Lift Off To Learning Next Step - Reentry

TEAM KENTUCKY | **KYAE**
EDUCATION AND LABOR CABINET | KENTUCKY ADULT EDUCATION

TEAM KENTUCKY
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Abstract

The Statewide Corrections PLC focused on enrollment, MSG attainment, and GED completion. Each program faces unique challenges and logistical hurdles to deploy new strategies and technologies. With this in mind, PLC members addressed areas that were realistic based on their
- specific regulations,
- student population, and
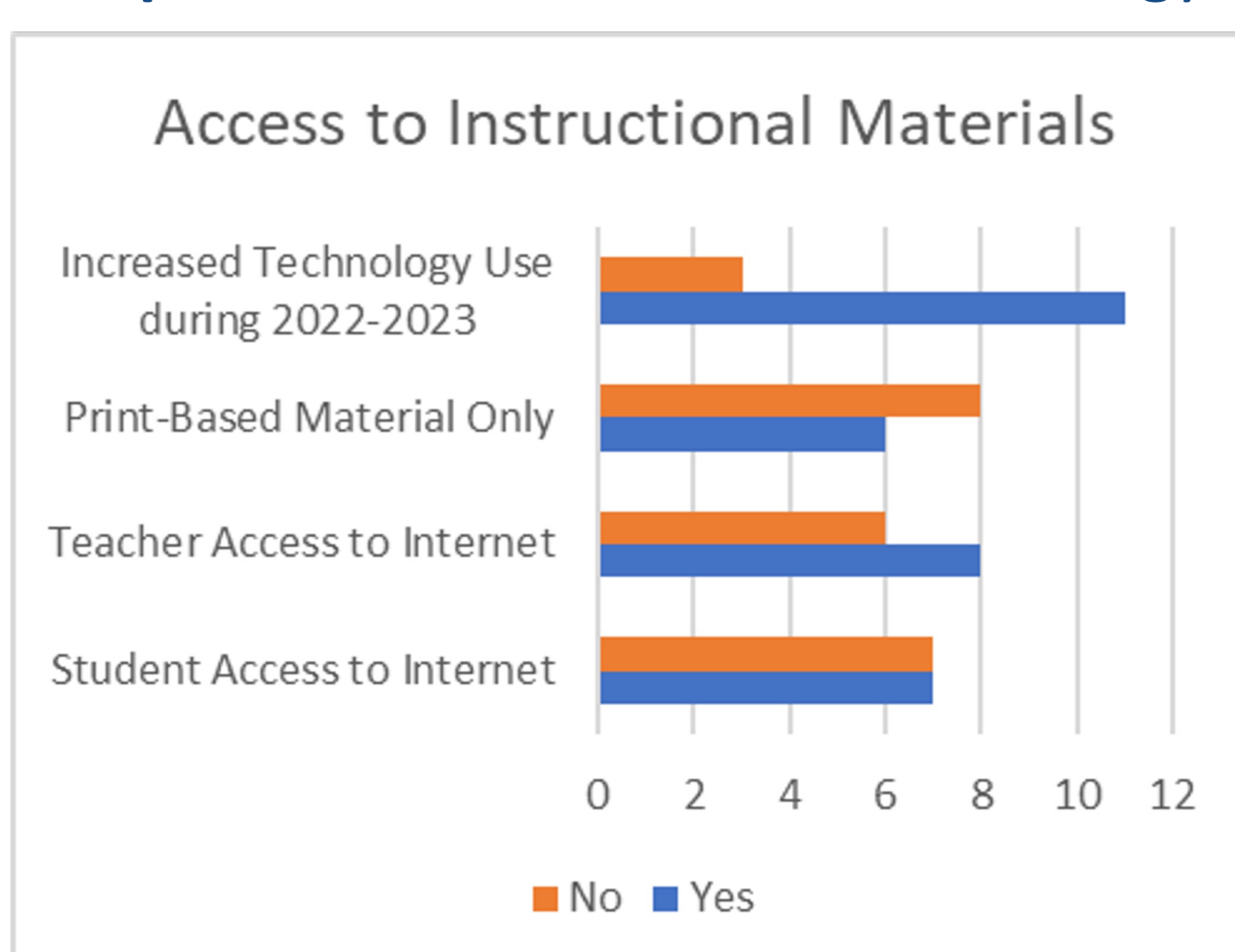- ability to access to new tools and technologies.

