



# Performance Monitoring Report: Basic Skills Programming Academic Year 2020-21

March 15, 2022

## Basic Skills Programming Purpose

Provide basic skills programming necessary to enhance the success of students.

# Basic Skills Report Details

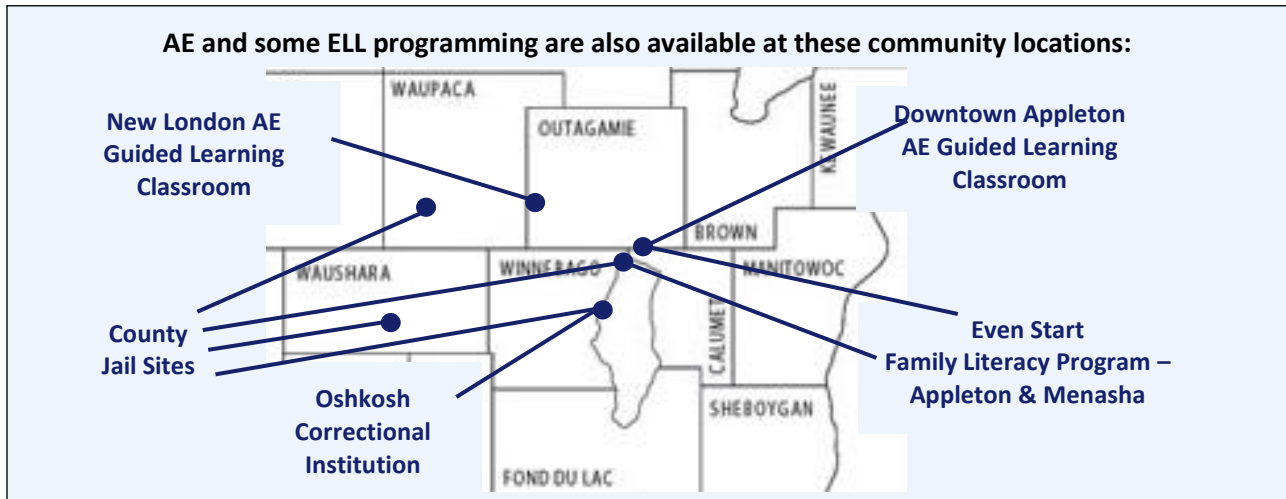
## Overview

Basic Skills programming, newly referred to as Adult Education (AE) (formerly Adult Basic Education) and English Language Learning (ELL), is primarily designed for out-of-school youth and adult learners. Many basic skills students want to improve their lives and earning capabilities, so they take a first, or next, step toward improving basic language and/or academic skills. AE also serves as a resource for high school age students in need of an alternative educational setting for completing a high school credential. Basic skills students represent a population for Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) with the potential to transition to FVTC programs. All basic skills classes have little or no cost to students.

## What We Do

AE and ELL services are offered at the FVTC Appleton and Oshkosh campuses and at FVTC regional centers.





*(Map excerpt from <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/coparks.html>)*



AE supports the College and community by providing basic literacy skills, preparation for post-secondary academics, and high school completion options. Historically, AE and ELL classes and learning opportunities were offered primarily via traditional classroom, guided independent study, and some on-line delivery formats. Learnings from the past year have provided the opportunity to expand the variety of teaching modalities. Using the instructional expertise of the AE and ELL faculty, a balanced menu of options including in-person, virtual, and on-line are now offered.

FVTC District communities are home to several immigrants who vary significantly in age, learning styles, education, country of origin, and goals. Many newcomers strive to learn about the American culture and the workplace by attending ELL classes to enhance their daily lives, prepare for programs, improve English skills for current employment, or for professional advancement. ELL instruction covers all aspects of the language: reading, writing, speaking, cultural studies, and digital literacy. These adult students, whose native language is not English, utilize advisors, counselors, and support services offered through FVTC to learn about program options and community resources.

The table below describes FVTC Basic Skills programming according to the primary goals of students. These goals include remedial education, high school completion, and transition to FVTC programs. Instructional areas include ELL, English, math, science, reading, social science, health, civics, and career/employment.

