

Iowa Narrative Report 2011-2012

I. 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.

Section 223(a) of the Act references the mandate that the eligible agency shall not use more than 12.5% of the grant funds for one or more of the eleven (11) State Leadership activities. The activities, programs, projects supported with State Leadership funds described below have been aligned with those eleven criteria as indicated.

In addition, Iowa was awarded a second year of incentive funds in partnership with Iowa Workforce Development. These funds were allocated to programs based on an RFP aligned with the State Plan as well as incentivizing career pathway and curriculum integration. Funds not exceeding 12.5% were held at the state for State Leadership activities to support the incentive and their activities are included below.

The three Iowa State Plan Goals include:

1. Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency
2. Assist adults who are parents obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children
3. Assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education

LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

State Leadership Activity(s): (1) the establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a state or outlying area;

The Iowa statewide adult basic education program will fund local staff development projects designed to serve the staff development needs of local providers. The local staff development program has been a traditional part of the funding pattern for local providers since the inception of the State Plan.

The Iowa Department of Education requires that each eligible provider submit an annual staff development plan outlining the staff development goals, objectives and activities for any given fiscal year. The grant awards are based on the needs and activities delineated in the local staff development plan. In PY 2012, Iowa disseminated \$80,000.00 for local programs to serve the professional development needs of local providers.

The request for proposal (RFP) provides guidelines for local programs under the auspice of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The local staff development plan is a required update with a detailed budget.

For the new Program Year, additional requirements have been asked of programs, such as identifying what is driving the professional development – teacher, student, state – and how the professional development this is offered will be evaluated, along with key indicators of the professional development’s implementation.

The program is held accountable for their professional development of well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators by tracking their budget expenses quarterly and reviewing their plan during the monitoring visit.

STATEWIDE STATE LEADERSHIP PROJECTS

The State Leadership Project is designed to fund and coordinate state level staff development activities within Section 223(a) of the Act based on the one or more of the State Leadership activities focusing on 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.

The Iowa State Leadership Committee--The Adult Literacy Leadership Committee is comprised of representatives from each community college including administrators, instructors, and trainers. Teleconferences/Adobe Connect Pro meetings 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/ longer (2-3yrs.). The Committee also helps in planning the Adult Literacy (ABE) Summer Institute, which will next occur in July 2013. In PY 2012, the feedback from the Iowa State Leadership Committee for Professional Development Standards was compiled. The plan for the state team to review the data and move the PD Standards initiative forward, however, was impacted by staff changes at the Iowa Department of Education. This initiative is planned to continue in PY 2013.

State Leadership Activity(s): (8) other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title;

New Coordinator Workshop was held August 29 and 30, 2011, for four new coordinators and their mentors. In addition, monthly coordinator meetings were held via Adobe Connect Pro or face-to-face. Technical assistance was delivered via webinar, face-to-face, and one-on-one throughout the year to use the claims process on iowagrants.gov.

State Leadership Activity(s): (3) the provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities;

Iowa Adult Numeracy Academy is an integrated face-to-face, ICN (Iowa Communication Network), and online training project that uses teacher inquiry and reflective learning to engage participants in learning mathematics and experiencing various instructional approaches to teaching mathematics. The Academy was organized around five central topics: geometry, measurement, data analysis, and algebra. Thirteen participated from September 15, 2011-February 24, 2012. Among the responses from participants, the following were given as an impact on their teaching from the Academy: "...using small chunks of information presented over a period of time. Using more activities using mental math. Having students show and explain.... The 5-minute strategy at the beginning of class...."

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The **ALWI/ABE Conference** was presented April 25-27, 2012 in Des Moines, Iowa. With the final year of Iowa's ALWI (Adult Literacy for the Workforce Initiative) funding, a conference entitled, "Today and Beyond: Preparing Students for 21st Century Opportunities" continued to build upon the focus of transitioning learners, especially into the workforce. Keynote speaker Thomas Sticht helped set that tone, along with many others during their sessions. Nearly 200 participants attended the three-day conference, and evaluations reported that 92.90% of responders gained their primary objective for attending.

State Leadership Activity(s): (3) the provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities;

Iowa Literacy Council is an advocacy group that includes diverse business and education members from all over the state who support literacy. In PY 2012, the council had presentations on and learned about workforce integration and transition issues, such as Iowa Workforce Development Virtual Access Points. The Iowa Literacy Council met September 9, 2011 at Southwestern Community College, Creston, Iowa; November 4, 2011, at Central Iowa Shelter & Services, Des Moines, Iowa; March 9, 2012, at Iowa Workforce Development, Des Moines, Iowa; and May 18, 2012, at Corinthian Baptist Church, Des Moines, Iowa.

