

## Arkansas Narrative Report 2011-2012

**A. 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.**

### **AALRC**

The Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) is funded through the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative by the Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division. It was established in 1990 to provide a source for identification, evaluation, and dissemination of materials and information to adult education/literacy programs. In 1994 the AALRC's vision and mission was expanded:

Vision Statement:

“Arkansas Adult Education/Literacy providers’ access needed information and resources to enable Arkansas’ adult learners to reach their full educational and economic potential.”

Mission Statement:

“To operate an enhanced network of communication and coordination that provides information, resources, research, professional development, and technical assistance, and that facilitates collaboration to benefit Arkansas Adult Education/Literacy providers.”

The AALRC is located in Little Rock, Arkansas. The center has seven full-time employees, which include a Director, Professional Development Coordinator, Information Technology Specialist, Disabilities Project Manager, Media Coordinator, Secretary, and Administrative Assistant. State funds support employee salaries while federal funds are used for the fulfillment of our mission.

The AALRC supports the agency goal of “developing a strategic plan for effective delivery of lifelong career development and workforce education” through training opportunities and technical support. During the 2011-2012 fiscal year training opportunities provided by the AALRC for adult education and literacy councils included: Access, AD-HD Demystifying, AERIS 101, AERIS 201, Beginning Excel, Best Plus, Best Practices for Distance Learning, Best Practices Using TABE, Budget Review Preparation, Community Action Poverty Simulation, Computer Basics, Computer Security /Speedup, Distance Learning 101, ESL Summer Institute, Excel, Fall Administrators Mtg., Google Docs, Hands on Science, Inspiration, Instructional strategies for Adults With LD, Kahn Academy, Kuder Journey, Leadership Excellence Academy, LD Comp, LD 101, LD 201, Literacy Strategies, Literacy Task Analysis, Movie Maker, New Adult Ed Administrators Training, NRS & Goal Setting, NRS Up-Dates, Parental Involvement & Educational Reform, Photo-Graphics, Quarterly Reconciliation, SAM Training, Smart Board 101, Social Media Networks, Spring Administrators Meeting, Teaching Adults w/LD, Teaching With Manipulatives, Team Building, True Colors, Woodcock –Johnson Training, Yes In the Land of No.

The AALRC also supports practitioners and trainers through professional development opportunities at state and national conferences. Those include:, AR Association for Continuing and Adult Education & Arkansas Literacy Council, Inc. Conference (AACAE/ALC), Learning Disabilities Association (LDA), Commission on Adult Basic Education Conference (COABE), Hot Springs Institute for Technology,

Project Ideal, Standards in Action Innovations Training, LINCS Region 2 Regional Resource Center Training, CSUN Conference, and SITE Conference.

The AALRC also supports local programs by maintaining a current library of materials, providing research support/information, purchasing/distributing software and materials, and upgrading/redistribution of equipment.

Arkansas requires adult education directors, instructors and counselors to be certified in adult education within four years of initial full-time employment. The AALRC supports this effort by providing tuition reimbursement for these individuals.

The AALRC supports the ACE/AED agency goal of “providing and effective communication system that is involved, informative, and interactive,” by holding statewide directors meetings, numerous committee meetings, publishing a statewide newsletter, publishing a directory of literacy services, and maintaining a web-site (<http://www.aalrc.org>).

**B. 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.**

There are areas in which Arkansas has done an effective job in meeting core indicators of performance and areas that could use some improvement. Compared to last year’s 2010-11 performance, Arkansas met or increased performance in 10/15 or 67% of the core indicator performance categories. The categories in which performance did not meet or increase over the 2010-11 year include ASE Low (-3%), ESL Low Intermediate (-4%); and the follow-up outcome measures of Enter Employment (-1%), Entered Postsecondary or Training (-16%), and Obtain a GED (-1%). The largest decline was in Enter Postsecondary (-16%). By contrast, the highest gains were in ESL Advance (+14%) and ESL High Intermediate (+8%).

