge and belief, the debarments statements are true and accurate, and that he/she fully endorses and supports the submission of this application.
39. The Grantee will provide career pathway options to participants. (State Requirement)
40. If Grantee, in Agency's sole determination, fails or refuses for any reason to perform any of its obligations under this contract or violates the grant policies, procedures or assurances (e.g. fulltime teachers not teaching the hours required by the grant), Agency may impose sanctions as it may deem appropriate. Sanctions may include, but not limited to, placing the grantee on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), cancellation or termination of the contract, repayment of funds to the Agency, reduction in current year funds, reduction in future funds, withholding of payments to Contractor until Contractor complies, or suspension of this contract in whole or in part, and the seeking of other remedies as may be provided by this contract law. Any cancellation, termination, or suspension of this contract, if imposed, shall become effective at the close of business on the day of Contractor's receipt of written notice thereof from Agency.

## SECTION III: APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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### A. Required Application Components

This section contains instructions for applicants to use in preparing proposals. The proposal must follow the instructions provided to complete the application.

The OAE, and its evaluation team for this RFP, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFP specifications should result in either disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal. Rephrasing of the content provided in this RFP will, at best, be considered minimally responsive.

The OAE seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the applicant's experience and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout this document. The OAE is also seeking an applicant that can demonstrate collaboration and innovation by rethinking adult education and literacy services in Mississippi. Responses will score well that can demonstrate how:

- a. adult learners have the opportunity to learn anytime, anywhere, at their own pace;
- b. adult learners have the opportunity to earn credentials faster;
- c. integrated education and training programs are the rule, not the exception;
- d. more apprenticeships, internships and on-the-job training opportunities are available to adults learners; and
- e. adult learners can earn a high school equivalency diploma while going to college.

### B. Adult Education Program Guidelines

The Adult Education Program Guidelines provide governance and guidance in the delivery of adult education services by clearly defining staff roles, program expectations, and operating guidelines. The policies represent high-level program statements that embrace the goals of adult education and define what is acceptable to ensure program success and effective and consistent program operations. The Program Guidelines can be found at: <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>.

### C. Proposal Format (State Requirement)

The applicant is asked to be brief and concise in responding to the RFP questions and instructions. All attached documents should be formatted for printing, as formatting will not be adjusted prior to printing and reviewing these documents. Each attachment must reference the section or subsection number to which it corresponds.

Responses should be **lettered/numbered** and answered in a clear and concise manner. Applications must be submitted in the format and content specified in these instructions.

- a. Times New Roman or Calibri font, 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins and numbered pages.
- b. The signature page must include original signatures of the Authorized Representative, Program Administrator and Fiscal Manager in **BLUE INK**.
- c. No handwritten applications will be accepted.
- d. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.
- e. Adhere to word limits indicated after each criterion.
- f. PDF format.

## D. Submission Requirements

Applicants must submit three (3) complete copies of the RFP package:

- a. One (1) electronic copy emailed in PDF format to [adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu](mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu);
- b. Two (2) paper copies bearing original signatures in BLUE INK; and
- c. Mail paper copies to:

Mississippi Community College Board  
Office of Adult Education  
Attn: **Nikitna Barnes**  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS 39211

The applicant understands the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying proposal.

Grant application materials, budget and resources have been made available on the MCCB website at <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>. It is highly recommended applicants review the following information prior to preparing the application:

- a. Entire grant application packet;
- b. 2024-2025 Adult Education Program Guidelines;
- c. [Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act](#);
- d. [MS WIOA State Plan](#);
- e. Local Workforce Development Board Plans.
  - o Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Local WIOA Plan: <http://cmpdd.org/>
  - o South Delta Planning and Development District, Local WIOA Plan: <https://sdpdd.com/>
  - o Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, Local WIOA Plan: <http://smpdd.com/>
  - o Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Local WIOA Plan: <http://trpdd.com/>

After reviewing the application information, eligible providers/applicants may submit questions to the MCCB, OAE. Questions must be submitted using the MS RFP Questions Form found at <https://www.mccb.edu/offices/adult-education/grant-opportunities>. Forms must be emailed to [adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu](mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu) by **March 10, 2025, no later than 4:00 p.m., local time**. No phone calls will be accepted. Questions and answers will be posted on the website.

