

## Louisiana Narrative Report 2009-2010

### Introduction

The dominant themes that prevailed over the State, and specifically the adult education program in Louisiana, were the budget crisis and transition of governance of adult education. The Louisiana Department of Education realigned programs for the second time in as many years in an effort to better serve districts, schools and the students of Louisiana. For FY 2009-2010, the Division of Family, Career, and Technical Education was changed to Division of Adult and Family Services to reflect the restructuring of programs within the Division.

In Louisiana, the overarching goal for adult education, which was administered by the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Adult and Family Services under WIA, 1999-2010, was **to build the capacity of the adult education and literacy system to provide customer-centered educational services, while improving student performance as part of accountability.** The need for a high quality and responsive adult education and literacy system has continued to be essential to cultivate the state's workforce.

Unlike the previous years, the state was spared the consequences and subsequent disruption of services experienced from catastrophic natural disasters, so the period from July 1, 2009-December 31, 2009 allowed local programs to concentrate on improved services for student enrollment and retention in their programs. However, there was much discussion of an impending budget crisis that culminated in mid-year budget cuts that were devastating to the adult education program. A mid-year budget cut of 67% in state funding for adult education was imposed upon the local program providers in January 2010. To their credit, the overwhelming majority of local providers sought and received support in the form of local funds to maintain level or near level program operations for the remainder of the year.

Later in January 2010, Governor Bobby Jindal announced that he would put forth legislation to move the governance of Adult Education from the Louisiana Department of Education to the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. The announcement was not unexpected, and was the culmination of several years of research and consideration regarding the best placement of Adult Education in Louisiana to benefit the more than 700,000 adults in need of services.

Conversations between the Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System regarding the transition of the duties and responsibilities for Adult Education, effective July 1, 2010, began immediately following the Governor's announcement. The transition was agreed upon by the Governor's office, and the leaders of each affected agency: President Joe D. May of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) and State Superintendent Paul Pastorek of the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE). For the remainder of the fiscal year, staff from each agency met regularly to ensure a seamless and transparent transition for the adult education program. Information was provided regularly to the field, as it became available, to keep them informed as partners in the process and to calm the inevitable angst that comes with change. The open dialogue between the state offices and the field were key to the seamless transition that occurred on July 1, 2010.

Evidence of the success in preparation for the transition can be seen in the program gains in the FY 09-10 year. Although much time and attention was directed to the transition, a balance was kept to evidence stability in the provision of program services, including an increase in the number served and participation in national professional development opportunities.

Statewide enrollment for FY 2009-2010 improved from the previous year. Enrollment increased from 27,268 in FY 2008-2009 to 30,931 in FY 2009-2010, which equates to a 12% increase. This increase

represents a convergence of two (2) key factors:

- An increase in the number of districts placed under the direction of a consortium administrator, improving enrollment and quality of service to clients.
- Local adult education providers continuing to provide high quality programs despite a severe mid-year decrease in funding.

The commitment of the programs to provide high quality adult education and literacy services to the adults in Louisiana remains strong. This was demonstrated by local providers who continued to deliver high, quality literacy programs and were able to maintain a consistent level of service, through a year that challenged them with the most severe decrease in funding known in recent times. Furthermore, programs were coping with the uncertainty of the future of their literacy programs as the adult education program prepared to transition from the LDE to the LCTCS.

There was a slight improvement in the percentage of students completing an educational functioning level and a 13% increase in enrollment. This improved performance is a testament to the commitment and professionalism the literacy providers bring to adult education in Louisiana.

**Section 1: A description of successful activities, programs, and projects supported with State Leadership funds and a description of the extent to which these activities, programs, and projects were successful in implementing the goals of the State Plan.**

Adult education programs in Louisiana continued to work with local stakeholders and other partnering agencies to facilitate new methods of service delivery, increase GED testing opportunities, expand instructional content, and provide technology to fill the gap between the basic skills of our citizens and skills needed for self-sufficiency. **Building capacity in adult education programs focuses on the following four areas: connecting assessment and accountability; developing new models for service delivery and outreach; expanding the use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning; and developing professionalism of personnel.** The various projects, programs, and activities are described on the following pages in alignment with the goals of the State Plan they support.

The Louisiana Department of Education extended funding for grantees in FY 2009-2010 based upon the score on the grant applications and performance outcomes used to calculate the performance-based funding formula. Continuation grants were awarded for FY 09-10, based upon the continued performance of subgrantees selected through the FY 08-09 competitive process. During FY 09-10, there were **12 adult education consortia statewide**. The purpose of the consortia is to streamline adult education services and offer assistance to districts that are not meeting performance outcomes. There were 23 districts managed by consortia administrators throughout FY 2009-2010, who were responsible for the programmatic and fiscal oversight of the partnering districts.

