

Office of Adult Education Memorandum 20.9.2

DATE: September 2, 2020

TO: Adult Education Program Administrators

FROM: Dr. Cayanna Good, Assistant Commissioner of Adult Education

RE: Fiscal Year 2021 Enrollment & Target Negotiations

OVERVIEW

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) acknowledges that serving students during the COVID-19 pandemic presents unprecedented challenges. To address these challenges, OAE provided maximum flexibility for its adult education providers at the pandemic's onset – waiving both enrollment and Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) targets for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20).¹ At this point in the year, OAE is aware that the pandemic may last well into or for the entirety of FY21. While the pandemic will continue to present challenges in serving students this year, OAE has become increasingly concerned about low adult education enrollment throughout the state. As of August 31, 2020, Georgia's adult education providers had a collective enrollment of 8,229 students with .25 or more contact hours, reflecting a 57.4% decrease over last fiscal year's enrollment as of the same date.

As a pass-through entity of federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds, OAE must ensure that all grant funds are used for reasonable and necessary purposes, and that the amount of money each adult education program receives is reasonable for the number of students it serves.² In addition, OAE must ensure the State meets its MSG and other performance outcomes negotiated with the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE).³ **Therefore, OAE cannot waive enrollment and MSG targets for FY21.**

In past years, enrollment targets were set based off a \$675 per student cost, and all providers were held to Georgia's statewide MSG targets. **This year, however, adult education providers will negotiate their enrollment and MSG targets with OAE.** This negotiation process will allow providers to negotiate reasonable, but ambitious, targets in the context of a pandemic, while still ensuring OAE fulfills its roles and responsibilities as a pass-through entity. Most importantly, these targets will hold the state of Georgia responsible for ensuring that it provides high-quality, flexible, and safe adult education services to every individual that needs them.

¹ Letter to Program Administrators from Dr. Cayanna Good, *Local Program Accountability Requirements Impacted by COVID-19*, March 21, 2020.

² [2 CFR § 200.331](#), [2 CFR § 200.404](#)

³ OAE negotiates its adult education performance targets with the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). These targets are available on the *FY21 State Targets Tab* of the Negotiations Workbook, as well as Appendix A of this memo. For MSGs, OAE only negotiates the overall targets. The EFL level targets are state-imposed. Per WIOA Section 116(f)(1), the State is subject to sanctions if it does not meet its targets. These sanctions include technical assistance and/or a reduction of five percentage points to the Governor's Reserve Fund outlined in WIOA Section 128(a). As of the date of this memo, these performance targets had not been waived due to the pandemic.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR NEGOTIATING ENROLLMENT & MSG TARGETS

To negotiate enrollment and MSG targets, programs must complete this [Google Form](#) no later than **September 22, 2020**. Please note, the Google Form requires programs to upload or provide the following information:

- **A completed Negotiations Workbook**, which includes your proposed MSG and enrollment targets by ABE and ESL. **Please note, programs only need to fill out the highlighted cells of the *Negotiations Spreadsheet Tab***. Any un-highlighted cell will automatically populate. The other tabs are for reference only.
- **A copy of your current class schedule**, including both in-person and scheduled distance course offerings, along with opportunities for students to participate in asynchronous instruction. Please be sure to include all opportunities for distance education that are discussed in the updated [OAE's most recently updated assessment policy](#) (Clock Time Model, Learner Mastery Model, and Teacher Verification Model).
- If you anticipate your class schedule will change based on your enrollment targets, MSG targets, or other factors, a **copy of your proposed course schedule**.
- A summary of your current enrollment data, including:
 - The number of students waiting to enroll; and
 - The number of students currently enrolled that have provisional EFLs. If this number comes from a source other than the AEL0003 report in GALIS, your program must be able to verify these enrollment numbers with additional documentation.

After receiving and reviewing your information, an OAE staff member will contact you to either negotiate further or approve your targets. OAE will consider the following factors when negotiating performance targets with providers:

- Whether the program's overall MSG targets demonstrate continuous improvement over their FY20 final MSG percentages and does not fall below 30%;
- The extent to which the program's MSG targets help the state meet its targets as negotiated with and approved by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCATE). The statewide targets are provided on the FY21 Statewide Targets tab of the Negotiations Workbook, as well as [Appendix A](#) of this memo;⁴ and
- Whether the program's overall enrollment target is at least 60% of its FY20 total enrollment.

⁴ Please note, for MSGs, only the overall targets are officially negotiated with OCTAE. The EFL level targets are state-imposed.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I Fill out the *Negotiations Spreadsheet Tab* of the *Negotiations Workbook*?

