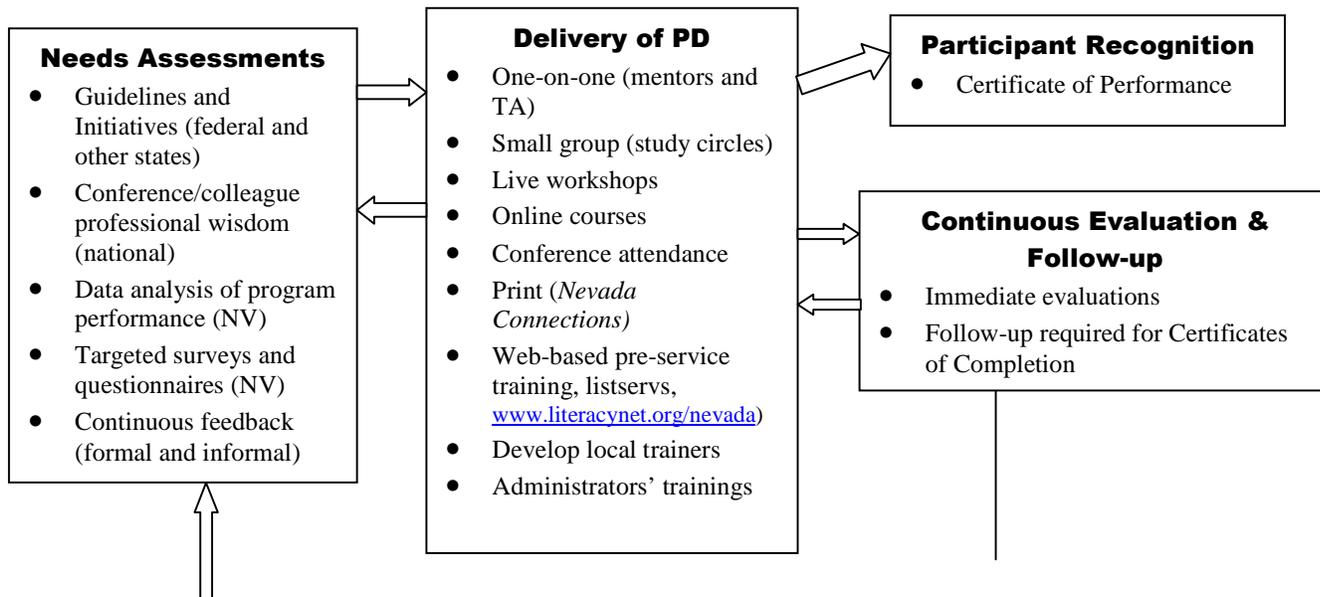


# Nevada Narrative Report 2007-2008

## **1. Describe successful activities, programs, and projects supported with State Leadership funds and describe the extent to which these activities, programs, and projects were successful in implementing the goals of the State Plan.**

- Nevada believes that equipping service providers with sound teaching techniques, content, and leadership skills ultimately benefits adult learners as they pursue their learning goals. Leadership funds are therefore granted to providers through a competitive process to provide activities and initiatives that will enable the adult education system to effectively meet the goals of the state plan or new mandates from OVAE or community or State initiatives. Activities, programs, and projects are consistent with goals from the state plan. Leadership monies are dedicated primarily to providing quality trainings and resources for instructors, tutors and administrators.
- Before being undertaken, all activities are subjected to the question, “How will this improve student performance?” Workshops for teachers and tutors specifically target the development of classroom skills and all require a follow-up activity linked to the classroom for successful completion; Nevada Connections articles present pragmatic teaching tips; the Adult Basic Educator’s Certificate of Performance is based on student outcomes. In some cases, such as for management training or funding for special projects, the link is more indirect. However, nothing is done without the belief that it will help AEFLA-funded literacy providers to positively affect student and program performance and therefore meet their program goals.
- All activities must be relevant as determined through feedback and observation, analysis of national trends, and surveys (formal and informal). All offerings begin with determining need and end with evaluating success. Activities are based on research and evidence-based practice when available, and colleagues both in Nevada and in other states are consulted frequently during planning implementation.
- We attempt to cover critical topics “deep and wide,” via a variety of methods for both administrators and practitioners. We are challenged to meet the needs of seasoned teachers as well as the new, which is leading us to more individualized, in-depth PD (such as study circles and Learning Communities) offered in ways that meet the varied schedules of our part-time teachers and staff.



