

Iowa Narrative Report 2009-2010

Mission

The mission of Iowa's Adult Literacy Statewide Program is to provide accessible, quality instruction that develops life, work and literacy skills.

The major goals/purposes of Iowa's Adult Literacy Program State Plan Extension are to:

- Provide a comprehensive blue print for implementation of Title II of the Act as it now stands and to prepare for possible reauthorization.
- Serve as a basis for both immediate and long-range planning and continuous, systematic evaluation of program effectiveness.
- Provide a basis for common understanding among Iowa's literacy partners, other interested entities and the U.S. Department of Education.

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.

With the goals listed above in mind, Iowa funded two major projects with the 12.5% State Leadership funds: (1) the Iowa Literacy Resource Center (ILRC), and (2) the state staff development/leadership project. The federal allocation for Iowa has significantly decreased over the last few years. As a result, the budget for the ILRC has been reduced to provide as much funding as possible for local programs. Therefore, the services provided by the ILRC, although valued, have been reduced to fit the reduced budget.

I. Iowa Literacy Resource Center - Report for Program Year 2010

The Iowa Literacy Resource Center (ILRC) works closely with the Iowa Dept. of Education. The goal of the ILRC is to be responsive to the federal reporting needs and curriculum support needs of the adult literacy community in Iowa.

The Multi-media Collection

The ILRC continues to send materials to adult literacy learners, teachers and tutors across the state, though we've been unable to add new materials during the last year. The ILRC is like a public library specializing in instructional materials that allows teachers to supplement classroom materials as well as support their own professional development. Adult learners are also able to borrow materials so that they may do extra work without having to purchase their own books, videos or CDs. Over 2,100 items were checked out during Program Year 2010. Many teachers and tutors take advantage of our extended borrowing period and use the materials for an entire year.

National Reporting System

The ILRC continues to work with the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to provide Iowa's adult literacy local programs the best tools to assess and assist instruction to Iowa adult students. This work also includes compiling data used by the U.S. Dept. of Education: Division of Adult Education and Literacy (USDE:DAEL) to evaluate state and local adult literacy programs as reported by the National Reporting System (NRS). The ILRC collects real-time data from all of Iowa's federally funded adult literacy programs and provides analysis for documents like Iowa's Community College Adult Literacy Annual Report. Making the reports possible includes: (1) server maintenance, (2) website development and (3) technical support to TOPSpro software users in the field

Literacy Program Support

The ILRC's support to the field also includes the website, www.readiowa.org. It is used to share all types of information, from state policy directives to locally produced lesson plans. The site also allows viewers to initiate an instant message contact with ILRC staff without needing any special software on their own computer. Last year the site received 1,540,488 hits by more than 255,000 visitors. Many of whom then made over 1,300 contacts by phone, email or instant message for more information.

The ILRC continues to host several topic area list-servs and an online forum to enable the sharing of ideas between members of the field.

II. State Staff Development Leadership Project

The State Staff Development Leadership Project is designed to fund and coordinate state level staff development activities in the following areas: (1) NRS reporting, (2) program improvement, (3) GED 2002 preparation activities, and (4) CASAS statewide staff development activities.

The impact of professional development on instruction and adult learner outcomes is evaluated against the following criteria:

- Statewide implementation, adoption and diffusion into adult literacy instructional strategies, methodologies and curriculum infusion;
- Long-term improvement in program outcomes measured by the state and local program's ability to continually meet negotiated benchmark levels.
- Adult learner assistance to effectively meet personal and program literacy goals.

Following is the summary of activities conducted during the 2009-2010 program year:

ABE Institute

The annual Adult Literacy (ABE) Summer Institute presented the *Navigating the Winds of Change* conference on July 16-17, 2009 in Marshalltown, IA for all Adult Literacy coordinators, teachers and support staff. There were over 20 sessions from which 134 participants could choose, which included peer sharing, spelling, writing and math strategies for learning disabled, GED strategies, human trafficking, and NIFL website learning activities among others. Professional development for Learning Disabilities had earlier been identified by the state staff development leadership team's surveys/input as an area needing professional development support for instructors. Thus, the keynote presentation, *You Can't Change the Wind, So Change Your Sails: Adjusting to Learning Differences*, was provided by a nationally recognized authority on adult learning disabilities, Dr. Richard Cooper, and focused on adult literacy and learning disabilities. Dr. Cooper expanded upon his ideas and strategies in two breakout sessions.