## E. Virtual Bidders' Conference

**Bidders' Conference is scheduled for February 14, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Interested applicants are encouraged to participate. Please use the link below to register for this meeting.

**Link:** <https://itsmsgov.zoom.us/j/85994022158?pwd=eKGrgv04aQAIPOFWVhbWu9RBOt3bMs.1>

**Password:** 835660



**F. Application Timeline**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>
FY 2026-2030 Request for Proposal (RFP) Released	January 1, 2025
Grant Application Virtual Bidders' Conference	February 14, 2025
Submit MS RFP Questions Form to OAE	March 10, 2025
Answers to MS RFP Questions Form Provided	March 14, 2025
Deadline to Submit Completed Grant Application Package	March 31, 2025
Application Pre-Screen, Evaluation and Negotiation Processes (including review by Local Workforce Development Boards)	April 1 – April 25, 2025 (LWDB Review: April 10 – April 25, 2025)
Applicants Notified of Award Decisions	May 30, 2025
Finalized Program List Released	June 2025
Official Letters Sent to Successful Applicants	June 2025
Appeal Due (If Applicable)	15 days post Receipt of Notification of Award or Rejection
Year One of Grant Contract Begins	July 1, 2025

## **SECTION IV: APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION PROCESS**

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### **A. Application Pre-Screening Process**

All Grant Applications submitted by March 31, 2025 will be pre-screened prior to review to verify that the following criteria have been met:

- a. the application is submitted by the required due date,
- b. demonstrated effectiveness in providing services to improve the literacy of eligible individuals, especially those individuals with low literacy skills, is provided.

### **B. Evaluation Process**

A review panel comprised of individuals with expertise in adult education and literacy will evaluate proposals, using a rubric-based evaluation tool. The panel will provide recommendations to the OAE regarding consideration for funding. In addition, applications will be reviewed by applicable Local Workforce Development Board(s) regarding the proposal's alignment with the local workforce development plan and the Boards will provide recommendations to the OAE to promote such alignment.

### **C. Scoring Process**

The request for proposal includes three funding sections: Section 231 (700 points), Section 225 (800 points), and Section 243 (800 points). Refer to the scoring rubric for evaluation criteria.

### **D. Budget Review Process**

Proposed budgets for applications with evaluation scores deemed fundable will be reviewed by the OAE and are subject to a negotiation process between OAE and the applicant. Budgets are then adjusted and finalized for successful applicants following the negotiation process.

### **E. Appeal Process**

**Appeal of Contract Award:** Any person(s) aggrieved by the award decision that results from this RFP may appeal the decision to the State Director for Adult Education & High School Equivalency at the Mississippi Community College Board. The appeal must be submitted in writing within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of award or rejection. Submit appeal to:

Mississippi Community College Board,  
Office of Adult Education  
Attn. **Beth Little**  
3825 Ridgewood Road  
Jackson, MS 39211

In addition, a copy of the Official Letter of Appeal must be sent via email to [adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu](mailto:adulthoodeducation@mccb.edu) with the subject line: Official Letter of Appeal.

## APPENDIX

### **RFP DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS**

The following terms and acronyms shall have the meaning indicated below as referenced in this RFP:

- 1. RFP:** Request for Proposal/s (*State Definition*)
- 2. State:** State of Mississippi (*State Definition*)
- 3. Administrative Costs:** An eligible provider receiving a grant or contract may consider costs incurred in connection with the following activities to be administrative costs: a) planning; b) administration, including carrying out performance accountability; c) professional development; d) providing adult education and literacy services in alignment with local workforce plans, including promoting co-enrollment in programs and activities, as appropriate, and e) carrying out the one-stop partner responsibilities described in Uniform Guidance 678.420, including contributing to the infrastructure costs of the one-stop delivery system, per federal regulations 34 CFR 463.26.
- 4. Adult Basic Education (ABE):** (refers to instruction at the 0-8.9 grade levels) A program of academic instruction and education services below the secondary level that increases an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics necessary to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, transition to postsecondary education or training, and obtain employment.  
  
