

Delaware Narrative Report 2010-2011

FY 11 was a year of change for Delaware Adult Education. During this twelve month period, Adult Education followed up on the initiatives started the previous year. ABE programs and state leadership implemented technological changes that assisted in monitoring the effectiveness of changes. The level of collaboration with other state agencies increased and new opportunities for collaboration materialized.

Adult Education continued its partnership with the Departments of Health and Social Services, Labor, Correction, and Housing in the Governor's Reentry Project and with the Workforce Investment Board in the development of the state's strategic plan; and its coordination with the Department's "Race to the Top" Initiative which focuses on increasing K-12 high school completions. Seven local programs received onsite monitoring in addition to their desk top audits and a STAR Training Institute was also provided. Other highlights included:

- ABE classes located in One Stop Centers continued with the plan to expand these services in FY 12. More information on the partnership with DOL is contained later in this report.
- For the first time, Adult Education was represented on the Workforce Investment Board as a member of the Strategic Planning Committee. This opportunity allowed Adult Education to introduce the concept of career pathways for adults, increase the business community's awareness of adult education services, and develop information sharing/client planning processes that integrated assessment, instruction and access to DOL trainings. The director of DOL's Employment and Training and the Director of Adult Education met regularly to discuss strategies for further collaboration.
- The Departments of Labor, Health and Social Services, Correction, Housing and Education continue to collaborate on the Governor's Reentry Project, Individual Assessment and Discharge Planning Team (I-ADAPT). The project's goal is to provide Level 5 and Level 4/Step Down offenders with services that will assist them to positively re-integrate into their communities, e.g. meeting with DOL employment and training counselors upon release; provision of community based substance abuse treatment; continuation of educational services through community ABE programs until a GED or high school diploma attainment; and increased access to housing. After one year of operations, over 500 offenders volunteered for I-ADAPT. Of these:
 - 242 participated in the Prison ABE Program in Level 5 facilities
 - 157 entered into ABE classes
 - 63 attained their GED
 - 32 attained their diploma
 - 47 completed at least one prison college course

- 7 I-ADAPT participants continued their education in community ABE programs.
 - 41 non I-ADAPT reentering offenders enrolled in community ABE programs.
- 71 I-ADAPT participants entered Vocational Courses for which a GED or a high school diploma was required.
- The Young Offenders Boarding School (Q Pod) was initiated to provide selected offenders with additional instructional hours and support through the use of trained offender instructional aides. Q Pod's schedule has been developed to include an additional 2 hours of study in small groups on the pod under the supervision of a Prison Education staff member.
- Prison Education staff have participated in three county-wide Reentry Expos which provided information on community ABE programs to those under Probation and Parole supervision.
- Prison Education supervisors meet once a month with DOL, DHSS, DSHA and DOC representatives to review exiting offenders' needs and to refer them to community services.

Participation in this project has required state agencies to review policies and procedures to accommodate each agency's needs. This level of cooperation has forced an exploration of new strategies for providing services that are changing current beliefs and processes regarding ex-offenders.

- In FY 11, Adult Education also partnered with another consortium of state agencies in applying for the Broadband Technology Opportunity Program, BTOP. The Delaware Department of Libraries is the lead agency in this effort. Delaware libraries received the grant to upgrade local libraries' broadband capabilities and offer additional services needed by community members. Three adult education programs are part of this effort offering onsite instruction and distance learning access. Planning and design of programming were completed in 2011. Delivery of services is scheduled for 2012.
- Adult Education is working with the "Race to the Top" Initiative to provide information on adult education services available in the community. It is becoming clear to K-12 administration that some at-risk students have parents who were unsuccessful in their educational pursuits. Participation in this project has expanded DOE's understanding of Adult Education. The results have been mixed. Some school districts are using Adult Education services to assist their drop outs in completing their education; thus, increasing linkages with ABE programs. Other districts, due to our assessment policy and placement procedure, are decreasing their referrals to Adult Education and placing their at risk students in twilight programs that provide computerized instruction leading to high school completion.
- During 2010-2011, seven local programs received onsite day long monitorings that included discussions with program administrators, teachers, and students. These monitorings focused primarily on program performances and implementation of state

policies and procedures. Commendations to programs included dedication and commitment to serving adult learners; collaborations with community partners; and use of innovative scheduling to increase student enrollment and retention. During these monitorings, any confusion regarding LACES data entry and/or the Assessment Policy was clarified and rectified, if necessary. Innovations discovered during these visits were reported on during the monthly Administrators Meetings.

