

## Texas Narrative Report 2007-2008

**I. The state leadership funds were used to fund numerous statewide initiatives and activities to successfully implement the goals of the State Plan. Seventeen state level initiatives were developed or implemented in 2007-2008. These activities are described below.**

NOTE: One significant additional event was planned at the local level by one of the Regional Teacher Training Projects (Project GREAT). The GREAT Center developed a post secondary partnership during 2006-2007 and continued it in 2007-2008 and established a technical working group made up of adult education local program directors and management staff from the local community college system. The partnership also included a state prison system staff member. The goal was to increase the number, percentage, and success of adult education students transitioning into post secondary. The activity agreed upon by the technical working group was to organize and host a joint conference for adult education instructors and development education instructors to exchange ideas regarding the success and persistence of transitioning adult education learners. The conference was planned for the 2008-2009 program year. The technical working group built strong working relationships, discovered many barriers experienced by adult learners attempting to transition to post secondary, and realized that there was no communication between the two systems at the local level. The conference was scheduled for statewide registration and participation in September 2008.

Other state leadership activities and initiatives are listed below:

1. **Adult Education Credential Project for Teachers and Administrators** - An instrument of empowerment--allowing and encouraging adult education practitioners to take control of their own professional development. Teachers and administrators completing the requirements of the credential are recognized by the Commissioner of Education with a certificate of completion. The state association recognizes completers also. The project will continue into the next program year with plans to complete the pilot and make credentialing a standard optional practice across the state.
2. **CredITS – Data-base for Credential Project** - The Credential Information Tracking System (CredITS) is a web-based electronic computer application adult educators, staff and regional administrators throughout Texas to organize and track the efforts to complete course requirements toward teacher and administrator credentials. The system supports efforts to standardize professional development and ensure program quality for educators specializing in adult education. This is an ongoing state leadership project.
3. **Texas Industry Specific for English Second Language (TISESL)**- Modular curriculum responses to workforce-related instructional needs of adult learners with limited English proficiency for three industry clusters – healthcare, manufacturing, and sales and service. The industry specific curriculum pilots were completed in 2007-2008 with plans for implementation in the next program year. The curriculum is intended for instruction at the English as a Second Language Beginning High and Intermediate Low levels. Numerous programs plan to implement in the 2008-2009 program year.
4. **AEGIS (Adult Education Guidance Information System) – Electronic Desk Monitoring and Review is a computer application** that supports the Texas LEARNS Grant Services Managers and the Texas Education Agency in confirming program compliance for grants funded by TEA and administered by the state office. This project has been implemented and provides valuable information for examining local program progress.
5. **Content Standards Implementation** for Texas Adult Education - National standards-based framework (*Equipped for the Future-EFF*) linked to the three primary roles that motivate adult learners to continue their education and focus on their roles as **family members, workers, and**

**community members.** The common foundation for adults seeking career path opportunities and gainful employment is a desirable outcome shared by adult education as well as business and industry. Although optional in 2007-2008, the majority of local programs implemented the Content Standards. Standardized training is provided by the GREAT Centers.