<b>Basic Skills Programming Student Count</b>				
<b>Helping Youth (age 18 &amp; under) Complete High School – Under Contract</b>		<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
	<b>High School Credit Recovery</b> Provides credits for classes not completed in high school	5	16	0
	<b>Alternative High School</b> Provides at-risk youth a place to earn high school credit, prepare for his/her high school diploma, or earn an HSED	92	93	127
<b>Helping Adults (age 18+) Complete High School</b>		<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
	<b>Adult High School</b> Provides adults a place to earn high school credit to complete his/her high school diploma	11	6	3
	<b>GED (General Educational Development Certificate)</b> Provides test preparation for the four GED tests and the Wisconsin Civics Test	250	205	170
	<b>HSED (High School Equivalency Diploma)</b> Provides preparation for the HSED and the Wisconsin Civics Test, employability skills, and health (students choose 1 of 5 options for the HSED)	460	423	416
<b>Helping Adults Learn Basic Skills and/or English</b>		<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
	<b>Family Literacy</b> Provides programming to parents and pre-school aged children	70	57	38
	<b>ELL (English Language Learning)</b> Provides skill development in six levels of linguistic proficiency	563	567	292
	<b>Incarcerated</b> Provides programming to incarcerated individuals	597	673	413
	<b>Enrichment</b> Provides opportunities for self-improvement in academic areas	99	127	17
<b>Helping Adults with Post-Secondary Preparation</b>		<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
	<b>Transition Services</b> Provides opportunities to transition into Pathway Certificate, Technical Diploma, Associate Degree, and Apprenticeship programs (participant count is the number of new program students each year who transitioned from Basic Skills)	141	126	104
	<b>Integrated, Contextualized</b> Provides courses taught simultaneously to or integrated with occupational course work	85	55	29
	<b>Pre-Program</b> Provides opportunities to strengthen basic skills prior to General Education coursework	10	52	59

Source: FVTC data warehouse as of 1/11/2022

## High School Completion

The AE program has incorporated several additional options for completing a High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED). Traditionally, the 5.09 utilized 100% AE coursework to fulfill the requirements. GED tests are now a part of both the HSED 5.05 and 5.09 options. Both options are available to students who are at least 18.5 years old.

Students younger than 18.5 years old and still in high school may participate in our Alternative High School program which operates under contract with the high school. Doing so provides them the opportunity to earn a HSED or their high school diploma. Prior to this year, students could not complete their final GED test until the end of the semester in which the student turns 18 years of age. A waiver was granted for the 2020-21 year which repealed the current age restriction. Thus, during this year students have been able to take their last GED test when ready to do so. This change reduced wait times to take the GED tests and ensured students did not disengage while waiting to take their last GED test. *(Note: This became a permanent rule change October 1, 2021)*

### Removing Barriers to Program Enrollment



**GED testers:** GED exam score may be used to waive the Accuplacer requirement



**FVTC Foundation:** Adult Promise Scholarship Program covers up to 6 credits of post-secondary coursework for currently enrolled AE students