***Goal 1: To connect assessment and accountability***

**Accountability in adult education in Louisiana**—framed by WIA and the National Reporting System (NRS)—paralleled the Louisiana K-12 accountability system in the state’s ability to disaggregate and report on data relevant to adult education. To meet the requirements of interagency reporting of student outcome factors and the National Reporting System, State Leadership funds were used, in part, to purchase LiteracyPro LACES (Literacy, Adult and Community Education System). The LiteracyPro LACES web-based data collection/management software is used by all federally-funded adult education programs.

The following are activities and initiatives used to connect assessment and accountability in Louisiana as referenced in the State Plan for Title II of WIA.

- **The Division of Adult Education and Family Services** adopted the philosophy of the **K-12 system's "minimum foundation funding."** With a minimum or based allocation, programs were able to provide a minimum of one full-time, certified instructor and provide a minimum of 30 hours of instruction per week. Programs that did not generate the minimum base funding were supplemented through the use of state leadership funds. Programs unable to generate the minimum funds are considered possible candidates for placement under consortium administration. Fiscal Year 2009-2010, supplemental funds were allocated to consortia administrators.
- **Louisiana** continues its commitment to reach the "harder to teach" adult learners who are most in need of adult education and literacy services by targeting federal funds to students working below an 8.9 grade level equivalent. During the fiscal year, **approximately 80%** of the students served were ABE level students (NRS Table 1).
- **The use of an** electronic database between the SEA and National Scoring Services, Inc. (NSS) for receipt of the General Educational Development (GED) Test results was implemented in 2003 and continued through June 30, 2010. The use of an electronic database will continue to provide more technologically advanced opportunities for students, administrators and state level staff to receive test results in a real time format. National Scoring Service, Inc. was selected to continue to increase customer satisfaction with the shortened length of time between test-taking and receipt of test results by students. The LDE received notification in February 2010 that NSS would cease operations for GED scoring on June 30, 2010. Effective July 1, 2010, scoring of the GED was transferred to Oklahoma Scoring Service, Inc. Thanks to the cooperation and professionalism of the two companies, the transition was accomplished with minimal disruption in service to Louisiana's adult learners.
- **The Louisiana Department of Education** provided the Pre-GED/Skills Option managed curriculum to every adult education program in the state. The curriculum aligned with the Louisiana Adult Education Content Standards and the K-12 Comprehensive Curriculum and was organized into coherent units, complete with sample activities and classroom assessments to guide teaching and learning in the adult education classroom.
- The Louisiana Department of Education's monitoring procedures included analysis of data and program performance through monthly data submissions and quarterly data desk reviews. Based upon desk reviews, state staff program managers may request local data documentation according to a risk assessment determination. Follow-up onsite visits were conducted when warranted.
- During 2009-2010, onsite visits were scheduled over a five-year cycle, with all grantees receiving a minimum of one expanded onsite visit, which includes an examination of student files, student attendance records, and program data submitted through the statewide data management system. Monitoring reports are prepared after each onsite monitoring visit. Sites that are non-compliant/have findings will receive recommendations for program improvements. Programs are given 30 days to prepare and submit a written plan of action describing the plan of resolution for the non-compliant/findings noted in the report.
- Technical assistance was ongoing to all projects, with special interest and follow-up given to sites with indicated findings. Future funding may be impacted for contractors who fail to meet corrective compliance measures or continue to perform poorly.

## ***Goal 2: To develop new models for service delivery and outreach***

The Louisiana Adult Education Program served a total of 30,931 (Louisiana 2009-2010 NRS Tables 1 and 12) undereducated adults in fiscal year 2009-2010, including 372 work-based project learners. The total number of students served with at least one hour of instruction during 2009-2010 was 45,342, which is a 9% increase from the 41,517 students served in 2008-2009. Policy emphasis continues to be on the incorporation of adult education services into the One-Stop system to expand services to underemployed and unemployed adults. The state funding formula for adult education incorporates a financial incentive to recruit new students with literacy levels from 0-8.9 grade levels.