- A six day STAR Institute was presented in May and June to accommodate programs with new teachers and to refresh teachers who had been previously trained. Across 18 programs, 11 new teachers received training this year in addition to the 56 previously trained. All programs have at least one teacher trained in STAR. The implementation of STAR in ten programs was observed by members of the state team this year.

Leadership Activities

This year, local program administrators and the state leadership team reviewed and discussed technological and process changes that would increase student participation and retention as well as monitor student progress. Adult Education's participation in the Governor's Reentry Project and the transition of offenders from Level 5 correctional education to community education was also a topic of discussion at every Adult Education Administrators' meeting. Administrators meet either in person or via teleconferencing 10 months of the year. An important component of these meetings is the sharing of "Ah-Ha" and inspiration moments. The information sharing and combined effort to deliver quality services are hallmarks of Delaware's Adult Education community. Some of the outstanding activities on FY 11 State Goals that were achieved this year were:

1. Increase the use of technology in instruction, professional development and administrative processes
 - The ACE Network, Adult and Prison Education's Resource Center, expanded the use of Moodle hosted by Remote-Learner.net for profession development through the offering of MS Office 2007 courses to ABE staff. The focus of these offerings was to assist staff in using data to improve instruction and/or program administration. These courses were free and could be used for staff development clock hour requirements.
 - An online Adult Education Teacher Training, ABE 101, was initiated this year. This six week course addresses the unique set of skills and knowledge required of an adult basic educator. ABE 101 includes: an orientation to the Adult Education system; an overview of the adult learner; topics focusing on planning for and delivering instruction; technology for teaching and learning; Delaware ABE policies and procedures; and collecting, documenting and recording ABE student information. The two required capstone projects are: (1) creating a student learning plan and (2) interviewing a program

administrator concerning program data, monitoring and program improvement. Seven teachers enrolled with two completing the course.

- A dashboard disclosing program performance was implemented. This dashboard, an enhancement of the LACES system, allows users to see a daily picture of the data health of their program under six key performance indicators; thus, increasing administrators' understanding of the importance of "real-time" data. Results of this addition include:
 - Teachers at some sites are entering attendance thereby becoming more cognizant of attendance patterns.
 - Administrators are observing daily indicators to ensure that post testing takes place in a timely manner.
 - Program coordinators are observing daily indicators for active students who have not received any attendance hours.
 - Administrators are able to place "waiting list" students quicker into classes.
 - Current documents regarding state policies and procedures are located on a central website accessible to all programs.
- Two new spreadsheet tools were developed to assist program administrators in evaluating program progress towards EFLs through providing information on:
 - current performance levels on specific EFLs
 - how many more students are needed to achieve targets
 - comparison of specific program performance to federal targets and state performance levels

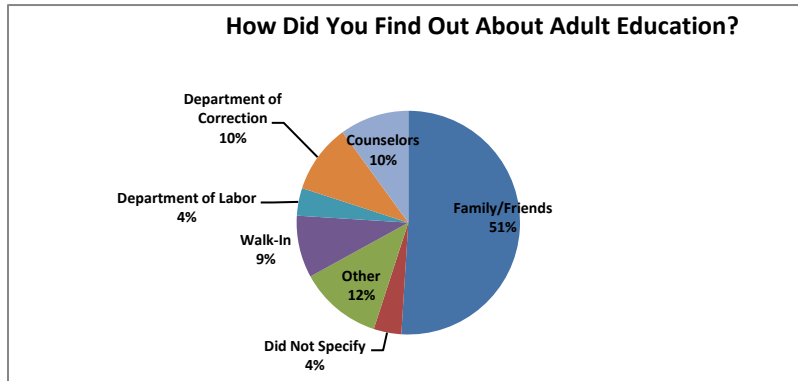
2. Enhance the leadership capacity of program administrators

Continuing with the findings from the doctoral study completed by Michael Grossman, one of Delaware's Prison Education teacher/supervisors, several activities were designed to assist program administrators in providing quality educational services.