6. **Distance Learning Implementation** –As a member of the University of Michigan’s [Project IDEAL](#), a national consortium of states supporting distance education delivery for adult learners, Texas has developed policy and reporting requirements for adult learners enrolled in distance education programs, effective July 1, 2007. In anticipation of this decision, Texas LEARNS formed a distance education committee with statewide representation to develop state policy that would provide guidance for distance education providers and comply with federal policy. In brief, state policy defines distance education as a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period. The distance education policy is included in the state assessment policy. DL 101, an online course providing professional development for teachers and administrators of distance education, is provided by the regional GREAT Centers. Local programs must complete the DL 101 before providing distance education.
7. **Getting Results Educating Adults in Texas (GREAT) Centers - Eight regional teacher training centers** – The GREAT Centers provide professional development for English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, and Adult Secondary Education Teachers as well as Volunteers and Tutors. Each center serves a region of the state, hosts a quarterly professional development planning meeting with local program directors and other stakeholders funded with AEFLA (Corrections and EL Civics included) and TANF grants, assists with statewide conferences, initiatives, business meetings, and trainings, and provides the collaboratively planned professional development to the region’s teachers, aides, and administrators including training on data collection, data entry and data analysis. Training is provided in a variety of formats including face-to-face, distance, Webinar, Online discussion, book study, academies, workshops, etc. The GREAT Centers provide all required state trainings including training on TEAMS (the state management information system), assessment training, and content standards training. The GREAT Centers meet quarterly with Texas LEARNS for statewide planning and implementation of the state priorities.
8. **Leadership Excellence Academy: *Connecting Local Adult Education Leaders to Ideas, Research, and Innovation*** -The academy, provided by a joint initiative of National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) and ProLiteracy America (PLA), provides a two-year professional development series designed for local program administrators and leads to national certification in Program Improvement. Learning gained during participation goes toward obtaining a Texas Administrator Credential, provides training on using self-assessment to identify strengths and needs, takes a look at teaching and learning research, and provides instruction on using data to guide program management. More than 50% of local programs participated in the first cohort in 2007-2008, and a second cohort is planned for the next program year.
9. **Literacy Volunteer Training and CBO/FBO Capacity Building Initiative** – An objective of the Clearinghouse Project at TCALL who collaborates with Texas LEARNS and the statewide literacy coalition organizations (Literacy Texas) to support program and professional development for community-based and faith based literacy programs and volunteers not currently receiving federal funds. The goal is to **build capacity of Community Based Organization (CBO) and Faith Based Organization (FBO) partners and assist volunteer organizations with support so that CBO’s and FBO’s may be competitive when applying for federal funds. In addition, the Texas Education Agency offers fiscal principles training for CBO’s and FBO’s to prepare programs to manage a federal and state budget.**

10. **Math Institutes** –This initiative was created after participating in the national GED Mathematics Training Institute in Washington DC where the findings of an analysis conducted by the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) were revealed. The analysis pointed out the four most commonly-missed areas of the GED mathematics test—(1) Geometry and Measurement (2) Reading and Interpreting Graphs and Tables (3) Application of Basic Math Principles to Calculations (4) Problem Solving and Mathematical Reasoning. To target these four problem areas and raise scores on the GED mathematics test across our state, Texas LEARNS and staff from the Texas A&M University-Kingsville South Region GREAT Center, formed The Texas Adult Basic Education Statewide GED Mathematics Institute. It consisted of two three-day training sessions in which master trainers are given the tools necessary for improving math instruction and who, in turn, will be able to train their peers throughout the state of Texas. This initiative is an optional training for all teachers through the GREAT Centers.
11. **Report Card Training** - comprehensive report card designed to showcase individual program performance and compare with state and national averages. Training is provided to local programs to complete the report card with the goal to offer programs a chance to build public support for adult education, inform students and others about program quality, and highlight efforts in program accountability. Additionally, implementing the report card benefits programs by providing a ready source of information about local and state performance over time, assists in addressing the challenges programs face, and informs programs of any needed improvements. The report card not only serves as a catalyst for program improvement but also a performance evaluation tool. A state-wide report has also been created to gage state performance. The initiative is ongoing with updates annually.
12. **Shop Talks and WorkforceLitTex Listserv** — Best Practices in Workforce Literacy is a series of informative releases from Texas LEARNS that has two purposes: to address issues, concerns, and questions raised by adult educators, employers, and local workforce development personnel; and to build awareness and expertise in meeting the educational needs of Texas’ emerging, incumbent, and displaced workers. These publications have proven to be a popular additional resource for stakeholders. The series is posted on a list serve made up of one-stop partners, post-secondary partners, and adult education local program directors to facilitate local collaborative planning and partnerships between ABE directors and the workforce development community and to exchange best practices and to foster and encourage collaborative efforts within the *Tri-Agency Partnership (Title I, Title II, and Perkins)*. The original intention of the list serve was to allow adult educators and local workforce development board staff to learn and understand each other’s professional language and to describe best practices in each context. This initiative is the result of joint planning among the tri-agencies.
13. **Special Learning Needs Initiative** - A series of intensive teacher trainings. The first year of the initiative focused on “*Effective Instruction for All Adult Education Students Including Those with Special Learning Needs.*” Thirty-three adult educators successfully completed the training and are Special Learning Needs Resource Specialists. The training was taught by nationally recognized consultants in the field of learning disabilities. The Special Learning Needs Training Institute provided 90 hours of intensive training which will enable the Resource Specialist to use their training in the classroom and in their local program to practically help adult education students with disabilities and special learning needs along with the many barriers and challenges faced by the adult student population. The initiative will continue into the next program year to build capacity to provide intensive special learning needs training throughout the state.
14. **TCALL (Texas Center for Advancement of Literacy and Learning) at Texas A&M University** - The mission of TCALL is to provide leadership and service to those meeting the literacy needs of adult learners and their families. As the state literacy resource center, TCALL