- In the Unified State Plan, the Department of Education continued its commitment to the **success of the One-Stop centers** by dedicating 1% of the federal allocation to be distributed equally among the One-Stop centers located in each of the 18 workforce investment areas. The supplemental allocation of federal funds was provided to the adult education one-stop negotiator in each of the 18 workforce investment areas to promote the activities of the One-Stop center, according to the needs of each individual site. The focus of these activities was instructional services at the One-Stop center.
- The State Plan provides up to 5% of federal flow-through funds to support both **workplace and family literacy projects**. In 2009-2010, Louisiana continued its requirement for workplace literacy projects to provide instruction at a job site where an employer contributes ½ release time for employees. Louisiana also required adult education programs that received family literacy grants to organize and operate programs based upon the Even Start Family Literacy model. A total of four continuation projects were funded for family literacy and workplace literacy projects for 2009-2010. During 2009-2010, 297 adults participated in family literacy programs and 58 adults participated in workplace literacy programs (Louisiana 2009-2010 NRS Table 6).
- The **Strategies To Empower People (STEP) Program** is an initiative in cooperation with the Department of Social Services to assist TANF clients in acquiring the necessary skills to move toward self-sufficiency and improve the overall well-being of the family. The Office of the Governor's Workforce Commission, the Department of Labor, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, the University of New Orleans and Louisiana State University are also partners in the project. Educational activities are available statewide through existing sites with adequate capacity to serve the estimated number of clients or the creation of new sites to serve the estimated number of clients.

The targeted population is adults, 16 years of age and older with a minor child who are in need of adult basic education and are referred to the sites by the Department of Social Services. The services provided focus on adult basic and secondary literacy instruction and GED preparation. Coordination between the Department of Education and the Department of Social Services determines the process for service delivery. A total of \$466,777 of TANF funds was allocated to local providers across the state in 2009-2010, with a total of 804 clients participating in the project.

- The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) GED Program** has been a successful undertaking by the Department of Education and the Department of Social Services since the fall of 2007. This initiative assists TANF clients in acquiring the necessary skills to move toward self-sufficiency and improve the overall well-being of the family. Educational activities are available in three targeted metropolitan areas of the state with high numbers and percentages of dropouts and high numbers and percentages of low-level literate citizens: East Baton Rouge, Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes. Services are provided through existing adult education sites

with adequate capacity to serve the estimated number of clients or the creation of new sites. The targeted population are eligible adults, 16 – 21 years of age, or adults 22 years of age or older and the custodial parent, non-custodial parent, or caretaker relative of a minor child. The services provided focus on literacy instruction to improve adult's educational functioning level for the purpose of attainment of a Louisiana High School Equivalency Diploma upon passage of the GED, employment or entry into postsecondary education. Coordination between the Department of Education and the Department of Social Services determines the process for service delivery. A total of \$270,000 of TANF funds was allocated to two fiscal agents in 2009-2010, with a total of 374 clients participating in the project.

- The **Department of Corrections GED Testing Program Initiative** has been a successful collaborative effort to provide GED testing opportunities for incarcerated individuals to earn a Louisiana High School Equivalency Diploma. The Department of Education receives state funds from the Department of Corrections to contract with GED examiners and schedule GED testing for incarcerated individuals throughout the state in an effort to help them better position themselves for success upon re-entry into society. A total of \$59,760 was allocated for this initiative. This initiative has provided GED Testing opportunities to 761 incarcerated individuals.

### ***Goal 3: To expand the use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning***

The Division of Adult and Family Services strives to improve upon and expand the opportunities that are available to adult education providers and students by offering multiple outlets for the increased use of technology in the classroom, including distance learning.

- During 2009-2010, the Division of Adult and Family Services continued to provide access to **distance education opportunities** for adult education students. Through a contract with Louisiana Public Broadcasting, local programs were provided with access to the **GED Connections** series on all Louisiana Public Broadcasting television stations statewide.
- State leadership funds continued to be used to provide virtual seats and professional development during the FY 2009-2010. The State purchased and distributed virtual seats for the **GED Online Interactive, Pre-GED and Instruction Targeted for TABE Success (ITTS) programs**. The availability of curricula enhances the distance education opportunities for adult education participants. Distance Education training was provided via webinars and sessions at our annual summer conference, including product specific software training and presentations on research-based best practices for teaching adult learners at a distance.
- Louisiana had a total of 1,051 students utilizing the distance education curricula provided by the State. During 2009-2010, there were 180 NRS reportable Distance Education students (NRS Table 4c).

### ***Goal 4: Professionalism of Personnel***

Louisiana had 515 **adult education teachers in 2009-2010**, including full-time and part-time teachers. In addition, there were 183 **paraprofessionals**, including full-time and part-time (Louisiana 2009-2010 NRS Table 7).

The Division of Adult Education and Family Services continued to offer **professional development opportunities** for the 2009-2010 school year to ensure opportunities were offered to support the State

Plan requirement that full-time staff must attend a minimum of 15 hours of state-approved professional development opportunities, while paraprofessional and part-time staff must document at least 10 hours of state-approved professional development in the area of adult education.

