Updates August 21, 2019

Integrated Education and Training (IET)
On Friday, we received notice from OCTAE regarding Program Memorandum 19-2: Allowable Use of Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Funds for Integrated Education and Training Programs – Frequently Asked Questions, which aims to clarify the circumstances under which AEFLA funds may be used to pay for occupational certificates and/or credentials in an IET program.

This announcement is good news because it allows Aspire programs to use program funds to pay for occupational certificates and/or credentials in an IET program. Please read the memorandum for more details. As always, providers have the responsibility to ensure that all costs associated with any certificates or credentials funded by Aspire as part of an IET program must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable, consistent with the cost principles in subpart E of 2 C.F.R. part 200, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

The IET webinar that Stephanie presented last Thursday will be updated to include this new information and will be posted on the Aspire website next week.

ABLELink Policy Update
We updated the Confidentiality of Student Records Policy (FERPA) to ensure that we safeguard student information. This policy, regarding how many people can have access to ABLELink, has always been in place but is more transparent now, in writing, in the Confidentiality policy.

Access to ABLELink is limited to the program administrator and no more than one additional person for every 250 students projected to be enrolled. Access granted is at the discretion of the State Aspire Office.

It is important to remember that all access to ABLELink is done at the discretion of the State Aspire Office. To maintain access, individuals must complete a new Personal Confidentiality Statement (PCS) form by July 1 of each program year. Those with access must also log into the system within every 90 days or the account will be deactivated and require a new PCS to reactivate.
Distance Education Mini-Grants
Ohio Aspire encourages local programs to effectively use technology and distance education to increase the quality of learning and to lead to improved performance. New for this year, the Aspire office is offering Innovative Distance Education (DE) Mini-Grants to support local programs to increase the percentage of DE users and to encourage programs to try something innovative with DE. A limited number of grants are available, and programs may apply for up to a $500 grant. Grants are available for both 231 and 243 funded programs. The application will be coming out in September; submit questions to sschab@highered.ohio.gov.

STAR
The STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR) returns to Ohio for a new round. We are recruiting five local program teams to participate in a second STAR training. Each team must include an administrator (or someone with authority to make program decisions and changes) and one or more instructors. Instructors will need to be working with adult students reading at grades 4 – 8.9 (NRS levels 2-4 as students are now taking TABE 11/12) throughout the training because part of the training is implementing what is learned in your classroom. Students can be ABE or ESOL, but ESOL students need to have a TABE 11/12 reading test and score at grade equivalency of 4 – 8.9. This is an intensive 8-month, hybrid-model training. Stipend information, the application, and syllabus will be sent out next week. Direct questions to sschab@highered.ohio.gov.

What’s New at the PDN
For FY2020, the State Aspire Office has consolidated PDN activities through the Ohio Literacy Resource Center (OLRC) at Kent State University. The OLRC will be contracting with OSU for staff time and will also secure outside trainers for content requested by programs.

Some of the planned changes include:
- extending NTO to provide structured, ongoing support to new teachers
- providing PD on topics requested through the surveys conducted by the state Aspire Office last year. Common topics requested include trauma-informed instruction, dealing with difficult people, management, instructional strategies, and content areas.
- providing or locating customized PD, TA, and resource topics for local programs either through staff or external trainers
- working with regional Program Managers to identify areas of concentration to support programs

System and process updates will include:
- automating registration for self-directed courses for new staff
- automating completion tracking of required trainings on IPDPs
- streamlining evaluations
- highlighting topics related to Desk Review and WIOA categories
- updating trainings and providing additional support to staff coming into Aspire