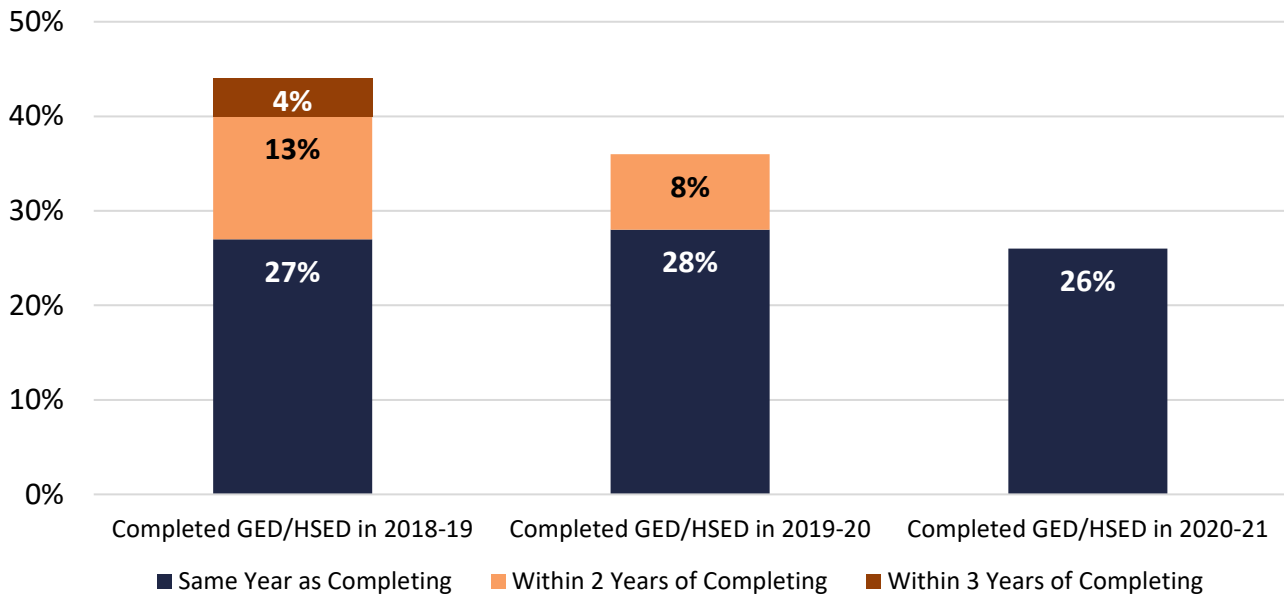


**FVTC GED/HSED completers:** No application fee

## Transition to Programs

Many students enter Basic Skills programming with the intent to only complete their high school credential or improve their English skills. Our goal for all basic skills students is to transition them into occupational programming. The increasing demand for trained workers has elevated the emphasis on helping all students recognize the need for some level of post-secondary training to enter occupations that provide sustainable, living wages. Students who faced barriers to finishing high school as teenagers require additional time and resources to prepare for and achieve that credential. Transition activities for AE and ELL students are important to improve students' individual prospects for financial stability and fill the employment needs of our communities. The chart below shows the percentage of adult high school (GED/HSED) completers from FVTC who subsequently enrolled in program-level or occupational adult courses.

## GED/HSED Completers Enrolled in Post-Secondary Courses



In addition to working towards transitioning students who have completed a high school credential, AE continues to offer a “matrix” HSED model. The “matrix” model enrolls students in both high school completion courses and post-secondary courses at the same time. By co-enrolling, students earn credit towards their HSED and college program credential. The objective is to shorten the student’s time to high school credential completion and entry into a program/career. To date, twelve programs have partnered with AE to “matrix” 19 courses. In addition, three general education courses have also been matrixed.

### Specialized Support

Students who are enrolled in post-secondary programming while completing their high school credential attend the “Hub”, a scheduled, instructor-led class where students get individualized educational support to help facilitate educational success. Each student is also provided a “coach” or “mentor” to help navigate the educational and personal barriers that may arise.

### Contextualized Learning

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is an instructional 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. During the 2020-21 academic year, the ELL program continued its partnership with the Culinary Arts and Hospitality program. In total, seventeen students participated in the project with the opportunity to complete from one to five of the program courses. Four students completed all five courses and earned an Introduction to Culinary & Hospitality Careers local certificate.

### 2020-21 Highlights

- Hub students showed a **93%** success rate in their post-secondary courses for Fall 2020 and a **69%** success rate in Spring 2021.
- **30** Hub students enrolled in-matrixed coursework plus other post-secondary classes in targeted programs which equates to **32** post-secondary courses.
- To date, **234** students have participated in Hub and **56** students have completed their HSED requirements through the “matrix” model.

## Focus on Technology

Adapting to the need for flexibility in learning modalities has resulted in the adoption of new technology and curriculum resources. The ELL program researched several options for computer-based curriculum to be used in 100 % online offerings and hybrid options that blend in-person instruction with remote learning in a virtual modality. The team identified Burlington English (BE) as the top choice. COVID Relief monies were utilized to support this software.