The curricula of beginning and intermediate ABE courses shall assist adult learners in the development of the skills necessary to process both written and oral information, and to derive meaning from the information applied to specific tasks. (National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) 1, 2, 3 or 4). (*State Definition*)
- 5. Adult Education (AE):** The term “adult education” means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to—
  - a. read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
  - b. transition to postsecondary education and training; and
  - c. obtain employment (WIOA, Section 203 (1)).
- 6. AEFLA:** Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.
- 7. Adult Education and Literacy Activities:** Programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training (Section 203 (2) of WIOA).
- 8. Adult Secondary Education (ASE):** (refers to instruction at the 9.0 – 12.9 grade levels) A program of academic instruction and education services at the secondary level that increases an individual's ability to read, write, and perform mathematics necessary to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, transition to postsecondary education or training, and obtain employment (NRS EFL 5 or 6). (*State Definition*)
- 9. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** A civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. For a full definition of ADA, visit the [ADA website](#). (*State Definition*)

**10. Assessment Policy:** Assessment policy identifies (1) the tests to be used to measure educational gain for both ABE/adult secondary education (ASE) and ESL participants, (2) when pre- and posttests are to be administered, and (3) how test scores are to be tied to the National Reporting System (NRS) EFLs for initial placement and reporting participant advancement across levels. The assessments allowed by the State must be approved through OCTAE's assessment approval process.

**11. Barriers to Employment:** Include displaced homemaker; ELL, low-literacy or cultural barriers; exhausting TANF within two years; ex-offender; homeless or runaway youth; long-term unemployed; low income; migrant or seasonal farmworker; individual with disabilities; single parent; youth aged out of foster care system.

**12. Basic Skills Deficient:** Refers to an individual who:

- a. is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level on a generally accepted standardized test: or
- b. who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

**13. Career Pathway:** The term "career pathway" means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- a. align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- b. prepare individuals to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the "National Apprenticeship Act"; 50 Stat. 664, chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 50 et seq.);
- c. include counseling to support individuals in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- d. includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- e. organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of individuals in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- f. enable individuals to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- g. help individuals enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

**14. Civics Education:**

Means: education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training. (as defined by <https://lincs.ed.gov>)

**15. Classroom Instruction:** Consists of:

- a. focused delivery methods that reflect a variety of research-based instructional approaches

and meet the assessed needs of learners;

- b. curriculum aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards;
- c. scheduled, leveled classes; and
- d. classes taught by an instructor who meets the qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development. (*State Definition*)

**16. College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS):** A set of academic standards that reflect the content most relevant to preparing adult learners for success in colleges, technical training programs, work, and citizenship—in the areas of English language arts and mathematics. (*State Definition*)

**17. Competency-Based High School Equivalency Diploma:** An alternate HSE Diploma embedded with both academic standards and industry recognized credentials for students enrolled in the Mississippi **Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (MIBEST)** Pathway. Instruction is designed to recognize the academic learning that occurs within the training programs. Essentially, the academic learning occurs through authentic, real-world problems and projects completed within the industry credential training. Mastery of content and competencies, as well as use of existing assessments for pre- and post-testing, such as TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) and ACT WorkKeys®, is the form of assessment used in lieu of the GED or HiSET norm testing.

**18. Concurrent Enrollment:** Concurrent enrollment or co-enrollment refers to enrollment by an eligible individual in two or more of the six core programs administered under the ACT.

**19. Correctional Institution:** The term “correctional institution” means any prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders (Section 225(e)(1) of WIOA).

**20. Digital Literacy:** The ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies (including but not limited to smartphones, tablets, laptops, and traditional desktop PCs) and the internet.

**21. Direct Costs:** Costs which can be identified specifically with a particular program or function. These costs may be charged directly to a grant.