Arkansas met or exceeded the national average in 5/15 or 33% of the core indicators of performance. The performance measures met included ABE Beginning Literacy (+5%), ABE Intermediate High (+3%), ESL High Intermediate (+1%), ESL Advanced (+11%), and Obtain a GED (+27%).

On the other hand, Arkansas met 8/15 or 53% of its 2011-12 Targets. The performance indicators met or exceeded include ABE Beginning Literacy (0%), ABE Low Intermediate (0%), ESL High Beginning (+4%), ESL Low Intermediate (+1%), ESL Advanced (+7%), Retain Employment (+7%), Entered Employment (+2%) and Obtain a GED (+2%).

During our spring Administrators’ meeting, we shared the state’s 2009-10 performance measures with our adult education programs and literacy councils. We showed them the state’s performance measures and how we compared to the national average. In addition, we explained how the core indicators worked and how many students needed to meet the goal in each category in order for us to meet or exceed the performance measures.

The statewide averages for the core indicators of performance and the follow-up measures for the last three program years are found in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: **National Averages, Performance** (2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011), and Targets (2010-2011)

**ARKANSAS**

<b>CORE INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE</b>	National Average	2009-2010 Performance	2010-11 Performance	2011-12 TARGET	2011-12 Performance	Change from Performance
ABE Beginning Literacy	42%	47%	46%	48%	46%	-2%
ABE Beginning Basic	41%	39%	39%	40%	40%	0%
ABE Intermediate Low	40%	40%	40%	41%	41%	0%
ABE Intermediate High	36%	42%	40%	43%	41%	-2%
ASE Low	38%	42%	43%	43%	40%	-3%
ESL Beginning Literacy	39%	30%	29%	34%	29%	-5%
ESL Low Beginning	50%	33%	31%	35%	31%	-4%
ESL High Beginning	48%	37%	40%	38%	42%	+4%
ESL Low Intermediate	44%	40%	46%	41%	42%	+1%
ESL High Intermediate	40%	30%	35%	32%	43%	+11%
ESL Advanced	30%	27%	21%	28%	35%	+7%
Enter Employment	68%	39%	44%	41%	43%	+2%
Retain Employment	54%	62%	67%	64%	71%	+7%
Obtain a GED	57%	80%	85%	82%	84%	+2%
Enter Post-Secondary/Training	62%	38%	44%	43%	28%	-15%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	46%	42%	40%	47.98%	43%	+2%

Another criterion we use to evaluate how effective our programs are in meeting their goals is by looking at a program's Effective and Efficiency (E&E) score. The E&E calculation is based on the number of students enrolled and uses "weighting" to give fair weight to each student with a goal. Programs are required to meet or exceed 80% of the state's negotiated core indicators of performance. A program that fails to meet E&E the first year must meet with its program advisor and develop a written improvement plan aimed at the program attaining E&E status which will be submitted to the Adult Education Division within 30 days following the review conference. Programs

that do not meet or exceed 80% of performance benchmarks for a second consecutive year will be assigned a state technical assistance team to assist the program in addressing its deficiencies and developing a program improvement plan. Programs not meeting or exceeding 80% of performance benchmarks for three consecutive years will be submitted to the State Board of Career Education for appropriate action prior to continuation of funding.

During that first program year of implementation, 2007-2008, twenty-eight (out of 77) adult education and literacy programs failed to meet 80 percent of the core indicators of performance based on the E&E calculations. As a result, those programs were required to develop and implement a program improvement plan that was closely monitored by the state office. In 2008-2009, only two programs failed to meet E&E requirements. Those two programs were successful in meeting E&E during program year 2009-2010. The majority of these programs, eleven of them, were community-based literacy councils.