provides knowledge, services, information, resources, and research opportunities for the fields of adult and family literacy. In addition, TCALL supports the fields' pursuit of excellence by anticipating and responding to their needs and national trends, and enable practitioners to connect with each other as well as with state leadership by providing a central communication hub. TCALL is the **state's adult education clearinghouse and provides the following statewide services to Texas Adult Educators**

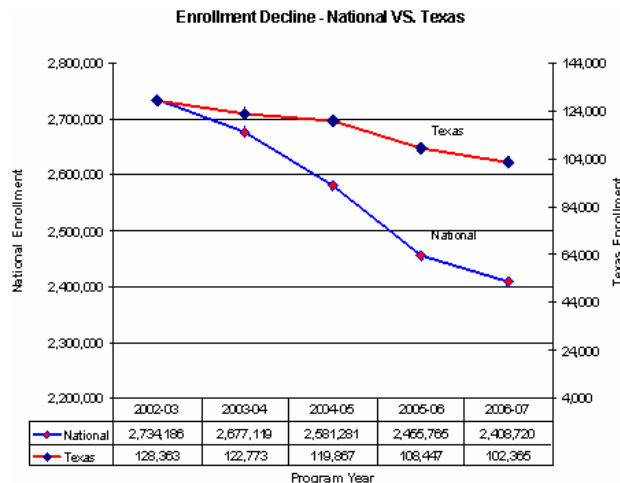
- Resources and information for adult and family literacy educators in Texas
  - Web site gateway to information about adult and family literacy education, resources, initiatives, and partnerships
  - Free practitioner-oriented publication, *Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly*
  - Comprehensive Directory of Non-profit Adult and Family Literacy Providers in Texas
  - Email discussion lists, including Adult Education Administrators, Teachers, Family Literacy, and Workforce Literacy, as well as other special purpose discussion lists
  - Research projects relevant to the adult and family literacy community in Texas, including support to two TCALL Fellows conducting doctoral research in adult literacy at Texas A&M University
  - Event planning and registration for statewide meetings support of statewide professional development initiatives
  - Volunteer Literacy Training Initiative to provide support for professional development of community-based literacy program volunteers and leaders
  - Basic English Skills Test (BEST) dissemination at state discount price
  - An Information and Referral Hotline for adult students and other stakeholders
  - Texas representative in the National Institute for Literacy's Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) and other appropriate national and regional initiatives
15. **TEAMS (Texas Educating Adult Management System)** – The Management information system was developed based on the business rules in the National Reporting System (NRS) for adult education reporting. The TEA owned and developed management information system for adult basic education is secured, web-based, real-time, and maintains information about students and staff in adult education programs throughout the state. Data collected is used for mandated Federal and state reporting requirements as well as identifying successful programs or those that may need improvement.
16. **Texas Education Agency GED Unit and Adult Education Official GED Practice Test Pilot-** Volunteering adult education programs and GED Testing Centers in Texas participated in a pilot project to increase the number of test takers who pass the GED. Of the thousands of adults who take the GED annually, only a fraction participates in an adult basic education class to prepare for the GED test. Many are walk-ins with not formal preparation. The GED is open to persons beyond compulsory education, i.e., the same population that is served in adult education. Adult education enrollment is not required before taking the GED exam. Between 40,000 and 80,000 persons are administered an official GED test annually in Texas. The passing rate statewide is below the national average. In Texas, adult education enrolls approximately 15% of the population who take the GED exam in adult secondary education classes with approximately 85-88% passing rate. The GED Official Practice Test (OPT) is recognized by the American Council on Education's General Educational Development Testing Service<sup>TM</sup> as a valuable tool in predicting if a person will pass or fail the GED exam. The Texas GED pilot established a requirement that every person who walks in to a GED testing center to take the GED be required to take the Official GED Practice Test and exhibit a passing score before being allowed to take the GED exam. The pilot took place over three years in various parts of the state with volunteering adult education programs partnering with volunteering GED