**22. Distance Learning:** Students who receive formal learning activities where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. (*State Definition*)

**23. Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR):** The federal regulations that govern all federal grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education.  
[www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html)

**24. Educational Functioning Level (EFL):** Levels at which participants are initially placed and continue to move through scope of services based on their ability to perform literacy-related tasks in specific content areas as determined by a State-approved standardized assessment. (*State Definition*)

**25. Educational Gain:** After progress testing, a participant completes or advances one or more educational functioning levels (EFL) from the initial starting level as measured by a State-approved standardized assessment. (*State Definition*)

**26. Eligible Individual:** (WIOA Section 203 (4)) means an individual:

- who has attained 16 years of age;
- who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law

- who:
  - a. is basic skills deficient;
  - b. does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education, or;
  - c. is an English language learners (ELL)

**27. English Language Acquisition (ELA) Program:** A program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners (ELLs) achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; and transition to postsecondary education, training or employment.

**28. English Language Learner (ELL):** The term “English language learner”, when used with respect to an eligible individual, means an individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, speaking, or comprehending the English language and:

- a. whose native language is a language other than English; or
- b. who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language (Section 203 (7) of WIOA).

**29. Essential Components of Reading Instruction:** Explicit and systematic instruction in:

- a. phonemic awareness;
- b. phonics;
- c. vocabulary development;
- d. fluency, including oral reading skills; and
- e. reading comprehension strategies (20 U.S.C. 6368.3).

**30. Fiscal Year (FY):** Mississippi’s Adult Education’s fiscal year begins July 1 and ends June 30. (*State Definition*)

**31. Flexible Scheduled Classes:** Classes that are scheduled in such a way that meets the needs of the greatest number of participants in terms of start and end times, hours per week and entire course length. (*State Definition*)

**32. General Education Provisions Act (GEPA):** Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved



application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

- 33. GED®:** The General Educational Development Tests are High School Equivalency Tests from GED Testing Service. Mississippi has adopted this exam as an approved high school equivalency exam.
- 34. High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma:** Recognized alternative to a **high school** diploma. There are two common exams used to determine **high school equivalency in Mississippi:** The [General Educational Development](#) (GED®) test, and the [High School Equivalency Test](#) (HiSET®). Mississippi also offers a Competency-Based Diploma as an alternative to a **high school** diploma and Total Transcript (see definition below).
- 35. HiSET®:** The High School Equivalency Test from Educational Testing Service (ETS). Mississippi has adopted this exam as an approved high school equivalent exam.
- 36. Incumbent Worker Training:** Training designed to meet the special requirements of an employer to retain a skilled workforce.
- 37. Indirect Costs.** Those costs incurred for a common or joint purpose benefitting more than one cost objective, and not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. It may be necessary to establish multiple pools of indirect costs to facilitate equitable distribution of indirect expenses to the cost objectives served. Indirect cost pools must be distributed to benefitted cost objectives on basis that will produce an equitable result in consideration of relative benefits derived. For Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), the term facilities and administrative (F&A) cost is often used to refer to indirect costs. (2 CFR 200)
- 38. Individual (Reportable):** A reportable individual is an individual who has taken action that demonstrates an intent to use program services and who meets specific reporting criteria of the program, including:
- a. Individuals who provide identifying information (including those what are determined ineligible to become a participant for a particular program);
  - b. Individuals who only use the self-service system;
  - c. Individuals who only receive information-only services or activities; or
  - d. For purposes of the title IV VR program only, a student with a disability who solely receives pre-employment transition services and who does not apply for VR services, who is not determined eligible, and who does not have an approved IPE. (Program Memorandum 17-2)
- 39. Infrastructure:** the nonpersonnel costs that are necessary for general operation of the one-stop center, including the rental costs of the facilities, the costs of utilities and maintenance, equipment (including assessment-related products and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities), and technology to facilitate access to the one-stop center, including the center's planning and outreach activities.
- 40. In-Kind:** Non-cash valued contributions, services, property, or assistance received by the adult education program operations. (*State Definition*)
- 41. Instructional Materials:** Content that conveys the essential knowledge and skills of a subject in the curriculum through a medium or a combination of media to a student.
- 42. Integrated Education and Training (IET):** A service approach that provides adult education and



literacy activities **concurrently and contextually** with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Instruction must occur concurrently, uses occupationally-relevant (contextual) instructional materials, and are organized to function cooperatively with a single set of learning outcomes for the purpose of educational and career advancement. An IET must include the following three components:

- a. Adult education and literacy activities;
- b. Workforce preparation activities; and
- c. Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

**43. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE):**

- a. **One of the adult education and literacy activities (WIOA Section 203 (12)) defined as:**  
Educational services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enable such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training (Section 203 (12) of WIOA).
- b. **A program (WIOA Section 243) designed to:**
  - i. Prepare adults who are English language learners for and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and
  - ii. Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

**44. Intensity and Duration:** Educational services that provide sufficient hours of instruction (intensity) and sufficient weeks of instruction per year (duration) to make sustainable changes in the educational functioning level of adults. (*State Definition*)

**45. Literacy, Adult and Community Education System (LACES):** The state approved database used to track enrollment, participation, measureable skill gains, outcomes and NRS tables for performance and accountability. (*State Definition*)

**46. Literacy:** An individual's ability to read, write and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual and in society (Section 203 (13) of WIOA).

**47. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB):** A local workforce development board established under Section 107 of WIOA.

**48. Library:** A public, state, and community-funded institution that offers education and community services in addition to providing access to print, audio-visual and technology resources. (*State Definition*)

**49. Managed Enrollment:** A system that allows learners to enter an instructional program only during specific enrollment periods, attend a specific class for the duration of the class term, continue in the same class for subsequent terms only by re-enrolling, and miss no more than a prescribed number of class sessions within a term. (*State Definition*)

**50. Measurable Skill Gain (MSG):** The percentage of program participants who, during a program year,

are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, toward such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

- a. Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;
- b. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- c. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;\*\*\*
- d. Satisfactory or better progress report, toward established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or
- e. Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by traderelated benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

\*\*\* Within each State there is an administrative unit that provides authorization to postsecondary institutions within the State. States differ in the requirements to which they hold postsecondary institutions responsible for satisfactory progress. Progress for WIOA purposes must comply with any applicable State standards. Likewise, every State has a State Educational Agency that establishes education standards for secondary education within the State, which would apply for purposes of determining if a participant is meeting the State's academic standards.

51. **Mississippi Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (MIBEST)**: Mississippi's IET Program.
52. **Monitoring**: The purpose of monitoring is to ensure grantees are using federal awards for authorized purposes in compliance with the laws and regulations, to promote program improvement, and meet the required provisions in the grant contract.
53. **National Reporting System (NRS)**: An outcome-based reporting system for the state-administered, federally-funded literacy program. (*State Definition*)
54. **Non-Federal Match**: The commitment of state or other non-federal funds required to receive federal contributions. (*State Definition*)
55. **Office of Adult Education (OAE)**: The department of the Mississippi Community College Board responsible for Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy and High School Equivalency.
56. **One-Stop Partners**: The term "one-stop partner" means— (A) an entity described in section 121(b)(1); and (B) an entity described in section 121(b)(2) that is participating, with the approval of the local board and chief elected official, in the operation of a one-stop delivery system.

REQUIRED PARTNERS.—

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ONE-STOP PARTNERS.—Each entity that carries out a program or activities described in subparagraph (B)(See WIOA Sec. 121 (B)(1)(B)) in a local area shall—

- a. provide access through the one-stop delivery system to such program or activities carried out by the entity, including making the career services described in section 134(c)(2) that are

applicable to the program or activities available at the one-stop centers (in addition to any other appropriate locations);

- b. use a portion of the funds available for the program and activities to maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers in accordance with subsection (h);
- c. enter into a local memorandum of understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop system, that meets the requirements of subsection (c);
- d. participate in the operation of the one-stop system consistent with the terms of the memorandum of understanding, the requirements of this title, and the requirements of the Federal laws authorizing the program or activities; and
- e. provide representation on the State board to the extent provided under section 101. An Office of Adult Education representative will provide Title II representation on the State board.