**Goal I: To ensure that adult learners meet their learning goals and achieve core measures through adult education programs that are effective and of high quality.**

- In order to increase effectiveness and collaboration among program directors and key staff members of Nevada’s funded programs, two 2-day meetings and one 3-day retreat were held during 2007-2008 with attendance by 29-33 key administrators, staff, and instructors. Content was wide-ranging and included training on performance feedback, effect of generational differences on ABE programs, transitioning, TABE efficacy, and teacher success (“How do they do that?”). Agenda items are timely and congruent, with follow-up at subsequent meetings. At the November meeting, Professor Hal Beder presented on transition and participants in a national conference on transition. At the March meeting, Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) reported on their transition research project.
- Three Nevada Shop Talks were held with an average attendance of 11. This year we added a Web meeting component, which allowed us to begin training on the “go to meeting” facility as well as enhance delivery of content.
- 243 practitioners attended 11 full-day professional development workshops, six study circles, and several shorter “special topic” workshops. We encouraged using a study circle model wherever appropriate, and although there was some initial reluctance to commit significant time and to delve into the research, when asked what they’d like to see in the future, many study circle participants asked to meet regularly at least for a semester. Workshops and study circles were designed to help teachers become aware of their learning styles, improve their current teaching practice (e.g., using standards, student goal-setting, holistic alternative assessments, using research-based reading strategies).
- Fifty-five people were served via individual assistance and shorter workshops: live pre-service workshops, facilitator training, and mentor training. This includes 20 trained on Access by the State Program Data Specialist in response to a request from the programs.

- CASAS assessment workshops were provided for over 70 people. TOPSpro trainings were also attended by data specialists and Directors of the State's programs.
- Nevada supported USCIS Citizenship workshop on 2/22/08; assisted in acquiring a site, with publicity, and funding travel for two instructors from the northern part of the State.
- Another area of focus has been to develop in-state training expertise. One teacher from TMCC has offered four workshops; she is motivated to continue as the response has been very positive. Her work fits with Nevada's adoption of the CASAS ESL writing assessment and possibly site-based training.
- Encouraged and enhanced online professional development participation. Twenty-six instructors signed up for 42 online courses; at least 21 courses were completed. Participation was nearly double that of 2006-2007. ProLiteracy and WorldEd are filling the void created by the decline of AEPro with quality self-paced and facilitated courses.
- One individual provider was sponsored to attend Scotopic Sensitivity training in California, which resulted in a NV training for 13 participants. Eleven Nevadans have become or are in process of becoming certified screeners.
- Information and resources regarding adult education were published in ten issues of Nevada Connections, a quality newsletter distributed of approximately 1,700. Issues are posted at [www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/newsletters.html](http://www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/newsletters.html)
- Certificates of Performance, based on student outcomes, continue to be granted to Nevada's qualifying adult educators. Senator Harry Reid's office acknowledges Certificate recipients with a personalized "gold bond" letter of recognition. Several states have asked for information about the process with the idea of replication in mind.
- Maintained and updated Web site, facilitated Nevada's listservs, maintained Administrator's Handbook.
- Nevada's content standards for all program types are on-line at the Content Standards Warehouse and Nevada's adult education website. Each individual program in the State has a list of resources that is aligned to the standards. Model lesson plans for every program type and level were created and presented to instructors that align the standards, objectives, and applicable CASAS competencies.
- Most Nevada ABE programs have one or more coordinators to assist the Director and to serve as a liaison between the Director and the instructors. A State Coordinator Network was created to ensure that coordinators have the necessary support and resources to meet the demands of their positions. Through this network coordinators help and support one another by sharing strengths, goals, problematic issues, and resources.
- In order to address the educational needs of Nevada adults who lack a high school diploma or GED credential, the statewide Nevada GED Online program is administered through a

Leadership grant. This program serves adult students who wish to prepare to take the GED; it also serves as an “ambassador” from ABE to libraries, WIA II one-stops, and several community based organizations.

**Goal II: To encourage providers to integrate technology into instruction and to use technology effectively in reporting program outcomes.**