To fill out the *Negotiations Spreadsheet Tab*, please follow the below instructions:

- 1) In Cell B2, select your program's name from the dropdown menu. Your FY20 data should automatically populate under Step 1.
- 2) In Cells C17 and C18, enter your target MSG percentages for ABE, ESL, or both, depending on which services your program offers. *Please note, the combined MSG percentage **will not** populate until you enter your enrollment targets.*
- 3) Enter your monthly enrollment targets for ABE, ESL, or both, depending on which services you offer. Please note the following:
 - The enrollment targets should be entered as separate monthly targets, not cumulative targets. The cumulative enrollment will calculate in Cells H29, J29, and H30. OAE will use the monthly targets as benchmarks to assess your program's progress towards its total enrollment goal.
 - Your enrollment targets should include both students with more than 12 contact hours and a NRS-approved pre-assessment (these students will appear on Table 4), as well as students with at least 12 contact hours who were enrolled with a provisional EFL.
- 4) Once you complete your enrollment targets, your combined MSG target will populate in Cell C19.

** **Please Note:** Your combined MSG % target (Cell C19) will turn green if your target demonstrates growth from your FY20 MSG % and does not fall below 30%. Your enrollment targets (Cells H29, J29, and H30) will turn green if your overall enrollment target is at least 60% of your FY20 enrollment.*

2. What happens if I do not meet my enrollment and MSG targets in FY21?⁵

Throughout the year, OAE will monitor each program's progress towards its FY21 enrollment and MSG targets. Specifically, OAE will monitor enrollment to ensure each program's budget and staffing is reasonable for the number of students served. As a reminder, per [2 CFR § 200.404](#), all costs associated with adult education grant funds must be reasonable and necessary. If a program demonstrates continually low enrollment and is not making reasonable progress towards its

⁵ Per WIOA Section 116, the WIOA core partners negotiate targets for the six indicators of performance outlined in WIOA Section 116(b). These targets are included in the state plan. Per WIOA Section 116(f)(1), the state is subject to sanctions if it does not meet its targets. These sanctions include technical assistance and/or a reduction of five percentage points to the Governor's Reserve Fund outlined in WIOA Section 128(a). As of the date of this memo, these performance targets had not been waived due to the pandemic.

enrollment or MSG targets, OAE may take additional steps including, but not limited to: providing additional technical assistance, placing the program on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP), and/or reducing the program's budget.

- 3. This memo mentioned that OAE will consider “whether the program’s MSG targets demonstrate continuous improvement over their FY20 final MSG percentages” when negotiating targets. How can my program improve its MSG percentage over FY20 when it cannot provide instruction as “normal” and when all students may not be able to take a NRS-approved assessment?**

OAE understands that the pandemic has caused interruptions to “normal” adult education services. However, OAE expects programs to explore multiple service delivery methods (face-to-face, adhering to social distancing requirements as noted in the Governor’s Executive Order; distance education; or a hybrid model) that allow them to deliver high-quality and safe instruction to students. As a reminder, TCSG has purchased a Blackboard license for your Adult Education program at no charge to your program budget, and you should feel comfortable delivering instruction via Blackboard Collaborate. If you do not feel comfortable, please let our office know so that we may provide in-depth professional development on this particular tool.

Although, a student enrolled with a provisional EFL cannot gain a MSG through the pre/post-test option, the student can gain a MSG through the other available options, including: (a) enrolling in postsecondary education, or (b) attaining their secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. Please note, a student can only attain a MSG through the pre/post-test option, if the provisionally-assigned EFL is later adjusted based on an NRS-approved pre-test score.⁶

⁶ [OCTAE Program Memorandum 20-5, May 29, 2020.](#)

APPENDIX A: STATEWIDE PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Georgia Adult Education Statewide Targets				
<i>Below please find Georgia's statewide targets as negotiated with and approved by OCTAE. Please note, for MSGs, Georgia only negotiates the overall MSG rates with OCTAE. The EFL MSG targets are State-imposed.</i>				
Fiscal Year 2021 MSG Targets				
	ABE		ESL	
	ABE 1	56.0%	ESL 1	57.0%
	ABE 2	49.0%	ESL 2	57.0%
	ABE 3	51.0%	ESL 3	58.0%
	ABE 4	54.0%	ESL 4	58.0%
	ABE 5	67.0%	ESL 5	53.0%
	ABE 6	66.0%	ESL 6	51.0%
	ABE Overall	53.0%	ESL Overall	56.0%
	COMBINED (ABE/ESL)		53.7%	
Fiscal Year 20201 Follow Up Indicator Targets				
	Employment Rate (2nd Quarter)	41.0%		
	Employment Rate (4th Quarter)	40.7%		
	Median Earnings	\$ 3,764.00		
	Credential Rate	43.4%		