During program year 2010-11, seven programs failed to meet E&E requirements, two, of which, are on their second consecutive year of not being E&E. As stated earlier, these programs will meet with state staff to discuss their E&E results, and will submit a program improvement plan for 2011-2012. The programs' E&E will be monitored by the state staff on a regular basis and all efforts will be made to ensure that these programs meet or exceed E&E and the federal benchmarks during 2011-2012.

During program year 2011-12, a literacy council failed to meet E&E requirements for three consecutive years and as a result, will have to go before the State Board of Career Education. One program, Arkansas Literacy Council, did not meet E&E this year. Unfortunately, the director has since passed and their Board of Directors for the council decided to discontinue the services.

**C. 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 Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (WIB), 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 Arkansas Department of Career Education, Adult Education Division (ACDE/AED) responds to both the employer and the potential employee to help enhance the local workforce skills through its Arkansas **Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy™** (WAGE) program. The WAGE program is designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the academic skills necessary for success in the workplace. WAGE places business and industry at the center of an effort to redefine basic skills required by today's workplace. WAGE includes 112 basic skill competencies identified in the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) and deemed essential by the nation's and Arkansas's employers. As part of WAGE, educators perform literacy task analyses (LTA) for participating businesses and industries and use the results to determine what basic skills are necessary for competent job performance, particularly in areas that significantly impact production, profit and safety. For an adult education program to become WAGE-certified, it must have a WAGE advisory committee that must consist of more than 50 percent business and industry members. The local WAGE advisory committee chairperson must also be from business and industry.

Community WAGE alliance members include the Arkansas Department of Human Services, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Department of Economic Development, the Workforce Investment Boards and other local economic development agencies and boards, postsecondary educational providers, chambers of commerce, employment training and placement agencies, local businesses and industries, and county and city governments. A WAGE student who successfully completes the program earns a state-issued certificate in one or more of five areas: Industrial, Clerical, Bank Teller, and Customer Service I and II or Employability. For the 2011-12 program year, 1255 WAGE certificates were awarded.

Banking: 104 (8%)  
Clerical: 104 (8%)  
Customer Service I (new 2010-11) 130 (10%)  
Customer Service II (new 2010-11) 90 (7%)  
Employability Skills: 575 (47%)  
Industrial: 252 (20%)

Some WAGE centers are located in area one-stop career development centers. The ADCE/AED is an active partner in the comprehensive **one-stop career development center** movement in Arkansas. Twenty out of 51 adult education programs are located within workforce centers or have a satellite program located there, and all of the adult education programs across the state provide services to one-stop participants. These services include the assessment of participants' basic academic and computer skills and the education of those participants to increase their skills when needed. Adult education programs also assist one-stop centers through resource sharing and, in a few cases, through the payment of rent and utilities. Several WAGE centers are also located in one-stop centers.

Adult education is represented on the local **Workforce Investment Boards** by at least one member in each of the ten regional workforce areas. In some cases, this is a local adult education provider, director, or president of a local two-year technical or community college.

The ADCE/AED in conjunction with the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, the Arkansas Transitional Employment Board, and the Southern Good Faith Fund collaborated to develop the **Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative**. This is an initiative to improve earnings and educational attainment of low-income, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)-eligible adults in Arkansas. It encourages and assists those adults to gain the requisite skills to earn a marketable employability credential for immediate entry into a job or to enter college and complete a degree in order to sustain a better quality of life.

The original Career Pathways Initiative in Arkansas was developed at an adult education WAGE program located at a two-year college. This pilot was funded with a grant from the ADCE/AED and services were provided from the local adult education program's funding. Expansion of the initiative to other two-year college campuses has been supported with TANF funding. Local partnerships between adult education programs and Career Pathway programs are close and supportive, especially with adult education programs located on college campuses.

