

North Dakota
Adult Education and Family Literacy
2008-2009 Narrative Report

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.

The ND Manual of Accountability and State Standards (ND-MASS) continues to be reviewed and edited to include the latest policy and best practice information for local Adult Learning Centers (ALC). This manual is a State Leadership activity to provide guidance and assist local Centers in the program improvement process regarding the implementation of the Adult Basic and Secondary Education (ABSE) programs in North Dakota. The Department of Public Instruction is committed to providing strong leadership to the local programs to enhance policy, practice and the continuous program improvement process. The Manual contains chapters on orientation, registration and enrollment, assessment, goal setting and LEAP resources, gathering student data, student performance, program improvement, exiting and follow-up, and record keeping.

The ND-MASS was used in the New Director Orientation held August 13, 2009 for seven (7) new ALC Directors who assumed their position within the past two years. Other topics included budgets, reporting, SIMS, monitoring and legislative activities.

For the second year the DPI sponsored, State Leadership funded publication *The Road to Success*; booklet was disseminated to an audience of 1,550 educators, policymakers, statewide partners and prospective students. The booklet's purpose is to provide information about Adult Education in North Dakota through a variety of success stories as they relate to the GED, Displaced Homemaker, English as a Second Language and Refugee programs.

State Leadership funds provided support for the annual professional development activities during the Adult Education Fall Conference held September 29-30, 2009. A pre-conference session held for all 18 ALC Directors on September 28th focused on state and local program goals, 2009-2010 funding, performance indicators, SIMS (data collection policies, data quality, data usage and data entry), training on the revised assessment policy, professional development, legislative activity, monitoring and partnerships. The Conference was attended by 128 participants from both the Adult Learning Centers and Even Start Program staff. Conference evaluations were extremely positive.

A self assessment Professional Development Survey was created and provided on-line for all ALC staff to complete. A total of 47 (90%) responders indicated their level of proficiency in eight areas of adult education to include working with the adult learner, understanding the adult education system, assessments, planning for and delivering instruction, facilitating learning, using technology and developing as a professional. An executive summary was developed from the results and shared with all local sites. This information will drive the Adult Education and Family Literacy professional development activities for the next two years.

North Dakota will host the Missouri Valley Adult Education Association Conference (MVAEA) in April 2011. The MVAEA is the oldest regional adult education association in the United States and includes eight participating states.

State Leadership funds are used to maintain the ND Resource Center, which is located at Williston State College. Its purpose is to provide educational information, resources, technical assistance and professional development for teachers, administrators, parents, and students involved with Adult Learning Centers. Highlights from the annual report include:

- Plans to develop a statewide cadre with expertise in the areas of instruction/curriculum, technology, ESL, professional development and mentoring;
- Update and expand the NDALL role with professional development and sub-committee membership;
- Maintenance of a monthly electronic newsletter which has the capacity to reach 1200 recipients;
- coordination of professional development in the areas of math, science, technology, ESL, the new citizenship requirements, and grant writing;

The Adult Education State Director completed monitoring of each Adult Learning Center using a newly developed self assessment process. Final reports have been completed and sent to all sites with a schedule for compliance related activities/follow-up. Future monitoring of ALC's will be on a two- year rotational basis, unless needed more often.

Pursuant to the Federal monitoring Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for North Dakota, several changes had been made to the data collection system and process, utilizing the DPI Management Information Systems (MIS) unit. Additional recommendations have now included a complete system revision; subsequently, ND is working with Montana regarding a review and incorporation of their MABLE system. The estimated timeframe for complete review, transfer, set up, training and input is June 2010.

During the 2009 Legislative session, state funding for adult education within the Department of Public Instruction budget was increased and ultimately supported at \$1,850,000. Efforts are already underway to seek additional state funding in 2011 for students ages 16-21 using a portion of foundation aid payments.

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota is a private, nonprofit social service agency owned by the Eastern and Western Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Their many programs include New American Services, which works to help refugees establish a home in North Dakota after they are approved for admittance into the US. In their goal to bring 250 family units into the greater areas of Fargo and Bismarck, many ALC's have become instrumental in providing services. Subsequently, the need for ESL, tutor training and BEST Plus training increased since last year. The state trained a Fargo ALC staff member as its own state BEST Plus trainer. Two training sessions have been held and to date, 13 instructors have completed BEST Plus training.

Contact is maintained with all ALC's at least monthly to maintain relationships and exchange information as to enrollments, instruction, data collection and any requested technical assistance necessary. Presentations are given upon request to local service clubs, colleges, conferences, etc.

State staff continues to coordinate program services with other agencies at the State level as well as at the local level. Primary partners include the Workforce Development Council (as well as several sub-committees to include ND Works, the Youth Development Council, Workforce Intelligence), North Dakota Job Service, North Dakota Human Services, and sub-contractors for TANF. Additionally, there remains a long and strong history and relationship with local school districts, institutions for higher education, and regional career and technical education centers.

Tribal community colleges have given authorization for FINDET to release student data from the five tribal community colleges for data matching follow up. The State Vocational Rehabilitation office agreed to provide over \$65,000 for technology to various ALC's using ARRA stimulus funds; this partnership will allow the individual centers to better accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Dave Massey, long time State Director of Adult Education retired in February 2009 after 33 years of service to the State of North Dakota and the Adult Education program.

