

Louisiana Narrative Report 2011-2012

Introduction

The Louisiana Community and Technical College System's (LCTCS) vision for adult education, WorkReady U, has expanded the purpose of adult education beyond literacy and secondary credential attainment to include wrap-around student services, work-readiness, and career pathways containing stackable credentials leading to sustainable employment. The state has a renewed set of expectations and a vastly different philosophy in regards to adult education. The state has redesigned the organizational, operational, and financial models of the state adult education delivery system in order to build upon the diverse resources of the LCTCS and its partners. The primary emphasis of WorkReady U is putting Louisiana adults to work by providing high quality basic skills instruction, in addition to secondary credential attainment, transitional services that lead to a seamless progression to post-secondary enrollment, technical skill mastery, and industry recognized credentialing leading to family sustainable employment.

Louisiana's vision, as outlined in Moving Adult Education Forward: A Pro Forma Business Plan, is built on the notion of recasting the expectations of our most important natural resource- our people. The 600,000 working aged adults in Louisiana without a high school diploma also lack a key ingredient for a sustainable life- hope. WorkReady U has created clear pathways into and through career and technical education programs that lead to life-sustaining jobs. Louisiana has begun a radical change in culture and can scale the effort to substantially increase the number of people who are part of the middle class.

Statewide enrollment for FY 2011-2012 slightly declined from the previous year; however academic performance, student retention, and student instructional contact hours all increased. Enrollment decreased from 27,615 in FY 2010-2011 to 27,029 in FY 2011-2012, which equates to a 2% decrease. This minimal decrease represents a convergence of key factors that were anticipated as a result of the WorkReady U vision implementation:

- *Shift in the provider/new provider delivery network*
It is projected that the provider network will be in evolution through FY 2012-2013 as the WorkReady U culture of adult basic education delivery and added desired outcomes is better understood and embraced.
- *Increase in the number of managed enrollment providers*
A focus on high quality instructional delivery that embraces a dynamic classroom: whole group, small group, peer-to-peer, and one-on-one instruction, initially decreases provider's enrollment capacity until scale is established through implementation of new organizational, operational, and fiscal models.
- *Adjustment to age demographics of enrolled students*
Actions of the 2010 Regular Legislative Session amended LA R.S. 17:221. School attendance; compulsory ages; duty of parents; excessive absences; consent to withdraw; condition for driving privileges was amended by four different acts of the 2010 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature resulting in a decrease of 16 and 17 year old students. Additionally, WorkReady U has identified the need to attract underemployed individuals that possess basic skills deficiencies that previously may have been unable to attend because of the traditional K-12 operational

schedule.

- *Redirect of program goals and outcomes*

A transferal in the desired outcomes and performance measures have resulted in an increase in: academic gains, retention, contact hours, and overall student experience. However the move resulted in a decrease in service capacity while quality providers work toward scaling up service volume and sustainability in the new instructional delivery model.

A commitment to excellence, by the LCTCS and its WorkReady U provider network, to deliver quality adult education and literacy services that are highly accountable and embedded in best practices research to the citizens of Louisiana remains strong despite the minimal enrollment decrease. This commitment is evident in Louisiana's academic performance data. Louisiana reflects positive and continued growth in total academic gain performance, average student attendance hours, and student retention rate. A three year review of Louisiana's performance data has revealed encouraging trends that adult education is changing lives throughout the State. This solid foundation will be built upon as WorkReady U continues its quest to build the Louisiana of tomorrow through comprehensive adult basic education delivery that affords students the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed.

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 secondary credential attainment opportunities, expand instructional content and delivery techniques, utilize technology to fill the gap between basic skills deficiencies and the knowledge necessary for self-sufficiency, in addition to comprehending the WorkReady U vision. **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.**

During FY 2011-2012, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System initiated two separate but overlapping adult education competitive grant applications. The first was a multi-year grant with Federal funds allocated pursuant to the AEFLA. The second was a single year grant with State funds. Both grants were awarded on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the State to enable entities to develop, implement and improve adult education and literacy activities, and expand the performance goals of Louisiana's adult education program to include transitional services, and career pathways that lead to sustainable employment. Funding was based on scoring rank, prior year performance - evidence of demonstrated effectiveness, and program capacity to meet the programmatic benchmarks and requirements of the LCTCS's WorkReady U - Adult Education initiative.

During FY 11-12, there were 14 adult education consortia/regional providers. The purpose of the consortia/regional provider is to strengthen adult education services and increase the opportunity to succeed for citizens in parishes that historically are not meeting WorkReady U performance outcome. This risk-management approach is assisting Louisiana to maximize our resources and

construct a highly accountable delivery network.