For several years, the ADCE/AED operated the **Food Stamp Employment and Training Program** through a contract with the Arkansas Department of Human Services. This program is exclusively intended for non-exempt work registrants who wish to participate in the program on a volunteer basis. This program is currently operating with Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the Arkansas Department of Human Services and local adult education programs. The Employment and Training Arkansas State Plan is approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

The **Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate** involves collaboration between ADCE/AED, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Workforce Centers, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and the Arkansas Department of Education, with the governor signing the official Arkansas CRC certificates. Adult education programs provide basic skills improvement through regular adult education services as well as the Key Train software. Six (6) adult education centers also provide the WorkKeys assessment which an individual must pass to receive an Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate. Recently this initiative has begun offering the Platinum CRC, which takes higher skill levels to earn. It is hoped that this move will increase the number of people who come to adult education to improve their skills in order to earn this credential.

Further evidence of collaboration is the MOUs between Arkansas Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to **match data on employment and postsecondary enrollment for NRS reports**.

Collaboration between the ADCE/AED and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) helps adult education **students with disabilities** through referrals to adult education programs for instruction and testing and referrals from adult education programs to ARS for diagnosis of students after thorough screening. In addition, one program provides basic skills instruction at the residential Arkansas Career and Technical Institute run by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for students with disabilities. During Adult Education's Fall and Spring Administration, a staff member from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services speaks to adult education providers about services for students as well as other programs that support student success.

ADCE/AED is an active participant in the meetings and activities of the **Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative** when they meet through representation by the director of the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center.

ADCE/AED is working with ACDE/Career and Technical Education, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, the Arkansas Department of Education, the Arkansas Chamber of Commerce, and the Arkansas Transitional Employment Board on a major initiative of the Governor's office to extensively expand the **Arkansas College and Career Planning System** for use by youth and adults. In 2009-2010, this system, supervised by ADCE, was launched as Arkansas Works. This program is piloting career coaches for adult education students and Hispanic students.

ADCE/AED participates in the **Interagency Council on the Homeless** with Arkansas Department of Human Services, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, the Arkansas Department of Education, and many local service providers.

**D. 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.**

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, ADCE/AED awarded EL/Civics grants to ten local programs including eight adult education programs and two literacy councils. There were 2543 adult learners served with the EL/Civics funds in the ten funded programs.

**A. Describe successful activities and services supported with EL/Civics funds in the following areas:**

**a. Rights and Responsibilities of citizenship**

As a yearly project, one program encourages voting by inviting the County Clerk to speak to the students. A voting machine was brought to class in order to familiarize them with the actual process; students practiced voting using sample ballots. School elections, special elections, primary elections, and general elections were discussed. Qualifications for voting were explained, registration cards were made available, registration locations were identified, and types of voting were mentioned. The Clerks would explain that voting provides citizens with a voice in local, state, and national governments. Students were supplied with copies of *Voting 101: A Pocket Guide to Voting in the Natural State*, along with voter registration cards.

A series of workshops for parents called PADRES (Parents Advancing Readiness for Educational Success) was offered by another program. Topics included but were not limited to: the rights and responsibilities of citizens and parents, the American educational system, and helping children succeed.

A unit on rights of U.S. Citizenship included discussion and vocabulary terms for one program and included freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, right to vote, right to hold a government job, right to run for an elected office, freedom to pursue "life liberty, and the pursuit of happiness", Constitution of the United States of America, Bill of Rights, and the Preamble. The program also had a unit on responsibilities of a U.S. Citizen including discussion and vocabulary terms: support and defend the Constitution, participate in the democratic process, respect and obey federal state and local laws, respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others, stay informed of the issues affecting your community, pay income and other federal, state, and local taxes, serve on a jury when called upon, defend the U.S. in time of need, and pledge allegiance to the U.S. of America.

**b. Naturalization procedures**

Eligible students are encouraged to consider becoming U.S. citizens. Interested students were tutored for the citizenship exam and assisted with the application process and received thorough information regarding how to become a U.S. citizen. Eligibility was determined then a practice N-400 form is completed. Students used ten citizenship booklets to practice their English reading, speaking, and writing skills. The programs reviewed the 100 civics test questions (on paper and with flashcards) and discussed the document checklist. In conclusion, each student viewed The USCIS Naturalization Interview and Test DVD on a computer.

