Advisory Meeting 3/28/2024

1. RFP funding- review team of 6. 36 applications, AR Correctional chose not to apply. 35 programs were awarded. UAM will now be the biggest program (8 counties). Increase in C&I- 20 and IELCE- 11. Letters will go out today. Monday at the latest the amounts will come out for awards. This will be state and federal. It will also include full or provisional award. Criteria will be laid out in the letter of notification. This will be based on the scoring of the RFP, heavily based on IET and enrollment. They have looked at the amount of funding based on the number of students (dollars spent per student). Not meeting benchmarks was also a factor. WAGE is going to be a consideration. Conditional funding will have additional training and additional support. This will require all directors to work together across the state. There could be another round of special funds available. It will be able to be carried over.

2. Adult Education Technical Assistance Compliance Meetings- Based on the RFP, site visit, and program reviews they will be starting non-compliance technical assistance meetings. Areas of concern: E&E not met, minimum 50% MSG not met, Outstanding CAPs/PIPs, Advisory committee, Lack of and IEL/CE, Lack of an IET, Lack of Credentials and Certification, Lack of WAGE™ Certificates, Enrollment of less than 100 participants, Retention Rate is less than ?, Post test rate is less than , Lost more than 10% of State Funding Consecutively, Effectiveness in serving employers (retention with the same employer and meeting their needs), Inventory Control Form. OCTAE looking more carefully. Some CAP items are easy fixes not 3-4 years. PIPs will be satisfied within a year. Advisory committee. Not all programs are going to have a compliance meeting. For the >100 participants, this has revealed a retention issue. Post test rate could be indicative of other issues. Lack of progression on the part of the centers causing students to leave. Everyone’s chart will look different. There will be leading topics: purpose of the meeting, updates from previous meeting, summary of discussion, and next action steps. At the bottom all things completed will be listed. Most of this will start July 1. The PAs will be focusing on E&E and performance benchmarks.

3. Education and Career Pathways Initiative Partnership- on Wednesday of the Spring Administrators meeting we will discuss Career Pathways Partnership. Creating a Pilot to use a blended approach. Trying to operate TANF without TANF coordinators. Referral process to Career Pathways. 2-3 concerns: what about programs at school districts other programs already had a good relationship. Still need someone to drive it. Need to make sure that partnerships are strengthened. We will prescreen to see if they are eligible to apply. We have to share attendance records. We will be able to ask questions of the commissioner at the administrator’s meeting. All students will be required to be looking for work. He doesn’t want adult education to be burdened with additional work. It will be a true partnership. This will reduce duplication of services while increasing opportunities. Adult Ed will continue to recruit and enroll, modify the intake to identify potential CPI individuals, refer to CPI, continue to track attendance and progress. CPI requirements: are they a parent of a student under 21, income less than 250% of Federal Poverty, current recipient of SNAP, Medicaid, ARKids, or a current or former TEA recipient, actively seeking employment. Effective date July 1, 2024. Career Coach will be vital. Training and monitoring will also be important.

4. Spring Admin Meeting- Secretary McDonald to share his 3 goals: increase the state GDP rate, labor participation rate, increase median earnings of Arkansans. There has already been an increase on our part. We will also discuss career pathways. How is the partnership already working? Second day- adult education trends (enrollment) and retention strategies. The afternoon increasing earning potential of adult learners in the state. What is the trend? Lajuana will talk about business and industry partnerships and how to recognize what is needed. We will hear from programs to hear and discuss what is already being done in the field that as increased earning potentials. We will also discuss pre-apprenticeship program opportunities. Successful partnership programs. The good, the bad, and the ugly about Pharmacy Tech. Credential attainment. Last day will be going over end of the year processes. Distance learning certification process. We will be receiving a memo about issues with GED and the process of getting accommodations and questions answered.

5. Adult Retention- What is retention? First, those that walk in either become table 2a or table 4. Second, they knew they needed to get something done, but something got in the way. Retention is about making people want to stay. What needs to happen for retention? Quality of relationship. Table 2a (reportable contact list)- intake date, hours, last instruction date. Look at if these students had multiple pops. Why? There is not a recruitment problem, it’s a retention problem. Why are they struggling? Have we asked them? Why are they missing? How can we remedy their barriers to coming to class? We do not have to worry about competition if we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. What are the best ways we revisit the students that have dropped off? There is a trend of 2a growing at a faster rate of Table 4. In the widget library, enrolled students with no instructional hours in (x) days (can be customized) and students with no enrollments (x) after intake date by EFL. Also look in student alerts look at students not assessed within (x) days of intake, student nots assessed within (x) instruction hours of intake, enrolled students with no instructional hours within (x) days. These are a couple of strategies that can be used to increase retention. Table 2a is where recruitment needs to be done. Get the staff on board with contacting students.