Goal 1: To connect assessment and accountability

USDE/OVAE conducted a monitoring visit in May 2012 for the adult education program in Louisiana. The purpose of the visit was to ensure that Louisiana's adult education program meet AEFLA requirements and provide guidance toward best practices. The monitoring visit provided Louisiana with recommendations to improve the quality of funded activities, provided assistance in identifying and resolving potential accountability problems, as well as providing guidance with policies and procedures for program accountability. As a result of the monitoring visit, policy changes have been prepared for the LCTCS Board of Supervisors approval during FY 12-13.

Accountability in adult education in Louisiana is framed by WIA and the National Reporting System (NRS)—the federal and state mandate 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 LCTCS** adopted the performance-based funding formula for adult education. Programs whose data generates inadequate funds to provide a minimum level of service are considered possible candidates for placement under consortium administration in Fiscal Year 2011-2012. A funding formula task force committee was created to study the feasibility of revamping the current performance-based formula in an effort to align performance indicators with the NRS and WorkReady U vision.
- **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 81%** of the students served were ABE level students (NRS Table 1).
- **The use of an** electronic database between the SEA and Oklahoma Scoring Service, Inc. (OSS) for receipt of the General Educational Development (GED) Test results was implemented in 2003 and continued through June 30, 2012. 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. Oklahoma 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.
- LCTCS has issued a contract to develop a comprehensive data system to be utilized by all LCTCS colleges. In FY 2012, all fourteen LCTCS colleges will have reporting capabilities through the Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP), a centralized data system. A task force committee has been created to study the feasibility of including the National Reporting System requirements for adult education in this centralized data system in an attempt to facilitate a seamless longitudinal MIS system.

Additionally, LCTCS is developing a Comprehensive Data Warehouse which will be capable of matching data from disparate sources and producing analytical and actionable information to drive decisions.

- The LCTCS's monitoring procedures included analysis of data and program performance through monthly data submissions and data desk reviews. Based upon desk reviews, state staff may request local data documentation according to a risk assessment determination. Follow-up onsite visits were conducted when warranted.
- During 2011-2012, 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.

The LCTCS Internal Audit Division conducted onsite fiscal monitoring during FY 2011-2012. Based upon fiscal desk audits which examined program budgets and reimbursement claims, a risk assessment was determined. Onsite visits were scheduled with identified recipients to determine if expenses were reasonable, allocable, and allowable as required by Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, LA Title 34 and LCTCS Board Policies.

As a benefit of the USDE/OVAE visit, the onsite monitoring instrument will be revised to incorporate six vital modules - data, recruitment/retention, classroom activities, records/reports, partnerships, and finance in an effort to model the USDE/OVAE instrument and place emphasis on what is valued and consistent with the WorkReady U blueprint.

- 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 sub-grantees who fail to meet corrective compliance measures or continue to perform poorly. After a comprehensive organizational needs assessment, additional state staff has been hired to assist with monitoring program progress and providing technical assistance to the local provider network.

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

The Louisiana Adult Education Program served a total of 27,029 (Louisiana 2011-2012 NRS Tables 1 and 12) undereducated adults in fiscal year 2011-2012, including 282 work-based project learners. The state funding formula for adult education incorporates a financial incentive to recruit new students with literacy levels from 0-8.9 grade levels.

After successful participation in the Design Phase of the Jobs for the Future (JFF), Accelerating Opportunity: A Breaking Through Initiative, Louisiana was awarded a three year implementation grant. This initiative reinforces the WorkReady U vision in Louisiana, to change the way adult basic education is delivered by positioning adult students to earn a postsecondary credential so they can seize the opportunity to earn family-sustaining wages and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. As we utilize these funds to ensure more adults complete and continue their education and

skills training, we will prepare them to meet their full potential, while at the same time, creating the workforce pipeline our state demands.

LCTCS continued the 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 **family literacy projects**. In 2011-2012, 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 programs were funded for family literacy for 2011-2012. During 2011-2012, 241 adults participated in family literacy programs. (Louisiana 2011-2012 NRS Table 6).

The **Strategies To Empower People (STEP) Program** is an initiative in cooperation with the Department of Children and Family 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 Investment Council, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, 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 Children and Family Services. The services provided focus on adult basic skills remediation and secondary credential attainment. Coordination between LCTCS and the Department of Children and Family Services determines the process for service delivery. A total of \$470,000 of TANF funds was allocated to local providers across the state in 2011-2012, with a total of 317 clients participating in the project.

The **Department of Corrections High School Equivalency Testing Program Initiative** has been a successful collaborative effort to provide testing opportunities for incarcerated individuals to earn a Louisiana High School Equivalency Diploma. The LCTCS receives state funds from the Department of Corrections to contract with examiners and schedule 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 high school equivalency testing opportunities to 713 incarcerated individuals.