The Louisiana Department of Education, Adult Education and Family Services Division provided a limited number of professional development activities. With the announcement by the Governor of the impending transfer of Adult Education from the LDE to the LCTCS, the priority was shifted at mid-year from professional development to technical assistance to the local providers for transition activities.

The Division of Adult Education and Family Services held a three-day Summer Institute in conjunction with the Louisiana Association for Public, Community and Adult Education. The collaborative endeavor was a successful professional development opportunity to provide a forum to advance adult literacy, basic education, GED and community education. It was also a well-received culmination of the technical assistance efforts to have the participants addressed by Dr. Joe D. May, President, LCTCS. Approximately 300 educators attended the conference. Conference sessions included updates on research-based resources, best practices, and laws and policies pertaining to adult education.

Louisiana was one of eight states selected to participate in the USDE Policy to Performance Initiative. The project designed to support state development of policies for the transition of adult learners to opportunities in postsecondary or the workforce is aligned perfectly with the goals sought by the LCTCS to expand and improve existing services for adult learners as part of the new system of governance. Participation in the project came at critical point and was seen as support and technical assistance for Louisiana's adult education program and its change in governance.

***Summary: Snapshot of Adult Education in Louisiana, 2008-2009***

The Louisiana Adult Education Program served a total of 30,931 undereducated adults in fiscal year 2009-2010 (Louisiana 2009-2010 NRS Tables 1 and 12). The total number of students served with at least one hour of instruction during 2009-2010 was 45,342, which is an increase from the 41,517 students served in 2008-2009. During 2009-2010, a total of 8,181 16-18 year olds (Louisiana 2009-2010 NRS Tables 2 and 12) were enrolled in Louisiana's adult education program.

Data reveals that a total of 51% of those who participated in adult literacy services during the FY 2009-2010 program year completed or advanced an educational functioning level (Louisiana NRS Table 4). For 2009-2010, the Department of Education administered a total of approximately \$10,500,000 of adult education funds (state funds, \$1,800,000 and federal funds, \$8,700,000) through the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*. The entities eligible to receive these funds for the 2009-2010 fiscal year included the following: ***41 Local Education Agencies (23 additional LEAs were served by 12 consortia administrators); 1 Community College; 1 Correctional Institution; 7 Community-Based Agencies; and 3 Faith-Based Organizations.***

The total number of participants served statewide across all groups and at all levels was 30,931. The total amount of federal and state funds expended by the Department and local programs was \$16,800,000 for 2009-2010. In FY 2009-2010, the total number of student attendance hours was 2,518,100 (NRS tables 4), which equates to the following:

average cost per adult education student.....\$581.51  
cost per contact hour.....\$ 8.19

Administering the adult education program statewide were **six full-time professional staff members**, as approved by the Louisiana Department of Civil Service. The professional background of these staff

members ranges from K-12 and adult education teaching experience to higher education administration experience to non-profit management experience. Staff members have participated in professional development activities including COABE, NRS Workshops, and OVAE-sponsored meetings.

The Division of Adult Education and Family Literacy Services maintained a presence in state-level meetings of agencies (both within and without the Louisiana Department of Education) relating to adult education. Close alignments also were maintained with the **Departments of Labor and Corrections, the Workforce Commission, the Department of Social Services, the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.**

In 2009-2010, the Division of Adult Education and Family Literacy Services expended federal funding at the following levels (including carry-over federal funds from prior year):

State Leadership.....	\$738,547
Administration .....	\$430,928
Basic Grant to Local Providers .....	\$16,817,245
Total.....	\$17,986,720

**Section 2: A description of any significant findings from Eligible Agency’s evaluation of the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on the core indicators of performance.**

The **Division of Adult and Family Services** utilized the data-collection software produced by LiteracyPro Systems, Inc., in order to meet the requirements of the National Reporting System. The **Adult Education – Performance Measures and Benchmarks** are outlined as follows:

**Core Indicator #1: Demonstrated improvement in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition and other literacy skills.**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Beginning ABE Literacy <i>Grade Level 0-1.9</i>	52% will complete the educational functioning level.	53%
Beginning Basic Education <i>Grade Level 2.0-5.9</i>	48% will complete the educational functioning level.	51%
Low Intermediate Basic Education <i>Grade Level 4.0 -5.9</i>	52% will complete the educational functioning level.	52%
High Intermediate Basic Education <i>Grade Level 6.0-8.9</i>	47% will complete the educational functioning level.	49%
Low Adult Secondary Education <i>Grade Level 9.0 -10.9</i>	50% will complete the educational functioning level.	50%
High Adult Secondary Education <i>Grade Level 11.0-12.0</i>	N/A will complete the educational functioning level.	70%
ESL Beginning Literacy	48% will complete the educational functioning level.	36%
ESL Low Beginning	50% will complete the educational functioning level.	49%
ESL High Beginning	43% will complete the educational functioning level.	49%
ESL Low Intermediate	43% will complete the educational functioning level.	51%