**57. Open Enrollment:** A system that allows learners to enter and exit a class at nearly any point throughout its term. Learners are free to come to class when they can, miss when they must, drop out for a while, and return without any wait time. Teachers may or may not receive notice of or information on new learners before they arrive in class. *(State Definition)*

**58. Period of Participation:** Refers to the period of time beginning when an individual becomes a participant and ending on the participant's date of exit from the program. States must count each participant's exit during the same program year as a separate period of participation for purposes of calculating levels of performance. For all indicators, except the measurable skill gains indicator, a new period of participation is counted each time a participant re-enters and exits the program—even if both exits occur during the same program year. For the Measurable Skill Gains indicator, both periods of participation are counted even if they do not exit during the program year for the second period of participation, as both enrollments occur within the same program year and Measurable Skill Gains is not an exit-based indicator. The skill gain may be counted as soon as it is earned at any point during the program year in which it was earned.

**59. Real-life Contexts:** Learning activities that ensure participants develop the skills needed to compete in the workplace, exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and/or attain academic skills and transitional skills to be successful in postsecondary education or skill training. *(State Definition)*

**60. Recidivism:** A person's relapse of criminal behavior that results in re-arrest, reconviction, or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the prisoner's release. *(State Definition)*

**61. Research-based Instruction:** Research-based instructional programs, according to the U.S. Department of Education, are those that withstand the test of standard scientific testing practices. Scientific research gathers information about significant questions; uses objective methods that involve reliable and valid observations and measurements; and meets rigorous standards of peer review. The conclusions of scientific research can be replicated and generalized. Part of the test for research-based instructional programs is whether they have a record of success in a variety of schools. *(State Definition)*

**62. Single Set of Learning Objectives:** Objectives that identify specific adult education content, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training competencies, and the program activities are organized to function cooperatively.

**63. Smart Start Career Pathway:** A career pathway model that facilitates the integration of programs and improvement of efficiency in service delivery across partners. *(State Definition)*

- 64. Smart Start Course:** This course prepares participants for middle-skill level employment. Participants will develop job skills needed for their careers, learn and practice good work habits and effective communication skills necessary for successful employment. *(State Definition)*
- 65. Student Success Plan (SSP):** A comprehensive individualized plan for adult education participants jointly developed by the learner and adult education staff. The SSP is an ongoing document that collects demographic data; signatures for release of information and technology acceptable use; and socioeconomic background information which includes barriers to employment. This information is used to make referrals to core partners in an effort to eliminate barriers to employment. The SSP sets and tracks academic, training, post-secondary education, and employment goals, which are used to report performance and outcome measures. Each SSP contains the steps necessary to lead learners to success and is visited regularly throughout the learner's adult education journey. *(State Definition)*
- 66. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE):** The State-approved assessment designed to test reading, language, and math skills. *(State Definition)*
- 67. TABE CLAS-E:** The State-approved assessment designed to test reading, listening, writing and speaking skills for English Language Learners. *(State Definition)*
- 68. Total Transcript:** The Total Transcript option is an alternate HSED by Diploma Sender. Total Transcript combines passing scores from the GED ® test and the HiSET ® test beginning 01/01/2014 to present to result in a credential status or HSED. *(State Definition)*
- 69. Workforce Preparation Activities:** Activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment (Section 203 (17) of WIOA).
- 70. Workforce Training:** Training or services may include:
- a. occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
  - b. on-the-job training;
  - c. incumbent worker training;
  - d. programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
  - e. training programs operated by the private sector;
  - f. skill upgrading and retraining;
  - g. entrepreneurial training;
  - h. transitional jobs;
  - i. job readiness training provided in combination with services described in any of the items a-h above; and
  - j. customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

**UPDATES/CHANGES MADE**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Section</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Changes Made</u></b>	<b><u>Reason</u></b>
February 14, 2025	N	15	Removed the following sentence: “Listed below are the suggested award amounts for each county served in Mississippi.”	We have not received our estimated award amount from the Office of Career Technical & Adult Education.
February 14, 2025	O	15	Changed “through the MCCB web-based financial budgeting system” to “through the MCCB.”	There is no longer a web-based financial budgeting system, all reimbursements are submitted via email.