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

LCTCS's WorkReady U 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 2011-2012, LCTCS continued to provide access to **distance education opportunities** for adult education students. Through a contract with Louisiana Public Broadcasting, funded with State Leadership funds, local programs were provided with access to **GED Connections** online and series on all Louisiana Public Broadcasting television stations statewide.

- LCTCS Online offers unlimited potential to assist the Louisiana provider network meet the goals and outcomes of WorkReady U. Through its non-credit delivery portal, plans continue to utilize LCTCS Online as a multifaceted tool to assist with the delivery of professional development activities centered around statewide strands, assist in basic skills instructional delivery options for the provider network to reinforce concepts taught in the face-to-face instruction, support transition activities, and contribute opportunities to interested adult learners to become college ready.
- Louisiana had a total of 1,072 students utilizing the distance education curricula provided by the State. During 2011-2012, there were 212 NRS reportable Distance Education students (NRS Table 4c).

Goal 4: Professionalism of Personnel

Louisiana had 521 **adult education teachers in 2011-2012**, including full-time and part-time teachers. In addition, there were 163 **paraprofessionals**, including full-time and part-time (Louisiana 2011-2012 NRS Table 7).

WorkReady U continued to offer **professional development activities** for FY 2011-2012 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.

WorkReady U staff continues to consult with professional development experts in order to streamline and focus professional development efforts on areas of value to the system - data, recruitment & retention, classroom activities, records/reports, and partnerships. As a result of a professional development task force recommendation, LA Federal Leadership funds will be utilized to implement Regional Centers of Excellence. The centers will provide resources and mentorship programs throughout Louisiana's eight Regional Labor Market Areas. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was developed and will be released in FY 12-13. The Regional Centers of Excellence will provide on-site meeting rooms, resource libraries, and leadership to guide research-based adult education best practices.

The next step in Louisiana's professional development plan will be to implement the WorkReady U Virtual Academy. The WorkReady U Virtual Academy will include online courses that will provide a cost-effective means of ensuring quality information is disseminated to providers. Six modules have been identified as part of the effort to streamline information and place emphasis on what is valued in adult education. These modules include data, recruitment/retention, classroom activities, records/reports, partnerships, and budgets/finance. Under each module there will be both required and optional self-paced courses. Required courses will include new instructor/supervisor training and policy updates. Optional courses will be tailored to specific groups such as ESL instructors or those working with non-readers and will include topics that advance the WorkReady U vision to move adult education beyond attaining a high school equivalency credential and towards college and career success.

During FY 11-12, sub-grantees were awarded additional federal funds earmarked for professional development activities including conference participation. WorkReady U continues to strive to shift

the mindset and culture of both adult education and postsecondary institutions through consistent, clear messaging delivered over time and in multiple contexts. In 2012, adult education and technical/community college instructors and administrators attended the same annual statewide professional conferences sponsored by the LCTCS and the LA Association for Public, Community and Adult Education (LAPCAE). Both conferences provided a unified means of communicating the WorkReady U vision to participants and emphasized the importance of integrating basic skills remediation and work skills.

The USDE Policy to Performance (P2P) Initiative provided LA an opportunity to evaluate state and local policy while planning and developing practices to expand the state's adult basic education transition system. The P2P initiative greatly enhanced the implementation of the WorkReady U vision in Louisiana by ensuring policy and practice supported sustainability, quality service, and accountability. The P2P project and the USDE/OVAE onsite visit provided the tools and support for Louisiana to deeply examine the adult education policies currently in place. During FY 12-13, policy revisions were drafted and sent to the LCTCS Board of Supervisors to review and approve as a result of participation in the above mentioned events.

Summary: Snapshot of Adult Education in Louisiana, 2011-2012

The Louisiana Adult Education Program served a total of 27,029 undereducated adults in fiscal year 2011-2012 (Louisiana 2011-2012 NRS Tables 1 and 12). The total number of students served with at least one hour of instruction during 2011-2012 was 35,552. Data reveals that a total of 54% of those who participated in adult literacy services during the FY 2011-2012 program year completed or advanced an educational functioning level (Louisiana NRS Table 4).

For 2011-2012, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System expended a total of approximately \$14,795,804.82 of adult education funds (state funds, \$4,563,618.67 and federal funds, \$10,232,186.15) through the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*. The entities eligible to receive these funds for the 2011-2012 fiscal year included the following: ***30 Local Education Agencies; 7 Community Colleges; 1 Correctional Institution; 7 Community-Based Agencies; and 3 Faith-Based Organizations.***

During FY 11-12, there were 14 adult education consortia or regional providers statewide. The purpose of the consortia/regional provider is to streamline adult education services and improve performance in districts/parishes that are not meeting performance outcomes. This risk-management approach is assisting Louisiana to maximize our resources and construct a highly accountable delivery network.