ESL High Intermediate	47% will complete the educational functioning level.	44%
Advanced ESL	30% will complete the educational functioning level.	38%

**Core Indicator #2: Placement in, retention in, or completion of post-secondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Placement in post-secondary education or training	36% will be placed in post-secondary education or training	5%
Placement in unsubsidized employment	71% will be placed in unsubsidized employment	58%
Retention in or job advancement	50% will retain employment or advance in jobs	56%

**Core Indicator #3: Receipt of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.**

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High School completion	66% will earn a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent	69%

There has been an increase in the number of students taking the GED® Test. The DOE worked with the Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans to establish new testing sites in Orleans Parish.

**Section 3: A description of how the agency has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities.**

The Louisiana Department of Education has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 in multiple areas relative to adult education, career development, and employment and training activities.

Adult educators are **represented on the Workforce Investment Boards, including the state Workforce Advisory Council and local boards.** The State Superintendent of Education, one of the Commissioners of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, designated the Assistant Superintendent for School and Community Support to serve in his place as commissioner. Additionally, staff from the Division of Adult Education and Family Services routinely attend meetings and present information regarding state level adult education initiatives to the commission.

Each regional adult education advisory council, aligned with the labor market areas and Workforce Investment Boards, has a Chairman responsible for continued communication with the Chairman of the local Workforce Investment Board. This coordination and communication provides opportunities for the Chairman of the local adult education advisory council to attend WIB meetings and to serve as a conduit for the exchange of information between the WIBs and adult educators. In addition, a **One-Stop Negotiator** is identified in each labor market area to coordinate adult education services and partnership issues for the delivery of services in the One-Stop Centers.

The Department of Education made a commitment to **provide 1% of the federal allocation to be equally divided among the 18 Workforce Investment Areas** to support the operations of the local One-Stop Centers. For 2009-2010, \$74,442 was allocated in equal amounts of \$3,913 to each of the 18 Workforce Investment Areas to support adult education services. Many local adult education programs



used their federal funds, in addition to the state allocation, to provide instructional activities at the One-Stop Centers.

**Section 4: A description of successful activities and services supported with English Language/Civics education funds.**

Louisiana awarded \$207,417 through continuation grants, ranging from \$21,005 to \$24,756, to nine local educational agencies and private providers. Allocations were based upon prior year success in providing both English language instruction and civics instruction. The total number of English Language/Civics education students served in the nine sub-grants in 2009-2010 was 1,365. Following are snapshots of three such programs, which provided services with English Language/Civics Education Funds:

***Literacy Council of Southwest Louisiana***

The purpose of the EL/Civics Program at the Literacy Council of Southwest Louisiana, Inc., is to help adults with limited English proficiency improve English literacy skills and become responsible citizens. The educational program focuses on helping students learn about healthy living, personal finance, civic participation, employment opportunities, and citizenship. Lessons are student-centered to ensure that students have input in lesson content. They are contextualized and focus on immediate needs. Lessons also included simulations of real-life adult experiences. All students work towards improving a functional skill level learning about naturalization, citizenship, employment, life skills, and civic participation. The Literacy Council of Southwest Louisiana served 114 students, with 44% of the federally reportable adult participants completing an educational functioning level.

***Lafayette Parish***

The Lafayette Parish EL-Civics Program is designed around two main goals: breaking the communication barrier and pursuing citizenship activities. Recent expanded services include additional class days and materials to better serve the non-English speaking population. The expanded program allows for additional instruction in oral and written knowledge of the English language, civics and government literacy, everyday life skills, social and cultural awareness, and parental involvement. Due to these changes, adults enrolled in these classes progressed at a faster pace and were better prepared to become U.S. citizens or active members of our community. The program served 192 students, with 71% of the federally reportable adult participants completing an educational functioning level.

***East Baton Rouge Parish***

The East Baton Rouge Parish EL-Civics Program also expanded services by adding another instructor. Services were provided at two locations in the Parish. The combination of individualized and small group instruction at both sites was effective. East Baton Rouge Parish served 198 adults, with 63% of the federally reportable adult participants completing an educational functioning level.

In addition to a variety of ESL software, video, and audio cassette programs, instructors provide students with activities such as field trips and organized out-of-class experiences to add to the students' sense of community involvement.