Test Centers. The results were positive, but state-wide implementation was not possible due to the overwhelming number of adults needing services and adult education remains at capacity. There are no plans to implement the practice testing statewide although many smaller communities have adopted the practice of requiring a passing score on the OPT before taking the GED exam.

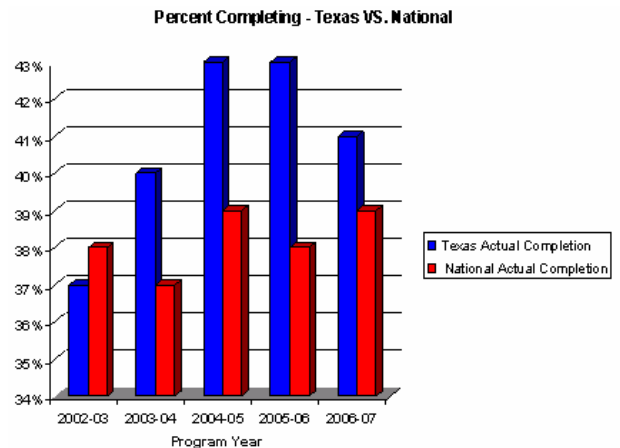
**17. TEA-Texas Department of Criminal Justice Partnership Initiative** - Agency Memorandum of Understanding between the TEA and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) – A renewed memorandum of understanding regarding services provided by adult education to recent state prison parolees. The objective of this program is to offer releasees choices and opportunities, within the realm of educational services to remain outside of prison and achieve maximum integration in the community. This partnership and MOU effective September 1, 2007 is a renewed effort from the original partnership established in 1995. The MOU will undergo review before August 31, 2011. **In 2007-2008, 748 parolees enrolled in adult education classes statewide. The main focus is to create a referral system between the two agencies and identify and reduce barriers for releasees who desire to complete their basic education.**

**II. 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.**

Upon examination of performance data, Texas has seen a steady decline in enrollment since 2002-2003. Again in 2007-2008, enrollment dropped by 9%. Enrollment in 2006-2007 was 102,365 and enrollment in 2007-2008 dropped to 93,242. The state’s decline in enrollment is compared to the national decline in the previous 5 years.

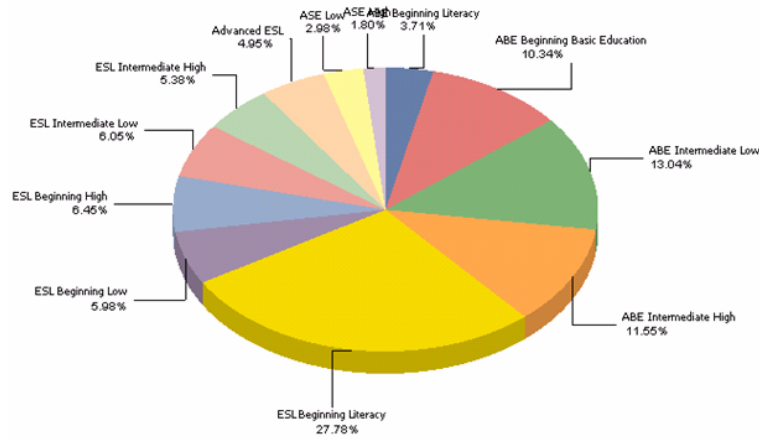


Although enrollment has declined, Texas has a higher completion rate when compared to a national completion rate.