State Leadership Activity(s): (10) integration of literacy instruction and occupational and skill training, and promoting linkages with employers;

CASAS TOPSpro training was held on April 9, 2012 at Iowa Lakes Community College. The nine respondents indicated 100% feeling prepared to move forward. In addition, a CASAS Implementation Training (IT) was held over the ICN on September 20, 2011, for seven participants; a **CASAS Writing Recertification Training**, October 11, 2011, for local certified examiners were held over the polycom system across the state. Also, teleconferences were held periodically to support the field with issues for TOPSpro, the database used for NRS reporting; and an e-Testing training.

CASAS Trainers-- CASAS-certified trainers include: 1 basic IT, 1 Providing Options for the Workplace, Education, and Rehabilitation (POWER), 1TOPSpro, and 2 Functional Writing Assessment (FWA) cadre. Additionally, a technology trainer is in process of becoming a certified CASAS trainer. 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.

In PY 2012, two local programs (Eastern Iowa Community College (EICC) and Kirkwood Community College (KCC) pilot-tested the **TOPS Enterprise (TE)** data management and **eTesting Online (eO)** assessment systems. Implementation began in October of 2011. The TOPS Enterprise web-based system includes a variety of data integrity protocols. Local program data is entered daily using TOPS Enterprise. Data is accessible in real time to state and local program personnel. The local TOPSpro Enterprise Specialist is able to run reports on demand. Reports are shared in a variety of formats with coordinators and instructors. Coordinators are encouraged to review and verify their data weekly and share information with staff. Local programs are on a three year rotating monitoring visit cycle which includes data base integrity checks and compliance with *Iowa's TOPSpro Data Dictionary*. This ensures that the Iowa Department of Education has the following quality control procedures in place for appropriate assessment procedures: [data integrity checks, system logic to prevent inappropriate assessments being administered electronically, data verification procedures, etc.]. Training and technical assistance was provided to the following colleges:

Date	College(s)	Training
October 5, 2011	EICC and KCC	Hierarchy Training
October 10, 2011	KCC	TE data base build
October 13, 2011	KCC	eO Training
November 17, 2011	KCC	eO Session Set-up
January 4, 2012	KCC	TOPS to TE Migration
January 11, 2012	EICC	TOPS data base preparation for conversion
January 18, 2012	EICC	TE desktop installation-prepare for migration
January 31, 2012	KCC	Migration reconciliation
February 10, 2012	EICC	TE class creation
March 2, 2012	EICC	TOPS to TE migration

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May 3, 2012	HCC	eO Proctor Certification
May 15, 2012	NIACC	eO Proctor Certification
May 23, 2012	ICCC	eO Proctor Certification
May 31, 2012	IVCCD	eO Proctor Certification
June 1, 2012	HCC	eO session set-up
June 20, 2012	SWCC	eO Proctor Certification
June 22, 2012	HCC	TE and eO set-up
June 25, 2012	WITCC	eO Proctor Certification
June 27, 2012	ILCC	eO Proctor Certification

In addition to providing training and technical assistance, State Leadership funds totaling \$16,000 were used to purchase web test units (WTUs) for local programs. The two pilot colleges received \$4,000 in WTUs (\$2,120 to EICC and \$1,880 to KCC). The additional \$12,000 was allocated to the 15 local programs and distributed based upon a five-year rolling average of enrollment. The web-based system was implemented in nine of 15 local programs in PY 2012.

State Leadership Activity(s): (3) the provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities;

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Training, Iowa’s ESL Regional Specialists presented four webinars on” FAQs for Newer ESL Instructors.” More than twenty-five viewed recorded webinars following the live presentations. One specialist presented on grouping strategies at the Iowa Language and Culture Conference in November 2011. In addition, specialists held a session at the ALWI/ABE conference in April 2012 discussing and gathering topics for further training for Iowa’s Adult Literacy ESL teachers.

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Monitoring Visits to Colleges--The Adult Literacy State Director and Adult Literacy Consultants monitored community colleges from August through April 2012.