After the Dream Act or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals the naturalization process seems to be sought more than before. The students are more inquisitive and follow through more often than in the past.

### **c. Civic participation**

Civics is experienced first-hand through participation in a community fair, heightening awareness of community involvement. Numerous businesses, agencies, facilities, and available resources were showcased; contact information was made available to students and their families. Students also helped update their bilingual community directory. This go-to-guide details resources most used by students and their families. It will be a one stop go-to-guide for students and new immigrant families.

Students received current transportation maps, learned bus routes and learned to give and receive directions. Students studied local parks and how to reserve buildings for events.

Speakers visited the schools to discuss auto insurance with students. Local and current healthcare information was provided to students. They learned to fill out healthcare forms and discuss health issues. Students visited the local library and got library cards. Representatives from the library also came to the school to demonstrate the library's website and free classes. Students received and studied current maps of their region and information from the Chamber of Commerce. Students learned vocabulary and critical phrases for shopping. They also learned to visit the library, the bank and the post office. Students acted out various scenarios to practice such activities as checking out books, cashing checks and mailing packages.

### **d. U.S. history and government**

U. S. History lessons included the following topics: colonial America and Native Americans; the Declaration of Independence; the Revolutionary War; the early United States; the Star-Spangled Banner and why it was written; the Civil War and Emancipation Proclamation; and Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement.

American government lessons included the following topics: the U.S. Constitution; the three branches of government and how they check-and-balance each other; how bills become laws; and political parties and why they experience conflict. Local, state, and national governments are studied and current officials identified. Federal holidays are discussed then compared and contrasted with holidays in the students' native countries.

After discussing national, state, and local government, students receive official 8x10 colored, autographed photographs of Arkansas Governor Beebe.

### **e. Describe any other activities or successes you wish to report on.**

The National Capitol: Students enjoyed a virtual tour of Washington D.C. The tour included meeting the president and his family while touring the White House and surrounding grounds and official buildings. Students learned about Air Force One and Marine One. Students expressed extreme gratitude for this trip – a trip that would be highly unlikely for them in real life. Guidebooks for this tour and the State Capitol tour are given to students.



The State Capitol: In addition to touring Washington D.C., students met the governor of Arkansas and visited the Capitol Building and toured its grounds with historically significant monuments in Little Rock, Arkansas. These monuments helped them relive important historical events from the Revolutionary War until today. Students felt shock as they marched up the steps of Central High with “The Little Rock Nine” experiencing the terror of facing angry mobs. Students were subdued as they viewed the monuments in memory of the soldiers who fought in many American wars.

Students participated in a study of American art. They learned terms to describe art and were able to visit Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and engage in discussions about the works on display. Once they returned to class, students described the museum, the artwork and the experience.

Students compiled a list of businesses in the community. The students worked in small groups filling out applications for employment to the businesses from the class business list. Students worked in small groups and addressed envelopes to the business in which they were applying. Students used the internet and phone books to look up business addresses. A list of resources was developed on where to find information on job availability.

Students learned basic computer terms and functions. The students learned to use the internet to access Google and the translation function on the Google search engine. The students typed a brief letter in Spanish to their children’s teacher and then translated the letter into English. The students used cut and paste to move the translated document into Word. The document was saved and printed.

The class made a mock 911 emergency video. The students acted out a 911 scenario and followed through with the reporting the accident to 911. The ESL class practiced making 911 calls. The students used a cell phone to call the teacher (911 operator) to report an emergency. The students compiled information on emergencies and developed an English/Spanish 911 emergency brochure.

The ESL class discussed how to read a prescription label using a teacher-developed PowerPoint presentation. Terms were translated in Spanish and the meaning of “keep out of the reach of children” and “poison” was discussed as well.