Iowa Literacy Council

This advocacy group includes diverse business and education members from all over the state who support literacy. In PY 2010, the council had presentations on and learned about financial literacy resources, Central Iowa Shelter and Services for the homeless, Drake's use of technology in Adult Literacy, and the *Pure Phonics* reading program for adult learners, as used by the Iowa Department of Corrections' program. The Iowa Literacy Council met September 11, 2009 at Well Fargo, West Des Moines, IA; November 20, 2009 at Central Iowa Shelter & Services, Des Moines IA; March 26, 2009 at Drake University Adult Literacy Center, Des Moines, IA; and May 7, 2010 at Corinthian Baptist Church, Des Moines, IA.

Learning Disabilities Training

Iowa provided a regional training for “Learning to Achieve: A Research-Based Training on Serving Adults with Learning Disabilities” from the National Institute for Literacy on August 3-7, 2009 in West Des Moines, IA. This further supported instructional professional development in Learning Disabilities. Twelve participants from Iowa, along with 11 others from three other states, received training to train others over the course of the 2010 program year. From October-June, Iowa’s trainers not only held local face to face trainings but included a two-part distance learning opportunity over Iowa Communications Network (ICN) on November 6, 2009 and March 12, 2010. These two presentations were videotaped and placed at the Iowa Literacy Resource Center for check out. There were over one hundred participants in Iowa’s regional and state trainings throughout the program year, as well as three participants from a neighboring state.

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) Training

A CASAS Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) “Kickoff” Training was held September 10, 2009 in Des Moines, Iowa with thirty-seven participants attending. This was followed with a TOPSpro Benchmark training on March 23, 2010 in Ankeny, IA for forty-three participants. Additionally, a CASAS Implementation Training (IT) was held over the ICN on September 17, 2009 for twenty-eight participants; and a CASAS Writing Recertification Training October 1, 2009, which resulted in twenty-eight local certified examiners.

CASAS Trainers

CASAS-certified Trainers Cadre includes: 1 basic IT , 1 Providing Options for the Workplace, Education, and Rehabilitation (POWER), 1TOPSpro, and 3 Functional Writing Assessment (FWA) trainers. These experts conduct training in their content areas as needed across the state and at conferences. All trainers participate in re-certification participation with CASAS.

Writing Skills

Iowa has had over nine years of experience with the CASAS Functional Writing project. There are local (28), state (2), and national (1) readers who have been trained to administer, score and use materials to teach writing. All colleges have had professional development on this topic. In 2010, the state level reader/trainer held an annual recertification and was responsible for ongoing in-services. As one outcome, Iowa's Writing Certificates increased from 210 issued in PY 2006 to 401 in PY 2010, as more emphasis is placed upon transitioning adult literacy students into certificate programs and post secondary, writing will be an area needing continued support for our adult learners.

Monitoring Visits to Colleges

The Adult Literacy State Director and Adult Literacy Consultants monitored all Community Colleges from January through June 2010. These included three on-site visits and twelve desktop visits. The purposes were to meet staff, learn about programs/facilities and procedures across the state, provide an opportunity for the staff at each center to ask questions/ to share ideas and concerns, and provide an opportunity for state staff to offer technical assistance. In addition, site monitoring included observation of instructional practices using a standard monitoring document that was provided to each center prior to the visit and extensive document review. Peer Coordinators were encouraged to participate as visiting monitors to expand sharing and collaboration. The monitoring tool and visits addressed data collection and reporting, instructional practices, benchmarks, materials, and assessment practices.

State Staff Development Committee

The State Staff Development Committee (now named the Adult Literacy Leadership Committee) is comprised of representatives from each community college, and teleconferences were held on a bi-monthly basis. The Committee reviews the staff development efforts of the previous year

and makes recommendations for the next year and long term (2-3yrs.). The Mission Statement was reviewed and updated in PY 2010. (Our Mission is to provide quality support, resources and training that will directly meet the professional needs of adult education instructors and staff). The Committee is also involved in planning the Adult Literacy (ABE) Summer Institute.