- Technology is used in all programs to collect data and track students. All programs use TOPSpro software. Data collection procedures have been established and implemented to ensure data quality statewide. New policy is in the process of approval by OVAE/DAEL as a result of the system monitoring in July, 2008. Training on this policy as well as all policy governing data collection is provided and individual assistance is available on request. The Program Data Specialist in the State Adult Education office uses a web-conference program which allows him to provide immediate and effective intervention when a program has questions regarding data—content or process.
- Catholic Charities has a fully equipped computer lab which enhances the ESL program. Each class is in the lab twice a day for 40 to 45 minutes at a time. Both staff and students enjoy Access to English with its interactive mode of learning. The software has a component which allowed the students to track themselves daily and view their progress.
- At Computer Assisted Literacy in Libraries (CALL) in the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, the program is based on a model that allows participants to learn technology and technical skills while at the same time improving literacy. 82% of all formal classes feature computer literacy instruction.
- College of Southern Nevada (CSN) evaluated computer lab use for its students, nearly all ESL. Students who used the lab had a slightly higher average gain in educational functioning levels than did those students who did not. 90% of the students who used the lab during March and April were post-tested. Of those who never used the computer lab, 69% post-tested. The college has decided that the computer lab is a positive influence upon students and their learning. Instruction is directed toward the integration of basic skills with demonstrable competencies.
- ESL students at the Winnemucca center of Great Basin College (GBC) participated in Computer Basics classes whereby computer instruction was paired with English language learning. The retention rate was 80 percent.
- Community Multicultural Center (CMC) has added ten stations of Reading Horizons, the All Star CDs from the new curriculum and an additional Alphabet program for lowest level learners—both ESL and ABE students use this program. Several of these programs are also invaluable tools in teaching reading and writing to students with learning disabilities as well as ESL students.
- At Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) up to 60 students can log into lab computers and work on ESL homework during posted hours, Monday through Saturday;

30% of all ESL students logged in more than once each session. All GED students must utilize GED Online, an online program for preparing for the GED tests. It is mandatory that all students enrolled in GED preparation classes attend two classes weekly as a group as well as attend two classes in the computer lab for individual/independent study.

- Unfortunately, Nevada does not have a formal distance education system. While the State's geography would warrant such a system, resources are not available to accommodate such.

**Goal III: To ensure cooperative/collaborative efforts between providers and community resource agencies.**

- Many representatives from community resource agencies as well as businesses are invited to come and speak to the clients at Catholic Charities about their services. These range from the police and fire departments, to environment, health, parks and recreation facilities, tax advisors, employers, and banks and other financial institutions.
- NNLC continues to maintain its working relationships with Washoe County School District's Title I programs, Even Start, and Family Resources Centers providing ESL classes at eight sites throughout the year for parents of school-age children involved with these programs.
- The CALL program works with its collaborative partners on recruiting and providing space for orientation and classes at their locations. This program also has many volunteers, some representing major employers in the community.
- WNC serves seven large, sparsely populated counties and each county has its own set of community resources and social service agencies. It is a major challenge to maintain relationships with the various human service agencies through the service area of 18,000 square miles. The program addresses the challenges to collaboration by working well with Vocational Rehabilitation, FISH, JOIN, and the Department of Parole and Probation in Carson City. The Director is a member of the Carson City Hispanic Advisory Board and the Douglas County Partnership.
- The program director at CMC is a learning disabilities specialist. The center's collaborative partners include Welfare, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other AEFLA programs in the area that refer adult students for evaluation and/or intervention. In addition the University United Methodist and Green Valley Presbyterian Churches continue to provide space for classes.
- GBC works with many different agencies to ensure that services are delivered to students in the vast rural area it serves. In addition the main focus over the last year has been to work more closely with faculty and staff at GBC, collaborating with the library, academic success center, recruitment, retention and financial aid offices.

**Goal IV: To promote Workplace Literacy.**

- SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) competencies are aligned with the CASAS system, focusing on workplace readiness and civics instruction. These, as

well as EFF standards, are incorporated into Nevada's content standards.

- GBC's ABE program is working with area gold mines on curriculum that will serve their purposes for Workplace Literacy and ESL needs of the students/employees. Winnemucca Farms has loaned a van to the field workers to transport themselves to classes three nights a week in Winnemucca.
- Curriculum and workshop content at CALL focuses on workplace skills and work-related topics.
- CSN's ESL and GED classes were offered at several Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee sites: Carpenters Apprenticeship, Plasterer's Apprenticeship, and Brick and Tile Apprenticeship programs. CSN's classes are not specifically structured for workplace literacy activities, but competencies which address basic skills for the workplace are incorporated throughout the curriculum in ESL, EL/Civics, Basic Skills, and GED Preparation classes.
- NNLC provided ESL instruction at three workplace sites during 2007/2008—Harrah's Hotel and Casino, Innotrac, and Purdy Construction.