Introduction

On average, corrections programs were shuttered for more than year due to the pandemic. This resulted in significant loss of learning for students in the corrections' programs. The goal this year was to reinvigorate programs, a result of many programs having to virtually restart from the ground up, in other words to "lift off" these programs and re-engage learners with new tools/strategies. The goal in these education programs is to ensure students have the skills necessary to successfully participate in reentry programs and move on in life.

Adult education programs located in jails function independently of each other. Each jail has its own regulations governing the education program. While some allow limited online access; others do not. Some programs allow students access to tablets or hand-held Study Buddies; others do not. As a result instructors focused on maximizing use of what is available to them. PLC members
- Compiled *Best Practices* that were shared with other programs. These practices included resources, instructional strategies, and logistical information. Submitted *Best Practices* for inclusion in federal report.
- Conducted a month-long trial of Chromebooks (if approved by the local jailer) as an instructional resource for the classroom.
- Completed a technology survey
- Identified *Most Effective Strategies for 2022-2023*

Graph 1. Access and Use of Technology and the Internet

Access to Instructional Materials

Product Description & Motivation

Corrections PLC members come from a wide range of programs housed in both jails and state corrections facilities. State facilities operate under KY DOC policies. KYAE programs operate under the regulations established by the local jailer, an elected official. This mix of regulations/policies and the isolated nature of their work creates challenges for teachers and limits their ability to interact with their peers.

This year, the PLC members focused on three areas designed to enhance learner engagement and outcomes.
1. Best practices for the classroom
2. Expansion of technology in the classroom (Chromebooks and Study Buddies)
3. Effective instructional strategies

Areas 1 and 3 allowed instructors to interact and learn from their peers and add new practices and strategies to their classroom. Area 2 provided instructors with technology that they could use
- with students in the classroom (if allowed by local regulations), or
- as a tool for accessing new instructional materials and implementing them in the classroom.
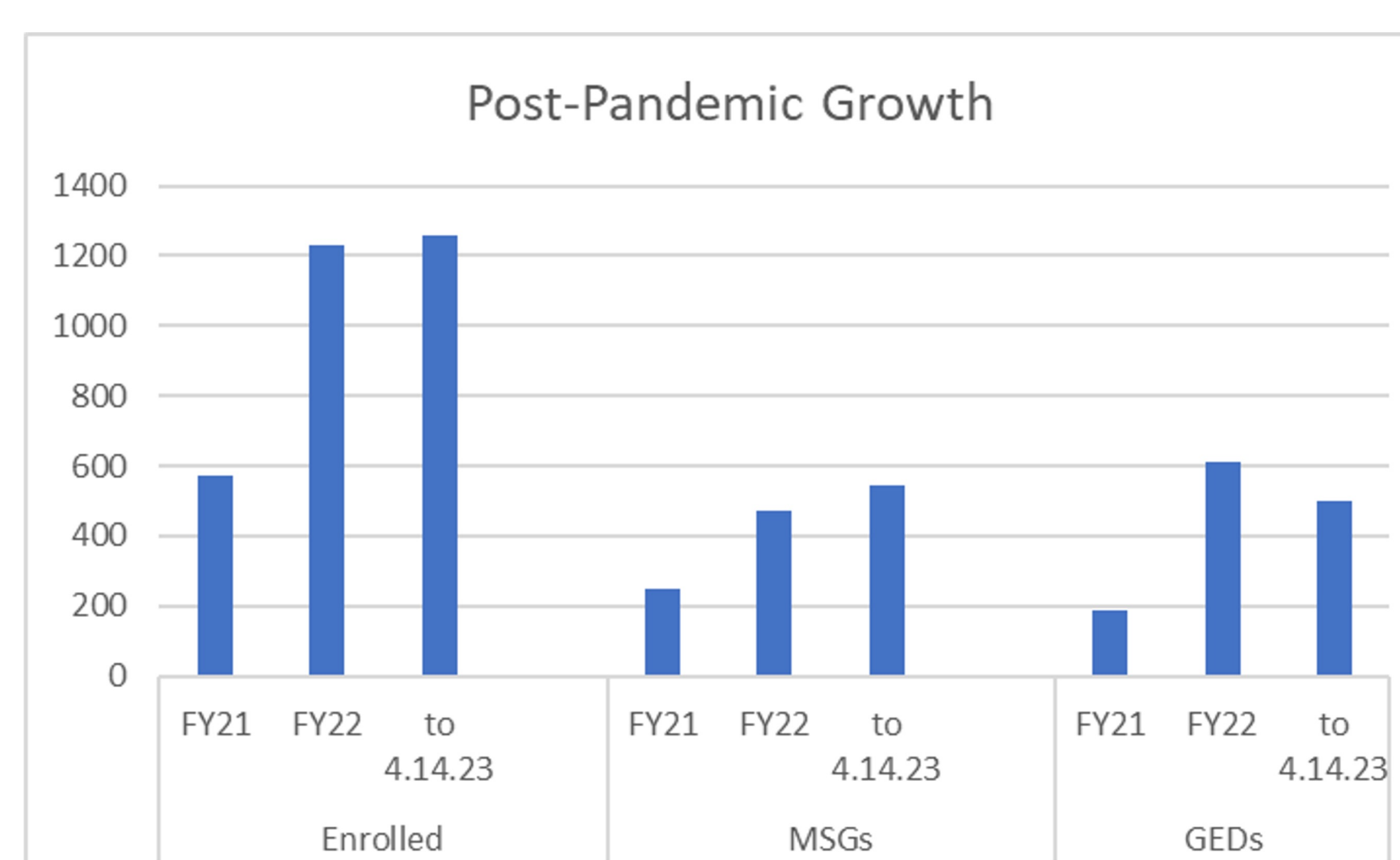
Baseline & Goal