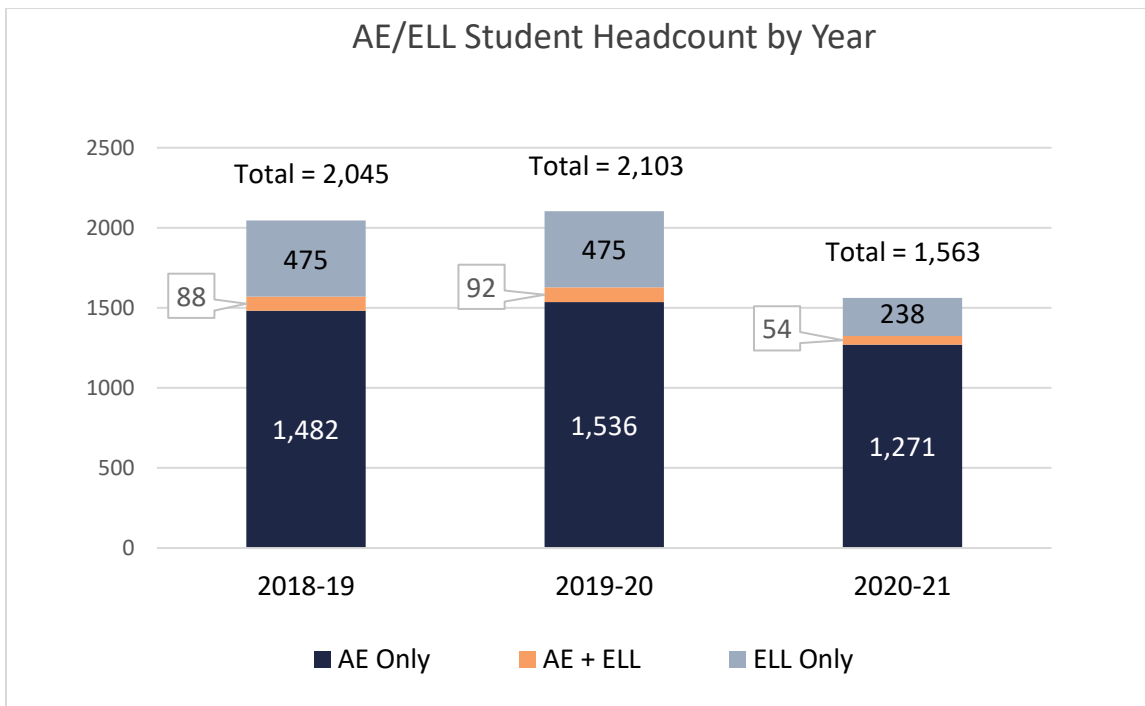
Burlington English is a multilevel and multi-skill program for English language acquisition. It focusses on thematic units and whole language curriculum, meaning it includes vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, pronunciation, and English for Specific Careers, across many subjects, conducive to not only language but also culture. Subjects include education, jobs and careers, money, health, housing, government, and law. The purchase of 150 seats enabled us to combine the any time-anywhere access to state-of-the-art online interactive materials with the traditional face-to-face classroom activities.



## For Whom

The AE/ELL population is a talent source that could help address many employers' skills gaps now and in the future. Changes in the employment market have resulted in significant numbers of AE and ELL students jumping into the workforce while still needing additional skills training. Decreases in AE/ELL enrollments may be attributed to increased employment opportunities for this population. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the landscape for both AE/ELL programming and AE/ELL student lives. For example, the course offerings transitioned to more virtual and online modalities which required students have access to technology and internet at home which was not always readily available. In 2020-21, the number of students working on basic skills at FVTC totaled 1,563 students.

Although we served fewer students this year than previous years, the percentage of students making state-recognized gains has earned FVTC recognition from the WTCS. During this year our AE/ELL program was ranked in the top quartile of all Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) grant providers in Wisconsin by achieving their grant performance targets. WTCS commended us for “a stellar year of innovation that has ensured adult education and English language learning services are provided to our state’s most vulnerable populations” and noted our “contribution not only supports the advanced economic mobility of Fox Valley’s adult education and English language learning students, but also significantly impacts the collective success of Wisconsin AEFLA.”



*Source: FVTC data warehouse as of 1/11/2022*

The table below shows Basic Skills student counts by location. The dramatic increase of students in online courses includes both synchronous (virtual) and asynchronous (online) delivery modalities and coincides with decreases for in-person enrollments at each site. During 2020-21, all ELL courses were offered solely in the virtual format. The AE offerings were a blend of in-person and online. Learning about and taking advantage of advances in educational technology has allowed us to reach students where they are. The synchronous virtual learning modality has removed the barrier of transportation for our students. The asynchronous online modality has helped lessen the barrier of providing childcare.

**FVTC Basic Skills Students by Location**

Location	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Appleton	891	943	362
Chilton	56	42	27
Clintonville	77	66	34
Oshkosh	862	852	554
Waupaca	63	103	27
Wautoma	116	99	21
Online Courses	96	219	957

*Source: FVTC Data Warehouse as of 1/11/2022*

### Family Literacy

AE and ELL have partnered with two K-12 school districts, Appleton Area School District and Menasha Joint School District, to provide a two-generational program called Family Literacy. The adult students learn English or increase academic skills while their children are in Early Childhood programming in the room next door. Despite limitations for enrolling families as a result of staffing shortages, particularly in the early childhood room, demand for the programming continues and a waiting list is in effect. The Family Literacy offerings were all virtual in the fall and began some in-person offering in the spring.