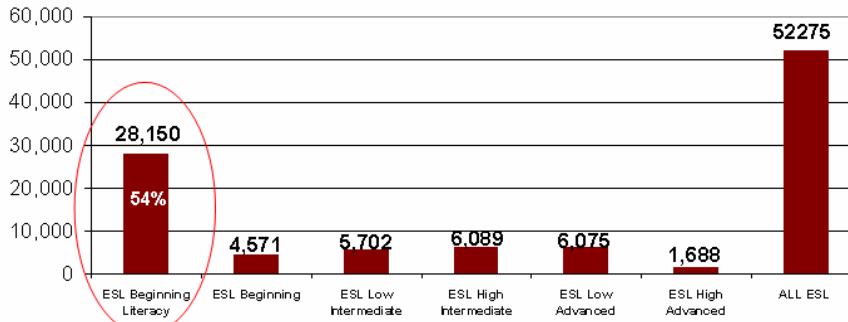
2007-2008 Table 4 show that the majority of students (56%) are enrolled in ESL. Approximately 5% are enrolled in ASE and 39% are enrolled in ABE.

**Total Participants by Educational Functioning Level**



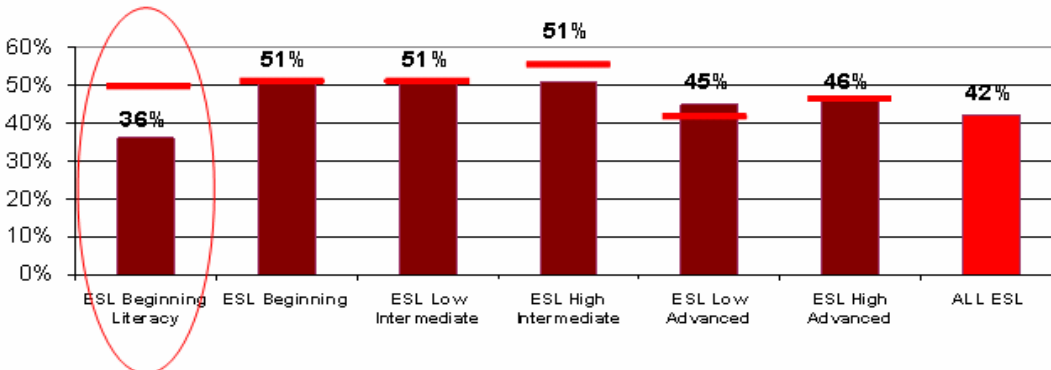
Taking a closer look at the ESL enrollment, 54% of ESL students are enrolled in the Beginning Literacy level.

**Numbers of Students Enrolled in ESL by Level**



Further examination shows that the ESL Beginning Literacy level has the lowest percentage (36%) of completions. As a result the state has made ESL Beginning Literacy a priority and a statewide work group has been established to address this issue.

**2007-08 Percentage of ESL Level Targets and Completions**



Another significant finding is that students who are obtaining a GED (regardless of whether they exit the program) are at all levels of adult education. One thousand, three hundred and fifty (1,350) ESL students set a goal to obtain a GED and 17% or 235 were successful. Interestingly, 83 ESL were from the Beginning Literacy level. The overwhelming majority of students who received a GED were from the ABE program. Eight thousand six hundred and fifty-five (8,655) students in the ABE program set a goal to obtain a GED and 45% or 3,865 obtained a GED. One hundred and six who obtained a GED were from the ABE Beginning Literacy Level. The table below is a state reporting table. It captures the large number of students who obtain GED's regardless of whether or not they exit the program.

**Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS)**

**GED Count with Educational Functioning Level**

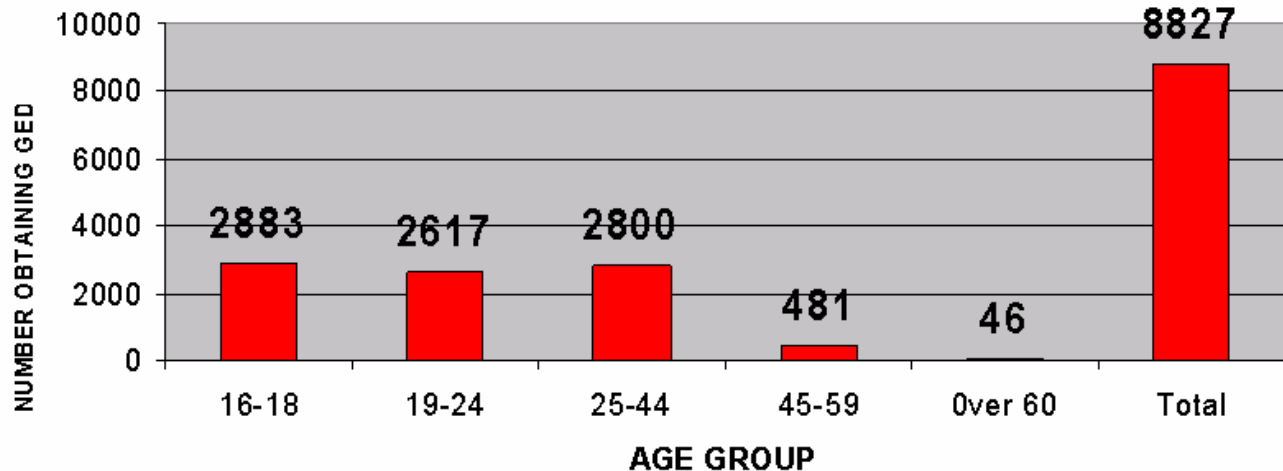
School Year: **2007 - 2008**  
 Reporting Group: **Regular Adult Ed. Reporting**  
 Fiscal Agent: **Statewide**  
 Funding Source: **Regular Adult Ed (TEA St & Fed) English Literacy Civics Education, Corrections & Institutionalized TEA**  
 12 Hour Rule: **Yes**  
 Validated: **Yes**

Educational Functioning Level at Start of the FY	Total Number Enrolled with GED Goal	Total Attendance Hours with GED Goal	Total Number Achieved GED with GED Goal	Total Attendance Hours with GED	Weighted Average Percent Outcome
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)
ABE Beginning Literacy	543	44,150.25	106	12,038.75	20%
ABE Beginning Basic Education	1,687	154,806.25	351	48,131.50	21%
ABE Intermediate Low	2,742	245,613.25	1,026	116,396.50	37%
ABE Intermediate High	3,683	289,781.50	2,382	208,892.75	65%
<b>ABE Subtotal</b>	<b>8655</b>	<b>734,351.25</b>	<b>3865</b>	<b>385,459.50</b>	<b>45%</b>
ESL Beginning Literacy	504	68,061.00	83	24,398.75	16%
ESL Beginning Low	114	19,935.50	25	7,310.50	22%
ESL Beginning High	185	27,905.75	24	6,418.75	13%
ESL Intermediate Low	201	32,284.50	38	10,345.50	19%
ESL Intermediate High	271	44,436.75	43	10,746.00	16%
Advanced ESL	75	11,764.50	22	6,348.75	29%
<b>ESL Subtotal</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>204,388.00</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>65,568.25</b>	<b>17%</b>
ASE Low	1,390	89,971.50	1,121	74,360.00	81%
ASE High	924	45,362.75	817	39,483.00	88%
<b>ASE Subtotal</b>	<b>2314</b>	<b>135,334.25</b>	<b>1938</b>	<b>113,843.00</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12319</b>	<b>1,074,073.50</b>	<b>6038</b>	<b>564,870.75</b>	<b>49%</b>



In addition the obtainment of a GED by Age Group shows that the majority of GED's are obtained by students who are between the ages of 16 to 18 years of age - an ever increasing population.

### 2006-07 GED OBTAINMENT BY AGE GROUP



**III. 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, adult education's involvement on the State Workforce Investment Board, the provision of core and other services through the one-stop system and an estimate of the Title II funds being used to support activities and services through the one-stop delivery system.**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is a member of the Texas Workforce Investment Council. TEA has designated Texas LEARNS to coordinate with the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) and serves as a resource to the TWIC System Integrations Technical Assistance Committee (SITAC). TWIC, through the Office of the Governor, and appointed members who provide “strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce development system; promotes the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas; and advocates the development of an integrated workforce development system that provides quality services.”