Indian Hills Community College (IHCC)	08/17/12
Kirkwood Community College (KCC)	02/28/12
Western Iowa Tech Community College (WITCC)	03/13/12
Southeastern Community College (SCC)	03/28/12
Northeast Iowa Community College (NCC)	04/26/12

These included five on-site visits. (A site visit planned for PY 2011 needed to be postponed until PY 2012, due to unavoidable and unusual circumstances.) The purposes for site visits 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 technical assistance to the program. Peer Coordinators (Sandy Jensen, Teresa Garcia, Brenda Kempker, Lily Bonilla, and Pam Woolridge attended KCC visit on 2/28/2012. Lisa Washington attended WITCC visit on 3/13/2012. Lisa Washington attended SCC visit on 3/28/2012. Mary Schultz attended NICC visit 4/19/2012) were encouraged to participate as visiting monitors, in order to expand sharing and collaboration across the state. The monitoring tool and visits addressed data collections, instructional practices, benchmarks, materials, assessment practices, and fiscal management.

State Leadership Activity(s): (5) the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and literacy activities;

Other State and National Conferences

An “Education Works! Strategies Linking Adult Literacy with Workforce Skills” summit was held in conjunction with United Way on November 1, 2011 in Ankeny, Iowa.

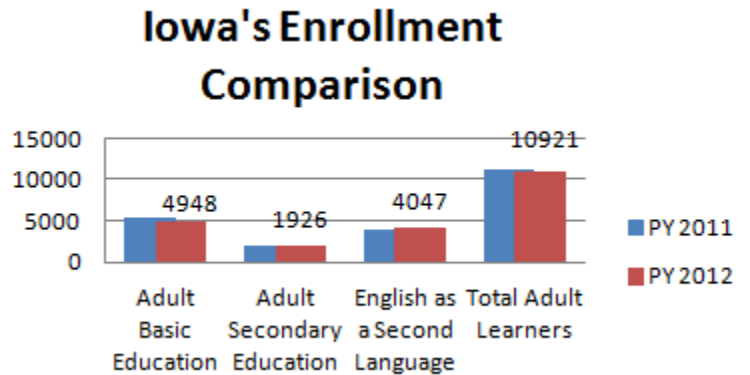
In addition, two CASAS trainers participated in the CASAS Summer Institute in San Diego, California, June 11-14, 2012.

State Leadership Activity(s): (8) other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title;

II. 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.

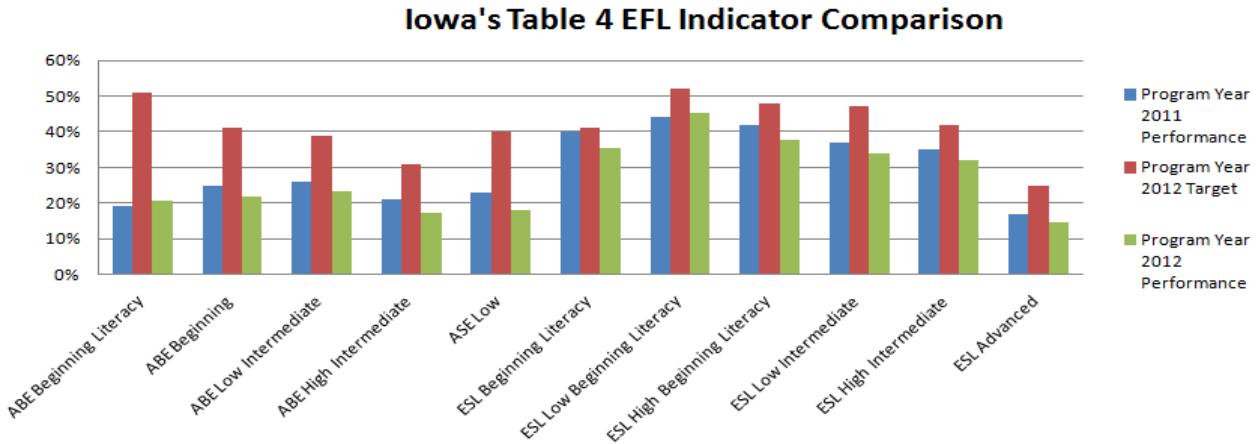
Iowa will use the aggregate and individual program tables to help determine effectiveness. In addition, Iowa conducts monitoring - both desktop and site visits – for each program every year in which recommendations are issued.

In PY 2012 there was only a slight decrease in the number of reportable adult learners (n=10,921) as compared to PY 2011 (n=11,167). Of the total number of learners (10,921) that met the NRS guidelines, students in Adult Basic Education (ABE) comprised the single largest group by program type with 45% (n=4948) of the total learners served. 18% of the total number of learners served were in Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and 37% (n=4047) were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL). The drop in enrollment of 246 adult learners also showed an average drop of 1.73 hours in attendance. This seems small but actually represents 38,302 (-4.35%) fewer attendance hours in PY 2012.