A baseline and goal was established using data from FY 20 - FY 22.
- Baseline enrollment - 1,437. Enrolled 1,258 for 87.5% of goal.
- MSG baseline - 2263. Attained 546 MSGs for 24% of goal.
- GED baseline - 1,664. Earned 500 GEDs for 30% of goal.

Results

While corrections programs did not meet the MSG and GED goals, they were able to make steady increases year over year as shown in Chart 1. Now that GED testing is available for students in most jails, this number will continue to increase.

Graph 2. Corrections Adult Education Post-Pandemic Growth

Post-Pandemic Growth

Best Practices from the Correctional Education Classroom

Scan me!

Summary Report from Chromebook Trial

Scan me!

Chart 1: Corrections Data - FY 18 - 4/14/2023

Corrections Data Overview

Date	Reportable Individual	Participant	EFL Gain	GED
Total				
FY 18	2076	7574	3565	1309
FY 19	1468	4995	2282	885
FY 20	2122	4334	1542	864
FY 21	575	906	248	189
FY 22	1229	1883	473	611
4.17.2023	1258	1944	546	500

Discussion

The most important goal this year was met, i.e., getting students back into classrooms. With so many programs closed for so long, it was challenging to get students back in the routine of coming to class. If students are not in class on a regular basis, they will not make progress or earn high school credentials. Enrollment was job one.

MSGs and GEDs lag at this point, however corrections instructors are continuing to work on improving instructions, engaging learners, and ensuring that students are attaining MSGs and GEDs. That work continues with better resources in the classroom, possibilities for more technology for student use, and more access to GED testing.

As more technology is introduced into the programs, there is evidence that it will result in increased student gains.

Conclusions

The Statewide Corrections PLC is unique in that it addresses issues that vary from location to location. This year PLC members took a multi-prong approach to how they could
- bring students back to class,
- re-engage them in learning,
- address loss of learning,
- identify new materials for the classroom, and
- identify technology that would be beneficial to student learning

A very important issue identified this year is the need to develop more consistent policies across jails, thus ensuring that more opportunities are available for students. However, that will need to be addressed at the state level. There are areas that could be replicated in regular adult education programs, including some of the best practices, strategies, and the use of Study Buddies to help students prepare for TABE and GED testing.

References & Acknowledgements

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