- Delaware administrators adapted Adult Education Leadership Standards that will form the basis for future leadership development; the preparation of a succession training programs; and the creation of a manual for new administrators.
- A training session was developed based on the primary need identified by administrators which was "encouraging active involvement of all staff and stakeholders in decision making processes". Program leaders were charged with developing and implementing a shared decision making model or incorporating such aspects into their programs. They reported implementing in the following areas: goal setting and student learning plans, smart board training, communication with staff and students, managed enrollment, consensus building, office management, and shared duties. Eighteen

administrators from 10 ABE programs attended the session reported out on topics at subsequent ABE Administrator meetings.

3. The Adult Education Student Survey, started in 2010, was reviewed and revised to better serve student and program needs.
 - Nine hundred and fifty-seven ABE students responded to the 2nd OAASIS Student Survey regarding the Adult Education services they were receiving. The students were most complimentary about the program staff, the learning environment, and the course offerings. They were also pleased with having information and community resources available to them and overwhelmingly agreed that the program provides opportunities to participate in community service events. Students also acknowledged that their teachers work with them according to their learning style, a focus area for adult education programs. Students did indicate that they needed more information on job opportunities. 28% of respondents would like to see programs provide more hours of instruction. The information from this survey was compiled into a statewide report and programs were provided with the responses from their own students. Both state and local teams are reviewing the information for potential changes to programming that would benefit students. The following is an example of the valuable information obtained from students.



- OAASIS presented at the 2011 COABE Conference regarding its history, mission, goals, statewide/local activities and student survey. The presentation was well received. The student representative, upon her return, related to her colleagues the positive responses to their activities. This has motivated the organization to enhance even further its efforts to support adult learners.
4. Implementation of new ESL standards and piloting the Best Literacy assessment to identify students ready to transition to ABE instruction.

In FY 11, five programs piloted the use of the new ESL standards developed in 2010. 118 students across all ESL levels were involved. Students were tested on both assessments, the Best Plus and the Best Literacy. 84% of students scored on different

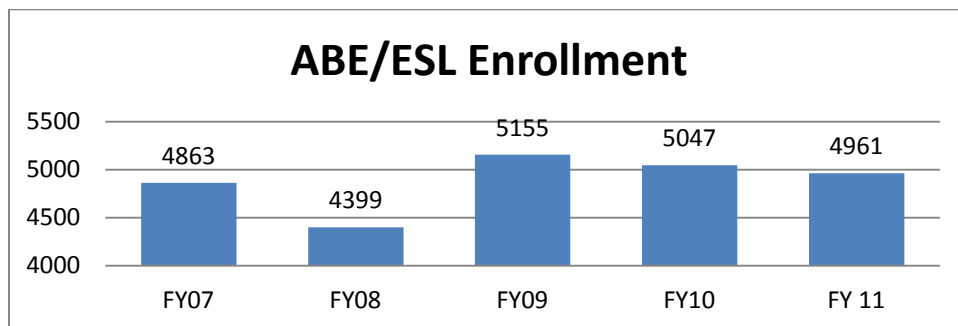
EFLs when tested on both tests. As a result of the new standards, teachers in the pilot (1) reported using more context clues and graphic organizational tools during instruction; (2) focused more attention on comprehension of the reading passage rather than of individual words; (3) increased the use of conversation logs, writing activities and interactive conversation, and choral reading activities both in the classroom and for homework. Instructors felt that the standards provided a “wonderful framework for more intentional teaching”. The results from the Best Literacy were not used to determine student progress for EFL gains. Students continued to be tested on the Best PLUS to determine EFL gains.

Effectiveness of Performance

Last year Delaware experienced an average of 8.5% unemployment fueled by the reduction of job opportunities in the construction, retail, real estate, state government, and professional and business service sectors of the economy. The numbers of manufacturing jobs remained stagnant while banking/credit card service positions were reduced. Despite the need to reduce financial obligations, the state legislature continued to level fund community based Adult Education programs.

Enrollment

In FY 11, enrollment in Adult Education classes dropped by 4 percent from the previous year. A decrease in enrollment occurred in ABE; while student participation in ESL increased by 4%. The decrease was partially caused by late openings of some ABE programs, a reduction in prison education participation, and data input issues.