Continuous Improvement Efforts Table 4

By adding the number of adult learners enrolled with a pre/post test match in the ABE, ASE Low and ESL Educational Functioning Levels compared with total enrollment in those categories, Iowa’s aggregate pre/post test match is 42.9% in PY 2012. Iowa’s Adult Education programs did not achieve any of its eleven PY 2012 annual negotiated performance targets on Table 4 in the educational functioning levels. A detailed look at each functioning level and at the individual programs procedure to help identify which of three possible areas of professional development needs to be offered: 1) performing a higher number of pre/post match tests; 2) retention of students past the 40 hours to be able to conduct a post test; or 3) teacher effectiveness in providing instruction related to competencies and standards. Overall, as programs are shifting to make the post match and EFL gain a higher priority for their students and within the program, recent changes to performance based funding in PY13 has prioritized this shift, Iowa is hoping to see an increase in EFL gains.

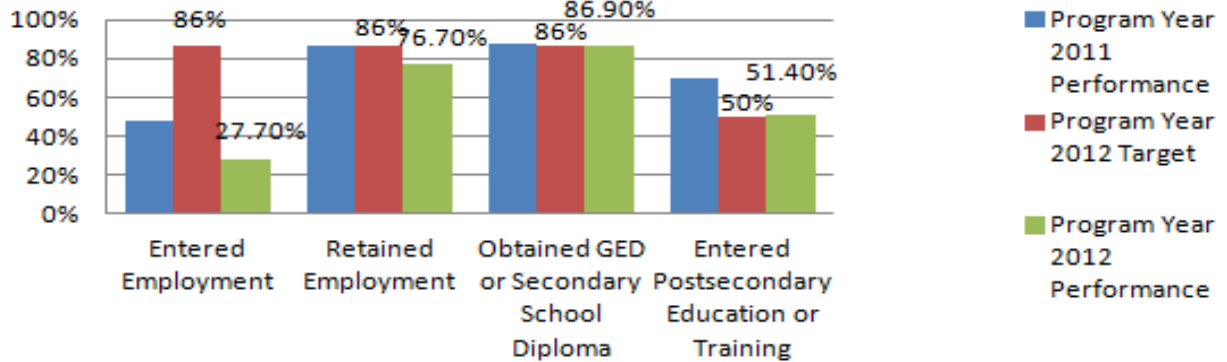


Two other significant influences for Iowa’s future change in achieving a greater number of EFL gains has been the move to a web-based data management system that can be reviewed by the state collectively as well as program specific. This access to real time data will help programs and the state provide guidance and direction. The other influence has been Iowa’s receipt of incentive funds has allowed programs to experience and adapt managed enrollment as a service delivery model which continues to be piloted in four programs throughout the state.

Continuous Improvement Efforts Table 5

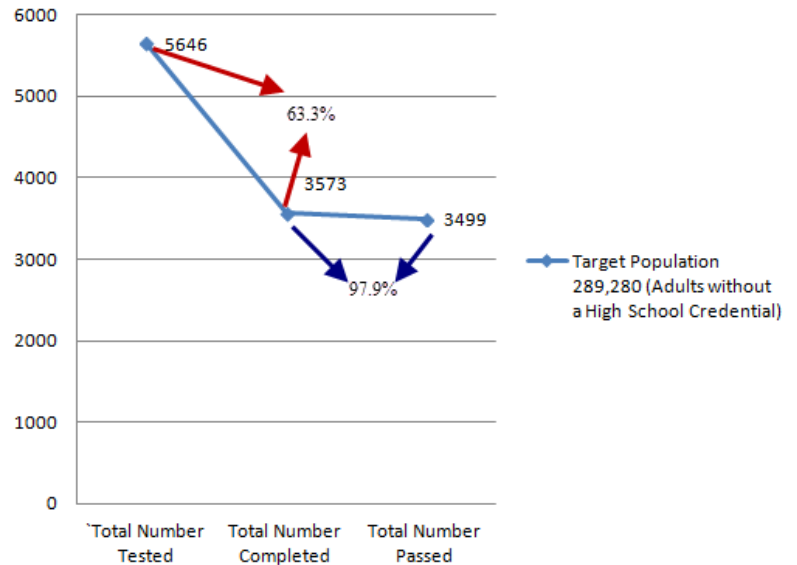
In PY 2012, Iowa was able to achieve two of the four core indicators, Obtained GED® or Secondary School Diploma and Entered Postsecondary Education or Training. While the “Great Recession” officially ended in June 2009, for many, economic recovery is still elusive. It is not surprising that of those 1,645 adult learners that indicated Entered Employment as a goal; only 27.7% actually achieved this. The unemployment rate has dropped to 5.9 percent in 2011 and for the first nine months of 2012 has averaged 5.3 percent, significantly less than many other states. However, many of Iowa’s industries that are driving job creation are dominated by middle-skill jobs, which require more than a high school diploma but less than a four year degree.