The total number of participants served statewide across all groups and at all levels was 35,552. In FY 2011-2012, the total number of student attendance hours was 2,431,354 (NRS table 4), which equates to the following:

average cost per adult education student.....	\$416.17
cost per contact hour.....	\$ 6.09

Administering the adult education program statewide were **three full-time professional staff members**. The professional background of these staff members ranges from K-12 and adult

education teaching experience to higher education administration experience. Staff members have participated in professional development activities including NRS Workshops and OVAE-sponsored meetings.

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

In 2011-2012, the Louisiana Community and Technical College System expended federal funding at the following levels (including carry-over federal funds from prior year):

State Leadership	\$1,239,921.66
Administration.....	\$654,034.02
Basic Grant to Local Providers.....	\$8,338,230.47
Total.....	\$10,232,186.15

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 **Louisiana Community and Technical College System** 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.

Performance Measure	Benchmark	Actual
Beginning ABE Literacy <i>Grade Level 0-1.9</i>	54% will complete the educational functioning level.	58%
Beginning Basic Education <i>Grade Level 2.0-5.9</i>	52% will complete the educational functioning level.	55%
Low Intermediate Basic Education <i>Grade Level 4.0 -5.9</i>	53% will complete the educational functioning level.	56%
High Intermediate Basic Education <i>Grade Level 6.0-8.9</i>	51% will complete the educational functioning level.	52%
Low Adult Secondary Education <i>Grade Level 9.0 -10.9</i>	52% will complete the educational functioning level.	51%
High Adult Secondary Education <i>Grade Level 11.0-12.0</i>	N/A will complete the educational functioning level.	71%
ESL Beginning Literacy	37% will complete the educational functioning level.	39%
ESL Low Beginning	50% will complete the educational functioning level.	49%

ESL High Beginning	50% will complete the educational functioning level.	58%
ESL Low Intermediate	52% will complete the educational functioning level.	43%
ESL High Intermediate	45% will complete the educational functioning level.	38%
Advanced ESL	39% will complete the educational functioning level.	35%

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

Performance Measure	Benchmark	Actual
Placement in post-secondary education or training	38% will be placed in post-secondary education or training	59%*
Placement in unsubsidized employment	60% will be placed in unsubsidized employment	53%
Retention in or job advancement	58% will retain employment or advance in jobs	41%

*Data matched to Louisiana Community and Technical College System data.

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

Performance Measure	Benchmark	Actual
High School completion	70% will earn a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent	72%

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 Community and Technical College System 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.

The LCTCS provided 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 2011-2012, \$74,024 was allocated in amounts of \$4,113-\$4,114 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. In each of the 18 Workforce Investment Areas an adult education director is responsible for continued communication with the local Workforce Investment Board. This coordination and communication provides opportunities for the director to attend WIB meetings and to serve as a conduit for the exchange of information.

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

Louisiana awarded \$252,309 through continuation grants, ranging from \$21,267 to \$34,029, 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 2011-2012 was 750. Following are snapshots of two such programs, which provided services with English Language/Civics Education Funds:

Terrebonne Parish

The Terrebonne Parish EL-Civics Program provided individualized prescriptive instruction utilizing a multi-media approach, small and large group settings, one-on-one and peer tutoring. The program integrated the Immigration Naturalization Service (INS) Citizenship DVDs and Preparing for Citizenship textbooks in the ESL classroom. The implementation of additional visual presentations through document cameras and computer/projector equipment boosted student interest and engagement. As a result of these instructional activities, benchmarks were achieved in all ESL functioning levels. The program served 133 students, 111 students (83%) were federally-reportable. Of the 111 students served, 83 students were post-tested and completed at least one educational functioning level.

Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults, Inc. (VITA)

Volunteer Instructors Teaching Adults, Inc. (VITA), is a non-profit community-based adult education program, incorporated in Lafayette Parish designed to provide educational services to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and low achievement in southwest LA. VITA designed an educational model which combines one-on-one and small group formats together with computer-assisted instruction to allow personal contact in a non-threatening environment to make learning relevant and expedient. The English Language Civics program represents an effort to provide ESL adult learners with the tools necessary to prepare them adequately for their life at home, in the community and in the workplace. During FY 2011-2012, VITA enrolled 139 English-as-a-Second Language adult learners. Sixty-eight (68) students (50%) with employment as a main or secondary goal were retained on the job or advanced in the job.