#### **Goal V: To promote Family Literacy.**

- Several programs have collaborations with Even Start and with Head Start, providing adult education instruction to parents. In some cases the classes are open to qualified community members as well.
  - CALL, in conjunction with Vegas Public Television Station, completed the final year of the \$241,000 grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Sciences. This grant focused on emergent literacy and family literacy. It provided support to pre-literate and low-literate adults as they made gains in their English language reading, writing and speaking skills. Young adults studied for their GED certificate examinations in order to transition to college and the workplace.
  - CSN's AEFLA program collaborates with four elementary schools offering family literacy programs. The schools are located in areas that are largely Latino, with the majority of the population considered economically and educationally disadvantaged. CSN provides the adult portion of the family literacy programs. Several of the schools offer after-school help to students during the same time that CSN's ESL and GED classes are offered.
  - Catholic Charities purchased training materials for volunteers who were willing to serve as tutors/mentors for families in need of family literacy activities. Materials were also purchased for the parents so that they may read to their children.
- 2. Describe any significant findings from the Eligible Agency's evaluation of the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on the core indicators of performance.**

Numerous factors affect Nevada's outcomes:

- The Call program made a concerted effort to increase the number of instructional hours received by students through workshops, computer lab time, and individual study. They increased the hours by 67%. The program focused on implementing the Nevada State Content Standards and CASAS Competencies in all CALL curricula. 86% of the negotiated levels set by the State were met. In addition, CALL has found an increased number of contacts made by their students with the College of Southern Nevada's career counselors following classroom presentation offered to intermediate students. They have also seen evidence that more students are moving into postsecondary education as witnessed by instructors who also teach at CSN.
- NNLC served 804 students, reaching its goal. However, only 505 students had paired tests. (The Director of this program lost her husband very suddenly in the Spring and, understandably, many things fell by the wayside for awhile.)
- Of the eleven literacy levels in Core Indicator I, CSN met or exceeded ten of the State's negotiated levels. CSN notes that 48% of its students completed at least one level; 62% of pre- and post-tested students completed a level.
- Catholic Charities claims that the implementation of CASAS Life and Work assessment series resulted in a 7.52 point gain overall on student's paired tests. The ESL program continues to be of high quality, and the percent of learning gains improves each year.
- At TMCC instructors are encouraged to focus on outcomes rather than processes.
- CMC exceeded their goal by almost 25% by serving 314 students. They exceeded the State negotiated goals in seven out of the 11 categories as compared to six out of eleven last year. The program's student/tutor hours for learning disabled students more than doubled over the previous year. The program has an outstanding success rate with learning disabled students. To date almost 80% of students with learning disabilities are benefitting from the use of color overlays after being screened for Scotopic Sensitivity/Irlen Syndrome.
- WNC reports that steady changes in processes related to retention and especially persistence are working. Overall numbers of students increased from 798 to 902. The program exceeded performance levels from last year in four of the six ESL levels, exceeding negotiated State levels for all ESL levels. Among factors affecting these outcomes are the implementation of Orientation in ESL classes which incorporates several persistence methods; turnover in the ESL staff is low; attendance at professional development opportunities is high. A transitions class for advanced level non-native English speakers was created and implemented with outstanding results. 38 students participated with 35 completing the class. 14 received a letter grade of "A" and were awarded a scholarship to take a WNC college course.
- 56% of students at GBC completed a level. The average point gain for each student was 11.68. The Elko site served 132 students with 64% retention. The Winnemucca site made

goal-setting a primary focus for its ESL students, including discussions about goals in class time, creating a bulletin board, issuing of certificates. Students were told that reaching their personal goals was just as important as their CASAS test scores.

- The number of Social Security numbers provided by students is dangerously close to negatively impacting our data matching processes. The percent available for data matching is declining each year. Without Social Security numbers, successful students cannot be identified as being employed or attending postsecondary institutions. Students do not give Social Security numbers when they are concerned about security, identity theft, etc. In addition some of Nevada's migrants and immigrants do not give Social Security numbers as they do not have them (estimates claim up to 200,000 of the 2 million people statewide are not documented). This will undoubtedly continue to be an issue.
- Statewide, 83% of the adult students in our programs are ESL students, many of whom lack proper paperwork. Postsecondary opportunities are not pursued due to self-image and/or the lack of documentation that results in prohibitive non-resident fees.
- One of the most powerful factors that influences Nevada's outcomes is its growth. Nevada remains among the fastest growing states in the country, second only to Arizona. The US Census Bureau estimates the population in Nevada at 2,565,382 in 2007, a 28% increase since the 2000 census (1,998,257) and a substantial difference from the US average growth rate for the same time period of 7%. The increase in Latinos is at 24% while the average increase for the US is 14% (2006).
- AEFLA programs in Nevada strive to address the overwhelming need presented by such population growth. Nevada served 9,526 students in 2007-2008, 83% of whom were ESL students.
- The increase in AEFLA funding from the 2000 census is no longer adequate to meet the constantly increasing demand for services. As mentioned above, the State continues to be among the fastest growing States with the fastest growing Latino population. Las Vegas welcomes thousands of new residents each month. Additional State monies are out of the question due to the very growth that is causing the need—Nevada is cutting budgets across the state in a scramble for resources.
- In contrast to Las Vegas, the vast northeastern part of the state is geographically challenging with fewer than two people per square mile. This area presents its own set of hurdles: how to ensure intensity and duration when a student has to drive 60 or more miles each way to attend a class; difficulty in finding adequately trained teachers or places to hold classes; not enough students to merit holding a class but students still needing/wanting to learn. Over 62,000 square miles with 123,000 people scattered throughout is a major challenge when providing services.
- Nevada's adult education data foundation is in place and each year the programs become more adept in using the accountability system. All programs in the State are using CASAS for assessment and TOPSpro for reporting data. Data matching is in place with the