Performance-Based Funding (PBF)

Iowa received an award from The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), U.S. Department of Education, for training and technical assistance as part of its *Performance-Based Funding in Adult Education* project. As a result of this award, Iowa received customized support to help design new and/or refine existing performance-based funding (PBF) systems, and to address other state-specific issues associated with PBF implementation. Beginning in mid-January 2010, Iowa's community colleges identified representatives to participate in a PBF Task Force and worked with a team of two assigned PBF specialists to create a customized technical assistance plan that aligns with Iowa's project goals and specific needs. Technical assistance activities occurred between mid-January–September 2010, beginning with the plan development, and included on-site visits by the assigned specialists. A PBF Task Force Meeting was held June 2, 2010 in Ankeny, IA for 22 participants followed by additional meetings for the same group.

Other Staff Development

A collaborative training on the GED Connection Awareness and Implementation Workshop for thirty-five participants was held on October 16, 2009 over the ICN. A Content Standards Alignment workshop was held on October 9, 2009 for thirteen participants in Des Moines, Iowa; and a Study Circle presentation was held for Eastern Iowa Community College on February 16, 2010 in Davenport, IA. Training for WIN (Worldwide Interactive Network) and ACT in collaboration/support of the National Career Readiness Certificate goal was held on March 2, 2010 in Marshalltown, IA for forty-two participants. Webinar training for WIN was held on June 1, 2010. Also, a transitions workshop with Lynda Franco presenting was held June 22, 2010 for seventeen in Ankeny, IA. The online course "College Readiness for Adults: Beyond Academic Preparation" was offered to programs from World Education with two participants attending. Moreover, the CAELA steering committee reported and shared at the national meeting April 29 and 30, 2010 in Washington, D.C.; and ESL Regional Specialists received training on June 9 and 10, 2010 from the national CAELA trainers regarding Communicative Strategies.

Future Staff Development Plans:

ABE Institute

The ABE Institute held its collaborative conference, *Leading the Change in 2010: Transformation of Lifelong Learning*, with the Iowa Association for Lifelong Learning (IALL) on July 15 & 16, 2010 in Des Moines, IA. A pre-conference on the I-BEST (INTEGRATED BASIC EDUCATION SKILLS TRAINING) model by Kathy Cooper of Washington was included. The keynote speaker was Dr. Jayne Witte addressing *Navigating Change: Communication as a Compass*.

CASAS Implementation Training

A CASAS IT will be offered in fall 2010 for Reading and Math, a Writing re-certification and new local examiner training will be held in fall 2010; and a TOPSpro training will be held in fall 2010. On-line training from CASAS.org will be provided throughout the program year and two individuals will be sponsored to attend the CASAS Summer Institute in San Diego, CA.

Monitoring Visits

All Community Colleges will continue to have an annual monitoring review: a one/two-day site visit or annual desk-top monitoring review each year. This process will allow the State Director of Adult Literacy, State Staff Development Consultant and Federal Data Consultant to review the findings of the

previous year, observe classrooms, and meet staff. ABE Coordinators will have an opportunity to travel to another college and be a part of the review. In addition, the monitoring process will allow for a check on compliance with the federal ABE grant. Aspects of the visits include: selection criteria, benchmark and reporting, staff development, outreach and cooperative agreements, curriculum and instruction, English literacy/civics and observations. To facilitate the monitoring process, a rubric has been developed that identifies exemplary, intermediate and base level standards of excellence. The Adult Literacy Sub-committee for the Monitoring Instrument will review this document and process annually for revision/modification purposes.

ALWI

A partnership retreat was held in the fall of 2010 to support collaboration among Iowa's stakeholders. Additional professional development to support the initiative will continue throughout the year.

Performance-Based Funding (PBF)

Facilitation will continue with future task force meeting in the fall of 2010.

Other Staff Development

Facilitation will continue to be given to programs who wish to use National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) study circles, which are research-based. (Areas identified by the programs as priority targets include Retention and Reading strategies.) Also, on-going support will be provided as needed for Learning Disabilities and other targeted topics.

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.

The following observations were made relative to the evaluation of the effectiveness of Iowa's programs for adult literacy and an analysis of Iowa's benchmark performance goals for 2009-2010.