State level program goals for 2009-2011 were determined and include:

- 1) Ensure the financial needs of ND Adult Education programs with federal and state income for existing ALC sites. In addition to local program growth, expand satellite sites in rural areas.

Short-term goals:

- Identify geographical pockets of non-GED students, economic development indicators and educational partners;
- Identify legislative champions and develop strategy for 2011 legislative session;
- Monitor federal funding status and communicate with ND delegation regarding ND Adult Education needs.

- 2) Ensure the adult education infrastructure functions in an exemplary model to meet federal standards for quality student outcomes and services.

Short-term goals:

- Provide annual training on enrollment, data collection, follow-up process/procedures;
- Review annual performance indicators with ALC staff;
- Conduct quarterly audits on ALC SIMS data;
- Conduct monitoring of all ALC sites;
- Identify professional development needs of ALC staff and customize a PD plan to meet those needs;

- 3) Maintain and expand local and statewide collaboratives and partnerships to maximize resources for ALC sites, staff and students needs, to include recruitment strategies and meet economic development and workforce needs to advance student outcomes/opportunities.

Short-term goals:

- Actively participate in meetings which promote the mission, vision and goals of North Dakota's ALC program;
- Provide presentations and information to new partner groups which can advance and strengthen the ALC agenda.

4) Explore opportunities for ALC sites to have access to staff with proficiencies in counseling/social work and special education as well as career advisors.

Short-term goal:

- Develop a strategic statement of need and identify possible partner groups.

5) Develop and offer a companion curriculum which focuses on leadership training, computer literacy, workplace skills and community service.

Short-term goal:

- Develop a strategic statement of need and identify possible partner groups.

6) Amend HB 1400 to include GED students and develop criteria for post-secondary scholarship opportunities.

Short-term goals:

- Identify partners, meet with partners to inform of omission and anticipated outcomes, research similar national programs, determine appropriate criteria;
- Identify legislative champion, provide testimony to Education Interim Committee and Educational Commission.

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.

Across North Dakota, local Centers continue to perform with significant competency; creative and passionate staff utilizes innovative methods of instructional delivery. Unique partnerships have stretched the boundaries of system rules to meet individual student needs, resulting in incredible success stories. North Dakota continues to strive to meet superior performance indicators. On the contrary, challenges do exist to include:

- A. Total student participation continues to decline. Factors include -
 1. TANF's work rules place a significant burden on individuals' capacity to work and go to school.
 2. ND's economy remains strong; the October state unemployment rate was 3.2%, the November rate was 4.0%. There continues to be a strong demand for employees across the state; as a result potential adult students are working rather than attending school.
 3. Students between the ages of 16-21 seeking adult education services continue to grow faster than any other age range.
- B. The requirements surrounding student follow-up continues to be a challenge for the local Centers. The adult population continues to be mobile and many cannot be contacted to secure current and accurate information. The State and local Centers are committed to

continue all avenues to locate and contact students to secure the necessary information for accurate follow up data. Subsequently, our partnership with FINDET (Follow-up Information on North Dakota Education and Training; a consortium of several state agencies formed to develop and maintain a state longitudinal data system) will provide data matching in coordination with personal contact regarding employment verification (employment and retention of) and post secondary admission). The mutual relationship involved between agencies in data matching continues to evolve to meet common needs in a timely and quality manner.

- C. The local Centers have an increased understanding of the need for accurate data in all areas and how to use data to make decisions for effective and efficient programming, staffing and fiscal needs.
- D. Federal funding was cut this year and we continue to struggle to meet some of our goals to eliminate waiting lists for instruction, provide year round services and partner with local school districts for satellite sites to minimize attendee travel. The state award for ELCivics has been the same for several years (\$60,000) despite the growth in numbers and increased need for services. Despite high performance indicators, North Dakota was not awarded an Incentive Grant this year.

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.

As North Dakota is a single service area, all eligible agencies work collaboratively and effectively in meeting common goals and outcomes. Through the Workforce Development Council and its sub-committees, all partners have opportunities to seek input and share ideas, data, and reporting.

Local Centers, which are funded by Title II funds, maintain a strong working relationship with all local WIA partner agencies: Job Services, Human Services, education agencies, institutions of higher education, Career & Technical Centers, Job Corp and local governments.

The State Director of Adult Education is a member of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, sits on many committees and represents the State Education Department as well as the Title II programs.

The State Vocational Rehabilitation office agreed to provide over \$65,000 for technology to various ALC's using ARRA stimulus funds; this partnership will allow the individual centers to better accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Describe successful activities and services supported with EL/Civics funds, including the number of programs receiving EL/Civics grants and estimate the number of adult learners served.

North Dakota receives the minimum allocation (\$60,000) for EL Civics. Five local programs are funded which have the largest concentration of Refugee (ESL) students. Those programs have implemented the following activities in the past year:

- a. Provided citizenship classes.
- b. Civics instruction for all ESL students.
- c. Provided training to the staff on Common Ground curriculum.
- d. Developed civics curriculum for entry-level language classes.
- e. Field trips to historic and cultural sites.

Estimated number of students served with this grant: 254