A Tri-Agency Partnership Committee consists of members of the Texas Workforce Commission (Title I), Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Perkins) and TEA/Texas LEARNS. The tri-agency group meets to implement workforce related Adult Basic Education strategies. TWC and local workforce development boards coordinate with adult education providers and handle job skills training and job placement.

Texas LEARNS also works closely with The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to promote and work towards a seamless transition of adult education students to post secondary education, including community college, technical colleges and four-year universities. This partnership works to match data to find out the next steps adult learners are taking in their education, as well as exploring possibilities and working to address the significant and ever increasing number of developmental education students. Coordination is also continuing on the implementation of Rider 77/50. During 2007-2008, the Texas Legislature mandated the two agencies to develop and implement immediate and long-range coordinated action plans to align Adult Basic Education and postsecondary



education. To increase the number, success and persistence of students transitioning to postsecondary education, these action plans shall address at a minimum:

- a. Outreach and advising;
- b. Assessment, curriculum, and instruction;
- c. Persistence interventions;
- d. State-level accountability systems to monitor performance;
- e. Service-provider-level performance measures and program evaluation;
- f. Standards to enhance data quality and sharing among state agencies and service-providers;
- g. Needs assessment of students and service-providers to identify other structural issues and barriers; and
- h. Grants (including Federal Funds and other funds) to maximize effective use of limited General Revenue funds.

Texas has a Workforce Literacy Resource Team that meets quarterly to promote communication and action among the tri-agency partnership. In addition, the three agencies are represented on the State P-16 Council. Other activities include the development of the Texas Industry-Specific English as a Second Language Curriculum implementation and the Workforce List Serve hosted and moderated by the statewide adult education clearinghouse. The culminating activity for the three agencies was a conference in April 2008 that brought employers, economists, Title I partners and one-stop center staff, adult educators, higher education staff and national presenters together for a statewide planning meeting.

#### **IV. 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.**

EL Civics funds were distributed through a competitive grant application process in 2007, and a total of 56 programs were funded by the Texas Education Agency in 13 Community colleges, 32 local education agencies and 11 community based organizations. These 56 programs served 10,705 students and logged in 880,856 contact hours. Forty-nine percent (49%) or 5,232 EL Civics students completed at least one educational functioning level while enrolled. Self-reported information from adult education MIS showed that 454 students became citizens during 2007-2008.

The state office at Texas LEARNS hosted a three-day institute and a one-day business meeting for EL Civics programs. The three-day institute was held August 22-24, 2007. EL Civics programs may apply for \$100,000 to provide the three components of the EL Civics program. The three components are: Civic Enrichment, Civics Implementation, and Intergenerational Participation. Programs must address at least two of the components with activities that engage adults into English Literacy combined with Civics.

The topics covered were:

- Managing an EL Civics Budget
- Statutes, Rules, Policies
- Technical Assistance
- Managed Enrollment/Student Intake
- Goal Setting
- Student Orientation
- State Assessment Policy

- Performance Measures
- Components of EL Civics
- Family Literacy
- Texas Teacher and Administrator Credential
- National Leadership Excellence Academy
- Professional Development Planning
- TEAMS (MIS) Overview Training
- Resources
- Learning Disabilities
- Distance Learning
- AEGIS (Quarterly Desk Review)

The business one-day meeting was held February 27, 2008. The presentations were:

- TEAMS Data & Program Improvement
- Keynote Speaker: *Robert Scott, Commissioner of Education*
- Distance Learning
- Report Card Update
- Special Learning Needs Initiative
- Performance-Based Funding
- Rider 82 – Workplace ESL Curriculum
- Math Initiative
- Budget - “*Spend Your Money*”
- TEAMS (MIS) Update
- Leadership Excellence Academies
- Administrator’s Credential

Texas remains committed to serving adults with at quality basic education program. Valuable professional development for teachers and administrators, well planned state leadership activities, a quality management information system, and statewide enthusiasm combined provide adults with a viable second chance for success.