6. GED Pass Three Follow-up- Data was sent to us in an email. Add to the notes. We are down in all areas. Pass three data needs to be used to get those over the hump. There was an issue with some of the data. Test center, not prep center must be used when pulling data to avoid issues with the data. There are too many gaps. We had an increase of 16% of students. This may not necessarily be just GED students. Students are coming in at different educational levels. Going into the new fiscal year if every program makes a goal to increase GED passers, the state as a whole will benefit. We have to be serving those that need it most. If the student doesn’t do what they are supposed to do send them back. There was a secondary push for the mobile units. Arkansas has the most non-correctional mobile units in the country. Make sure to follow up on the spreadsheet sent to us about the pass three. Try to get prior to the spring admin meeting. Dianne will send out a follow up email to request the update. Professional development request for GED subject specific content. Also, ESL best practices.

7. Program Operations- Testing Discussion and Concerns: student had passed the ready test about 2 weeks ago and were ready to official test but ready scores had not been sent. What is the process of signing up for the test. What is the policy? What should it be? Another issue, does that person understand the importance of testing? What is going to be done, the test examiners will come to the state to discuss all things GED: policies, vouchers, accommodations, best practice when administering the test.

8. WAGE Level I, Level II, and ESL- webinar on March 14th to discuss the new rollout. We were given the opportunity to review the course. Everyone in the building will touch the course. 39 courses have been built and are available. Some are reviewing and some have started utilizing the course. Need to follow up with the directors that have not accepted the course to review. Students are still being enrolled in the original course. Course should not take as much time as the original course. Aztec is required. Essential Ed will not be supported in the new course. Structural changes have been made in the career exploration and the resume. ESL is still being reviewed but should be available soon. There will be 3 levels for the different educational abilities of the students in ESL. There is an approved syllabus for the Level I course. It outlines what the course entails and the projected outcomes and requirements of the course. Level II based on the 16 clusters. Focus has been placed on the high demand careers. Must complete the career exploration and career exploration in the McGraw Hill textbooks. It will set up similarly to the Level I course and will follow the books. It is meant to be a more advanced course. There are objectives that must be met. There is a level of understanding of the job requirements and the career pathways that must be realized. There are contextualized learning components in this course. The goal is for students to be able to obtain a job in the field of which they are studying. The goal is making a connection to the learning and what is needed in the employment field. It will be essential to use these components as the basis of any IETs. WAGE scholarships can still be applied but there may be a cutoff. When advanced certificate scholarships are requested, Level II must be completed. Many stakeholders were involved in getting this ready to go. How do we get all on board?

9. Critical Role of Career Coaches and Staffing- we should know where all students are when they get finished in their program of study or have passed their GED test. Are they going college or career? Have they made a plan? Follow up measures can be obtained utilizing the career coach. May need to go back and have people trained in the CSP course. The state will cover the cost of the certification.

10. LACES Future Requirements and Customization- There is a student intake, staff intake, and naming convention being looked into. Student intake- you can add secondary program. Class naming convention- standard naming convention across the board. The class naming and staff intake may take a while, but it will be done soon. Rollout is TBD. There will be a training session for the new information. Required fields in the staff intake will be used to keep up to date. There would be a difference in the options available whether a staff member is paraprofessional or a teacher. A webinar will be provided when the changes are made. On last high school attended, it is a smart fill, but schools could be added. If there is a new high school that could be added, contact LACES. The staff intake is now up to date. The asterisk is available. There are tech questions that mirror what the students have on their intake.

11. SLP to Student Education and Career Plan- when we sit down with the students they can develop a plan to get to future goals. The mindset needs to be changed to the goal of a career plan. We can develop our own. There can also be places to show where students have met with different providers to develop a living document to achieve their goals. Barbara has information about a template that can be used. She will send a link to the group.

12. Adult Education Bridge Transition Program- goal is to be able to expand the partnership with the two-year colleges. This will be for students that need remediation in subjects prior to attending college. Question is whether or not to TABE in lieu of Accuplacer. Adult education would pay for the placement test. It will aid in focusing on how to succeed in college. Potentially will give students a one-hour credit course.

13. New Director Mentoring- need to do a better job at reaching out to new directors. How do we get it going? How often do we meet with new directors? Seasoned directors are invited to attend the new director training to provide feedback. Connect with newly hired directors.

14. Regional Planning Meeting- each region has around $5,000.00 has money to offer training that is specific to each region for a regionally planning meeting. Professional development request form. Send to Dr. Wilkerson. This must include all training costs.

15. Concerns from the field- 16/17-year-old policies. The memo has been sent out to the field. We are already on track for the Governor’s initiative. They are trying to capture any credentials that students achieve. Launch is a part of that initiative. This is a boosted form of AJL. Broadband Initiative- where is it? It has kind of stalled.

16. Next meeting- May 9th, 9AM on Zoom.