employment division, GED scoring service, and postsecondary system. Nevada's data are increasingly reliable. Directors are becoming more proficient at using data for program improvement. With natural attrition of staff, ongoing training is more important than ever.

- 73% of students were pair-tested with 63% of those students completing one or more levels. Overall, 46% of students with 12 or more hours completed one or more levels in 2006-2007. However, unlike all previous years of AEFLA reporting, Nevada did not meet performance indicators. Six of the 11 Educational Functioning Levels, as negotiated, were met or surpassed.
  - The State exceeded the "entered employment" measure by 2%, coming in at 76%. "Retained employment" came in at 79%, one percentage point shy of the 80% goal.
  - With a successful GED percentage of 57% (53% negotiated measure), the State is grateful for the efforts of several program directors who made this outcome a "mission." Two programs have increasingly strong GED programs which makes us assume that GEDs will probably continue to grow in Nevada. 57% for 2007-2008 compares to 43% for 2006-2007, suggesting that this is a strong possibility.
  - The goal of postsecondary education or training is a difficult one in Nevada with its particular population configuration in the ABE/ESL programs (83% ESL instruction). As some of the programs are focusing on GED attainment for all students, Nevada's enrollment in post-secondary education is increasing. 2007-2008 yielded a 37% outcome in this category as compared to a 13% outcome the previous year. The negotiated level was 15%.
  - All in all, the State continues to reach the majority of its negotiated performance measures. Just as importantly, all programs strive to treat their adult students with dignity and to lead them to higher educational levels.
- 3. Describe how the Eligible Agency has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities. Include a description of how the eligible agency is being represented on the Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), adult education's involvement on the State WIB, the provision of core and other services through One-Stop system and an estimate of the Title II funds being used to support activities and services through the One-Stop delivery system.**
- There are two One-Stops in Nevada. There is adult education representation on each local WIB, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction represents adult education on the Governor's WIB. The Director of the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education represents the Superintendent on this board in his absence and serves as the chair for the Individual Training Account (ITA) Taskforce. There is also informal interaction between the ABE programs and the One Stops.

- One of the ABE/ESL program directors sits on the NevadaWorks Board. (The Nevada Works Board oversees the Nevada JobConnect [One-Stop] offices in northern Nevada.)
  - She is also a member of the JobConnect Consortium which directly oversees the three One-Stops in the northern part of the State.
  - Leadership funds have been used to establish GED On-Line in several One-Stops with more placements planned. These are for direct client referral and are very popular with the One-Stop partners.
  - CALL is working with One-Stops in the implementation of its Family Literacy program.
  - NNLC maintains its collaborative relationships with One-Stop partners at both the Sparks and Reno JobConnect offices. Referrals are made from and to the ABE program.
- 4. Describe successful activities and services supported with EL Civics funds, including the number of programs receiving EL Civics grants and an estimate of the number of adult learners served.**
- All EL/Civics classes focused primarily on CASAS Content Area 5: Government and Law. In addition to civics and citizenship content, these courses include basic English writing, reading, listening and speaking skills. Adult learners enrolled in classes were assessed prior to their learning experiences using a CASAS assessment series.
  - 83 of CALL's 99 EL/Civics students were post-tested. 32 of these students passed the USCIS exam, successfully gaining their citizenship.
  - CSN served 746 EL/Civics students. 44% completed one or more levels. (562 students pre and post tested with a 59% level completion rate.) Of those, 69% completed a level. Curricula have been specifically developed for each level of English Literacy/Civics.
  - NNLC uses a competency-based curriculum which addresses the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation, and U.S. government. The curriculum also addresses community resources and develops the students' understanding of their role as community members.
  - TMCC's EL/Civics projects stress contextualized learning in which language and literacy are developed through practical, immediately relevant, thematic units. Experiential learning concepts such as the "classroom without walls" in which students are actively engaged in community pursuits are integrated into program delivery.