Iowa's Table 5 Core Indicator Comparison*



*Table 5 data as submitted 12/15/2012 – might not match final submission.

Iowa's 2011 GED(R) Testers and Pass Rate



GED® Testing

According to the *2011 Annual Statistical Report on the GED® Test*, published by GED Testing Service LLC, Iowa was able to test 2.0% of our state's target population (adults without a High School credential) as based on 2010 U.S. Census data. Of the 5,646 adult learners that tested, from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011, 63.3% completed all five subtests and 97.9% passed with a minimum total score of 2,250.

Program Monitoring Results

Changes to the monitoring instrument are being conducted through this period of time. Additions to the previous requirements, such as

- 1) One class observation and student interviews;
- 2) Interviews with instructors concerning adult literacy, English literacy, and classroom methodologies;
- 3) Reviewing lesson plans for competency and content standard alignment;
- 4) Reviewing curriculum

was piloted in PY 2012 and is being implemented in PY 2013. These additions include a detailed financial review, targeted classroom observation with a self – assessment element, and a detailed student file review. As monitoring results are beginning to be associated with quality programming and a point system, Iowa believes this will allow issues to be identified and resolved in a clear and targeted manner.

III. Describe how the eligible agency has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development, and employment 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 Corrections working collaboratively to achieve common goals and objectives. On November 1, 2011 a summit was held in partnership with IWD and Adult Basic Education in conjunction with United Way entitled "Education Works! Strategies Linking Adult Literacy with Workforce Skills." The summit focused on braiding funds and pooling resources.

The Title II component has been identified as the basic literacy skills component of the overall WIA state level collaborative efforts. This was reinforced with the collaboration of the Adult Literacy Workforce Initiative (ALWI) which was funded from a joint incentive grant awarded to the Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Workforce Development. A collective report for the two years was filed with Mariam Baker, Employment and Training Administration.

The Division Administrator of Community Colleges provides input into the State Workforce Investment Board. The provision of core and other services is delineated in the state level MOU. The newly hired State Director for Adult Education has submitted and recently been approved for appointment to serve as the adult education representative on the Central Iowa Local Workforce Investment Board.

A rough estimate would indicate that approximately 2-5% of Title II funds are used to support activities through the One-Stop delivery system. These funds were used to provide a collaborative initiative that introduced the Key Train® curriculum in the adult literacy centers along with the National Career Readiness Certificates by ACT in the Iowa Workforce Development sites.

IV. 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 English as a Second Language (ESL) population enrolled in integrating civics and citizenship classes. The EL Civics classes are held in all fifteen (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. As a result, the ESL enrollment constitutes approximately 3,635 of Iowa's total adult literacy enrollment. Iowa's ESL Regional

Specialists, who support the required integration of civics and ESL instruction in programs, have provided statewide support. These specialists conducted webinars and presentations at the Iowa Culture and Language Conference (ICLC) and ALWI/ABE Conference in SFY 2012.

Future Direction

A new State Director for Adult Literacy and Education assumed the role in January of 2012. With a new director, several initiatives have been implemented to help shape the future direction of literacy efforts in Iowa, while maintaining the integrity of past efforts and successes.

Examples include:

- 1) Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) training has begun in Iowa as a consortium effort with Kansas. Our pilot site is helping to promote not only additional assessment methods but managed enrollment class structure. This approach will aid other programs to successfully implement managed enrollment elements to their delivery structure. As ABE and ABE Intermediate in particular represents the largest proportion of our adult learners, the additional diagnostic assessment tools and reading strategies for this population will greatly aid the instruction in achieving educational functioning level gains.
- 2) Aligning CASAS standards to College and Career Readiness standards will be a priority in professional development for Iowa. With changes to the high school equivalency assessment and its relation to the Common Core Standards, programs and instructors need to be prepared in helping students be successful with 21st century skills.