1. Iowa experienced an 8.4% increase in NRS reported enrollment with a 2.9% decrease in ESL, 7.2% decrease in ASE and a 28% increase in ABE. This indicates the direction we need to go in offering professional development opportunities to better prepare instructors to serve this population.
2. We saw decreases in the pre/post assessment percentages of ABE (-32%), ASE (-13%) and ESL (-14%). Pre-post assessment percentages decreased significantly in all three areas because of the exclusion of all students between 12-39 hours of instruction without post assessments. Iowa began monitoring and enforcing the 40 hour rule in November of 2009. Iowa anticipates a further decline in pre/post assessment percentages for data year 2011 because the 40 hour parameter will have been monitored and enforced for an entire program year. Based on the 2011 data set, Iowa will have the necessary information to set appropriate pre/post assessment percentages for local programs.
3. The major areas for program improvement are in all EFL levels except for ASE High. Data year 2011 (July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011) will establish a 40 hour of instruction baseline with the revised hours of instruction parameters. Once the baseline is calculated, Iowa will have information needed to improve based on the changed data parameters for post testing after 40 hours of instruction. With apples-to-apples comparisons from data year 2011 to 2012, Iowa will begin the process of establishing trend data, over time, with local programs. After Iowa completes five years of data with the 40 hour parameters, professional development will be delivered with increased precision, based on an adequate number of years with which to draw conclusions, from a longitudinal data set. Until that time, we will continue to provide professional development and technical assistance to the field to assist programs in their adjustment to changes in performance levels. Iowa will continue to pursue high levels of pre/post assessment percentages.

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 Iowa community college consortium based adult literacy delivery system has successfully integrated the activities sponsored under Title II with other relevant adult education, career development and employment and training activities. The integration has been achieved through the cooperation, collaboration and coordination efforts achieved through the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Workforce Development and Iowa Department of Human Services and Iowa Department of Corrections working collaboratively to achieve common goals and objectives. The Title II component has been identified as the basic literacy skills component of the overall WIA state level collaborative efforts. The local adult literacy coordinator serves as the adult education representative on the Local Workforce Investment Board. The provision of core and other services is delineated in the state level MOU. A rough estimate would indicate that approximately 2-5% of Title II funds are used to support activities through the One-Stop delivery system.

With our WIA 503 incentive grant, a new level of partnership is taking place on the state and local levels between adult literacy and Iowa Workforce Development. The collaboration is supporting ALWI- adult literacy for the workforce in Iowa, which requires local adult literacy programs to build partnerships to meet local employment needs and prepare communities for the future. ALWI has been the catalyst for strengthening and deepening local relationships between the community college adult literacy programs and Iowa Workforce Development Regional Offices. Common goals and consistent practices to support adult literacy students in moving towards post-secondary education or a family sustaining wage through job training and credentials have united the agencies in these efforts.

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.

The EL Civics grants are used to support the EL population enrolled in civics and citizenship classes. The EL Civics classes are held in all 15 community college consortium sites throughout the state. The addition of the EL Civics funds has enabled the local programs to increase the number of classes to meet the educational needs of the immigrant population.

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA)

Iowa's ESL Regional Specialists conducted fall and spring regional trainings based upon Multi-level Teaching Strategies. The Eastern Team held face to face training on September 25, 2009 in Cedar Rapids, IA; and on April 9, 2010 in Dubuque, IA. The Central Team held face training on October 23, 2009 in Ankeny, IA; and April 23, 2010 in Ankeny, IA. The Western Team held face to face training on October 2, 2009 in Sioux City, IA; and on April 16, 2010 in Sioux City, Ia. Attendance at each training averaged between 20-30 participants, reaching approximately 60-80 unduplicated participants.

CAELA Trainers

The existence of Iowa's seven ESL Regional Specialists is the result of receiving the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition award for 2008-2010. The trainer of trainer model was used to develop Iowa's cadre of ESL trainers, who received training in Multi-level Teaching Strategies and Communicative Strategies from the national team. In addition, a needs survey, self-reflection instrument and an evaluation instrument were developed. All are posted on the CAELA/Iowa page website for others to use <http://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/profdev/states/iowa/index.html>.

Facilitation will continue to support programs' professional development for ESL instructors through ESL Regional Specialist teams.