### County Jails

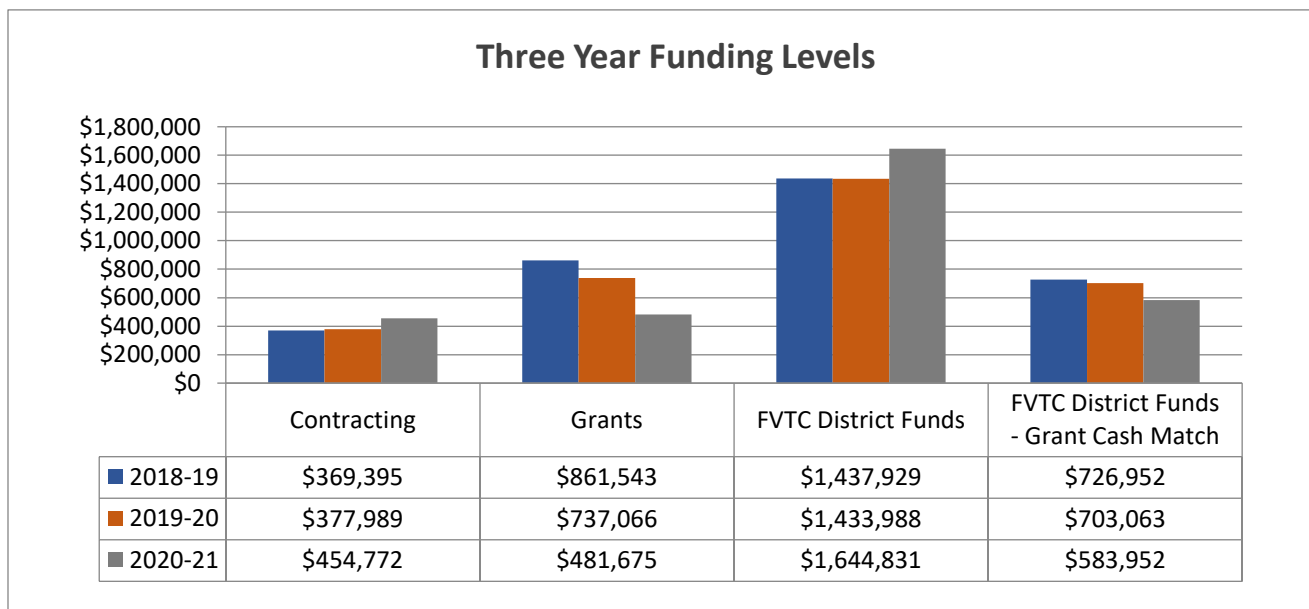
County jail students primarily attend for enrichment or GED/HSED preparation. Since jail students may be moved to another facility or released quickly, these students are not able to attend for long periods of time. Reduced enrollments reflect the safety procedures restricting access to the jails during COVID. The grant funding for this programming has been used to update curriculum and develop technology solutions to better serve this population moving forward.

### Education and Redirection Now (EARN)

The EARN program is a diversion project to facilitate education, career exploration, and other success strategy discussions for low level offenders. EARN is a joint project with the Winnebago County District Attorney’s Office. Limited in-person opportunities during COVID reduced the participation in this program by more than half. The program continues to be an option offered by the District Attorney’s office.

## At What Cost

Instructional costs for AE/ELL students are funded through contracting, grants, and district funds. Contract revenue increased due to the addition of Alternative High School at Wautoma and an expansion of Alternative High School in Oshkosh. WTCS 2020-21 grant funding decreased due to a non-renewed WTCS Consortium Grant. Some grants require the district to provide a percentage of funds (cash match) to support the total project costs. As such, District funding has been a significant funding source for AE and ELL programming. Given the decrease in AE/ELL enrollments during the 2020-21 academic year, a reduction in faculty will impact our offerings in future.



Source: FVTC Financial Services



## Challenges and Opportunities

### Grants:

*Challenge:* WTCS has continued to offer unique grant opportunities.

*Opportunity:* Integrated Education and Training (IET) grant categories provide an opportunity for AE/ELL to partner with FVTC programs to engage students in contextualized learning. Discussions are underway to partner with Wood Manufacturing.

### High School Contracting:

*Challenge:* The learning atmosphere in the high schools, including changes from in-person to on-line and back again, along with in-person restrictions such as masking, has many high school students searching for a learning option that fits their needs.

*Opportunity:* Expand connections with area high schools to best assist at-risk students to graduation while educating these students to the many post-secondary educational opportunities available at FVTC.

### Employment Prior to Credential Completion:

*Challenge:* As employers continue to struggle to fill open positions, candidates are finding employment opportunities that do not require completion of a high school credential.

*Opportunity:* Partner with employers to create a pipeline of candidates that complete their high school credential while employed.