Performance Target Achievements

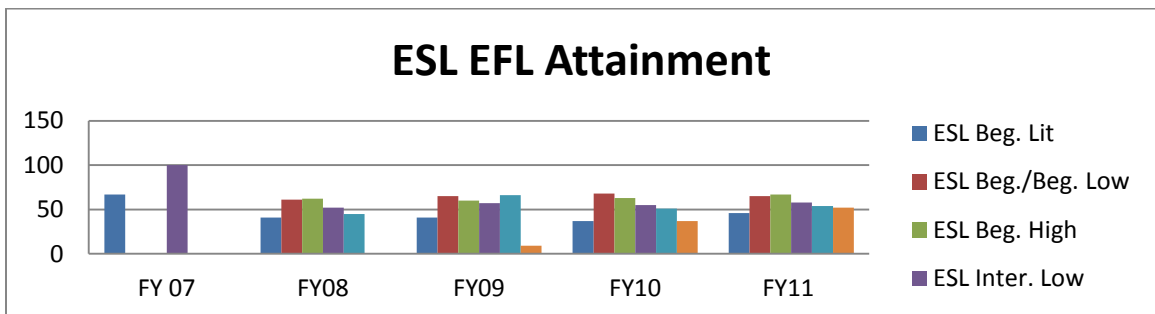
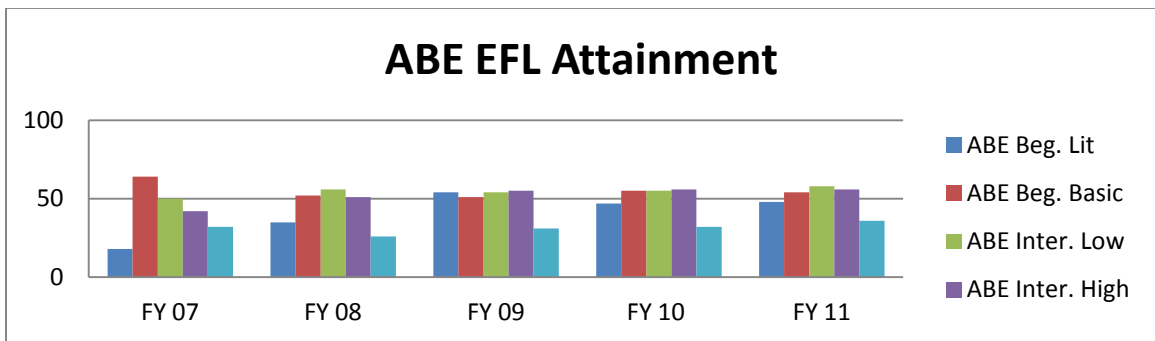
- *Educational Functioning Levels Completions*

Delaware Adult Education met or exceeded target performances in 6 out of 11 educational functioning levels. In three EFLs, Delaware was within 2%, or 17 increases statewide, of achieving the state targets. Advancement from Beginning ABE Literacy and High Intermediate ESL were problematic for some programs. The Beginning ABE

Literacy level fell short by 9% or 6 student outcomes. The High Intermediate ESL level was missed by 13% or 17 student outcomes. This year Delaware was able to attain its performance in the ABE Intermediate High EFL. While Delaware’s performance targets are high, we believe in a “continuous improvement” process in order to better serve our adult learners. The development of the new LACES reports mentioned earlier should allow us to monitor progress better and discover data input concerns earlier.

Prison participation was down in all four Level 5 sites due to various causes. One program was forced to relocate midyear to a smaller building and reduce instructional hours. The level of probationers in another prison increased dramatically reducing student participation. Instructional sessions were reduced in another prison due to a change in the chow schedule. Another program had no teacher for months when the instructor left the program and another teacher couldn’t be hired until the Department of Correction scheduled its next Correctional Employee Initial Training which occurs twice a year.

In FY 11, average ABE student attendance was 74 hours and 69 hours for ESL students. Student retention remains a primary focus for all programs. Analysis and discussions with local programs reveal that many ESL students who started late in Fall 2010 did not continue attending in winter 2011 after the holiday break. In addition, Sussex County ESL programs were visited by Immigration and Customs Enforcement Officers causing sudden decreases in student participation. To improve retention, two programs began offering classes on designated Saturdays which did increase student participation at these sites. Late program openings due to budget processing concerns also reduced student participation hours.