Future Direction

- Iowa is presently involved in a WIA Incentive Grant for the grant period of July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2011 and will be implementing an additional round of funding that will cover July 1, 2010- June 30, 2012. The focuses of both grants are the design and implementation of **Adult Literacy for the Workforce in Iowa (ALWI)**. This effort will drive the professional development efforts and local program plans across the state. This is an opportunity for local programs to research economic and educational needs of their communities and to design, with key internal and external partnerships, an approach that will provide adult literacy students with transition opportunities to post-secondary and/or job training and placement. The statewide initiative, although customized in each community college, will provide a foundation for Iowa's future direction to meet the needs of the state, community colleges and students.

Iowa is fortunate to have this seed funding to build a new approach to adult literacy in preparation for our next state plan. In addition to building collaborative relationships across the state, we have introduced such initiatives as: National Career readiness certificates and WIN Curriculum, GED-I, customized orientation for adult literacy students, bridge classes, integrated basic and work skills classes, improved data collection and reporting, transition specialists at most colleges, employer supported job training programs geared specifically for adult literacy, and many other efforts. We consider the ALWI approach, which offers each community college the opportunity to use local data and research to design a program that fits with their local community, needs to be in the spirit of our state.

- Adult Literacy Coordinators will continue to meet two to four times a year face to face or through the ICN (Iowa Communications Network). In addition, we will continue to have monthly conference calls during which pressing issues are discussed and plans made for future meetings and events.
- The Adult literacy coordinators participated in a process to build a strategic plan for the future, modeled after what the State Director of Adult Literacy learned at the NRS Leadership Institute. Having a common language and focus will be instrumental in supporting Iowa through reauthorization and the development of the next state plan. After establishing the mission which introduces this narrative, the group identified the following:

Core Values:

Students and their achievement will be our first priorities.

- Data integrity will be expected on the state and local levels.
- Ongoing, sustainable professional development is essential for well trained staff.
- A continuous program improvement model drives state and local efforts.
- Our work will be responsive, transparent, equitable and auditable for quality and compliance with federal, state and local requirements.
- Research and innovation will guide Iowa's programs into the future.
- Cultural understanding, respect and integrity will be integrated in all programs.
- Partnerships with community are necessary for program success.

Vision Statements:

- Adult literacy services are available for adults who lack the basic educational skills or English language skills necessary in order to negotiate life, be employed and model successful learning for their families.

- Local administrators, community leaders and state government value and embrace our mission to provide adult literacy for all Iowans.
- Funding is earmarked specifically for Adult Literacy to ensure quality classrooms and curriculum.
- Qualified and reasonably compensated teachers and program leaders, both new and experienced, are motivated to participate in professional development opportunities that provide them with a range of knowledge about sound, research-based practices.
- Quality programs that are responsive and efficient support persistent and engaged students in their efforts to achieve their educational goals, serve as positive educational role models for their children and move into the workforce as responsible citizens who are fully capable of meeting life's demands.
- Strong partnerships exist with local workforce offices and other community resources, so we can use our respective agency strengths, expertise, and funding sources to help adults be prepared for success in work, community and family endeavors with a seamless process.
- Varied, flexible, innovative and research-supported instructional opportunities and materials are used to meet the learning styles and needs of our student population as they strive to gain the basic literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and English language skills needed in the workplace and to transition to post secondary education and training.
- Cultural understanding and respect are evident throughout Adult Literacy programs.

PY 2009 Matrix Demonstrating How Iowa's Activities, Programs and Projects Support the Implementation of the Goals of the State Plan and Purposes of the Plan Extension

Activity, Program or Project	State Plan Goals			Purposes of Plan Extension		
	Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;	Assist adults who are parents obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children;	Assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education.	Provide a comprehensive blue print for implementation of Title II of the Act;	Serve as a basis for both immediate and long-range planning and continuous, systematic evaluation of program effectiveness;	Provide basis for common understanding among Iowa's literacy partners, other interested entities and the U.S. Department of Education.
ILRC- NRS	√	√	√	√	√	√
Collection Development	√	√	√			
Literacy Program Support	√	√	√	√	√	√
State Staff Development Activities (CASAS, Study Circles, Learning Disabilities Training, PBF, ALWI)	√	√	√	√	√	
ABE Institute	√	√	√		√	
Iowa Literacy Council				√	√	
CASAS Training/Trainers	√	√	√		√	
Monitoring Visits				√	√	√
SSD Committee	√	√	√		√	√
Family Literacy	√	√	√			
Writing Skills	√	√	√			
State and National Conferences	√	√	√		√	
CAELA	√	√	√			