- *Core Completions*

Delaware did not meet its target performance in the gained employment category. Our target was 50% and actual performance was 41%. A partial explanation for this shortfall is that adults lacking a secondary credential have a difficult time obtaining employment. In 2010, Delaware's unemployment rate fluctuated around 8.5%. It is an "employers' market" currently. Employers can now hire workers with more education since they are now also looking for work and are willing to take salary reductions. Since this workgroup also serves as the state's GED/Diploma verification contact for the department, it is very clear that employers are checking educational credentials before even offering interviews. Likewise, Delaware's performance attained a 61% performance level in the retained employment category, three percentage points lower than the target goal of 64%. During the report period for this statistic, the GM, Chrysler auto plants and Valero oil refinery closed. Construction projects were dramatically reduced. Retail stores and the poultry industry were reducing employees. ABE students were losing their full and part time employment and competing with more educated applicants for available jobs. Delaware's ABE collaboration with DOL is geared to support these DOL clients in need of a secondary credential prior to accessing further skills training.

The target performance for GED[®]/Diploma was also not achieved. While our performance rate was a respectable 85%, it did not meet the 92% target. Part of the cause could be process based. Adult learners taking the GED[®] do not always list their ABE program as recipients of test results. The state team is working with the GED[®] examiners to remedy this problem.

Delaware did attain its performance target in the entered post secondary category with a 90% performance rate. Adult learners are finding that currently available jobs require different skill sets that can only be attained if they continue their education. On the other hand, the expense of post secondary education/training is becoming a barrier for some. The Department of Labor can offer training but its capacity to fulfill client needs is also limited.

Integration of Activities Sponsored under Title II

- In 2011, the statewide One Stop Assessor Project concluded at the Department of Labor's request. This was due to a DOL change in procedure on client assessment for entry into training programs. In FY 11, training funds to the state were delayed and, as a result, assessments weren't needed. It was also determined that DOL case managers would start administering CASAS assessments as was the practice prior to the project. However, DOL Employment and Training and Adult Education are working towards two goals. The first is establishing an ABE program in two additional One Stop Centers. One center, the Hudson Center One Stop, is scheduled to open in early 2012. A suitable space is still be sought for the Dover One Stop. The second is extending classes in the One Stop

Centers that already deliver ABE instruction. Both the Fox Valley and the Georgetown One Stops are reviewing scheduling to expand ABE class hours.

The purpose of the three year One Stop Assessor Project was to evaluate the readiness of DOL clients to enter training programs. The following data summarizes the work accomplished through this project:

- 2,799 clients were referred to assessment
 - 183 assessment sessions took place
 - 1,431 clients were assessed
 - 36 Veterans were assessed
 - 1,093 clients received academic counseling regarding TABE scores
 - 794 clients were referred to academic services
 - 303 clients entered Adult Education programs
- For the first time, Adult Education was represented on the Workforce Investment Board. This year, the State Director of Adult and Prison Education Resources was appointed as a member to the Strategic Planning Committee of the WIB. Through this work, Adult

Education for dislocated, unemployed and underemployed DOL clients is being discussed and more services are being requested at the DOL One Stop Centers. Through participation in this group, Adult Education also became a partner in the state's request for a Manufacturing Incubator Grant which would support the expansion of manufacturing sites in Kent County.

- In FY 11, two of the four One Stop Centers had sufficient space to house ABE classes on site. There are part-time ABE classes operating in the Fox Valley and Georgetown One Stops. Clients from the other two One Stops that need academic remediation are referred to the nearest ABE programs. An estimate of funding for these projects is approximately \$30,000.

EL/Civics

The EL Civics project for 2011 focused on raising awareness of health issues for ESL adult earners. The EL Civics Committee of Practitioners EL Civics grants recipients reviewed the seven goals from the *National Action Plan to Improve Health Literacy*. The Committee chose the following two goals as the basis for the 2011 Health Literacy project:

- Develop and disseminate health and safety information that is accurate, accessible and actionable
- Support and expand local efforts to provide adult education, English language instruction, and culturally and linguistically appropriate health information in the community

The Committee of Practitioners created a survey to determine student knowledge of health issues in three categories: clinical, preventive and navigational. Topics identified through the

Pre-Survey were the basis for contextualized instruction. The Committee collected health resources and information from each county. Representatives from state, county and private health agencies and organizations were contacted to present health information that students had identified as important. A Health Literacy Post Survey was given to determine if participating students acquired the information on health issues that they had identified through the Pre-Survey. Lesson plans were created or adapted by teachers and were placed on the ACE Network, the resource site for Delaware adult educators. Two hundred and seventy-three ESL adult learners participated in the FY 2011 project. The 2011 Health Literacy Project positively impacted those that participated, their children and their communities.