

New York State Narrative Report 2011-2012

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.

State leadership funds supported the following activities: Regional Adult Education Network RAEN; continuation of adult education program licenses; professional development and web-based data system and technical assistance on the National Reporting System Data Monitoring and the continuation of the National External Diploma Program.

Regional Adult Education Networks (RAEN) that serves seven geographic areas of New York State continued to be funded to provide professional development for adult education programs. The RAEN represents seven geographic areas of New York State: Long Island, New York City Hudson Valley, Capital/North Country, Central/ Southern Tier, Finger Lakes, and West. Each RAEN prepared an annual work plan for 2012-13 that addresses the areas of network building, technical assistance to high need areas, accountability, staff development, infrastructure, and Statewide Summits.

RAEN provided staff development and technical assistance based on state and regional needs in the areas of learning standards for beginning teachers in Adult Basic Education, ESOL, Adult Secondary Education, citizenship education, and evidenced-based instructional strategies and program improvement activities. Specific professional development topics included the introduction of Common Core Standards in preparation to align adult education instruction, a case management on-line benefit kit for Literacy Zones, coordination activities with Literacy Information and Communications (LINCS), overview on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and presentation on high school equivalency assessments.

The New York State Adult Education Programs and Policy Team and the RAEN provided coordinated technical assistance to programs that performed below acceptable

National Reporting System performance. The RAEN directors provided technical assistance to help programs raise their actual and reported performance. Successful programs were identified and strategies were disseminated to other programs. The RAEN directors dedicated 90 percent of technical assistance to programs in need of improvement in the seven regions of the State. RAEN Directors work closely with the Program Improvement Committees from 21 programs who were designated by NYSED in need of technical assistance. An interactive web-based tracking system documents the accomplished activities that contributed to the continuous improvement process.

Individual Technical Assistance Plan (ITAP) combined with on-site agency visits and program staff discussions provide a framework for technical assistance, agency visits and appropriate professional development. Each program under review develops a program improvement process following guidance from the New York State NRS manual (see: www.nys-education-accountability.org). Local program improvement committees worked with the RAEN directors to identify data management and instructional strategies. In 2012-13, the RAEN directors provided on-site assistance to the programs including the identification of mentors from high performing agencies. Additionally, the NRS accountability specialist designed a task master for each ITAP program that provided step by step guidance on weekly, monthly, and quarterly data management.

In addition, the RAEN provided distance-learning training for the following programs the areas of Giving Ready Adults Study Program (GRASP), GED® Connection, Skills to Make Adults Ready to Succeed (SMART), and Crossroads Café.

The RAEN played an active role in coordinating Workforce Investment Act Title II grant recipients with respect to the development of local memoranda of understanding and the development of support to adult education within the local workforce investment areas.

The RAENs conducted full day meetings with One Stop partners in regions that requested technical assistance and program development. The RAEN Directors coordinated the annual Literacy Zone Summit. The emphasis of the Summit was case

management and the introduction of an on-line benefit tool kit. Dr Ruby Payne, key note speaker, provided guidance on a better understanding of poverty.

Under the direction of a RAEN director, two New York State teacher participants attended the Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL) Summer Institute in 2011, where they participated in activities designed to further demonstrate successful classroom strategies for teaching evidence-based writing. These teacher participants shared how they applied the skills of the ten-month professional development project in their classrooms and received feedback from the experiences of the other 11 participating states. During 2012-13 these practices were delivered by the RAEN and shared with the other six regions of the State.

In effort to further support adult students with learning disabilities the RAEN directors, focused and provided professional development using Learn to Achieve. The RAEN directors conducted the training throughout the State.

In 2011 the RAEN participated in the Open Society Foundation's Points of Entry Project that focused on the educational and career needs of adult students functioning at NRS Level 4 and incarcerated students transitioning to their communities. This project under the direction of American Institute for Research, worked with a RAEN Director to coordinate the collection of data from 11 community colleges for an equalization study comparing the adult education students exit scores and either Accuplacer or Compass scores. The findings will be available in 2013.

A second leadership activity supported by leadership funds was the continuation of the licensing agreements between Kentucky Educational Television and New York State's Public Broadcasting Stations (PBS). These licensing agreements and digital rights include the following distance learning programs: GED® and pre-Connections®, and Cross Roads Café. These on going licensing agreements provide the curriculum framework for many of New York's distance-learning programs. In addition to the PBS licenses, a site license from Houghton Mifflin for Skills Tutor, an on-line tutorial

program for students who successfully tested above the third grade level, and who need employability skills, continued. NYSED contracted with Corstar Communications LLC for E-Literacy NY, an electronic platform that is an adult education portal and a learning management system hosting adult education curriculum for NYS-funded adult education programs. This distance learning program expanded to include an on-line assessment component in 2011-12.

The third leadership project continued to support a web-based data system - Adult Student Information System and Technical Support (ASISTS) that assists local adult education program personnel in identifying and defining the interrelationships between their data, program performance, NRS Core Outcome measures, and NYS Benchmarks. Funding reports and data check reports give programs ample opportunity to structure program improvement efforts. By modifying ASISTS to align with funding requirements, the data system is now used for fiscal reporting as well. Programs are provided interim data management tools that track their funding cohorts. During 2012, an assessment pilot will continue to document and track in ASISTS; the ability to scan attendance directly into the data system will be afforded to those programs that have scanning equipment available. Additionally, in 2012, ASISTS began communicating with NYSED to bring up to date information regarding the recipients of the NYS High School Equivalency diploma electronically through individual program accounts in the data system.

The fourth leadership project is the funding of the National External Diploma Program (NEDP), a nontraditional experiential adult learning assessment program which serves as an alternative pathway to high school credentialing. New York State Education Department has contracted with Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) to provide the assessment program that allows adult education students in New York to demonstrate their transferable skills for which a local high school diploma is awarded. The four components are diagnostics, generalized assessment, post-task assessment, and portfolio review and graduation. NEDP has updated the number of

competencies to measure 21st century skills and the total program is being aligned to Common Core/College and Career Readiness Standards.

New York State currently funds 18 NEDP programs, however, the goal is to increase the number of providers in NYS to 25 agencies in 2012-2013 and 40 agencies by 2013 - 2014. In addition to being aligned to the Common Core Standards, the program has been changed from paper/pencil to electronic delivery. Staff training, as well as student work will become web-based as of January 2013. The long range goal is to move the NEDP credential from LEAs to NYSED.

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.

New York State's Adult Student Information System and Technical Support (ASISTS) effectively supported local program data for the past four years. During the 2011-12 program year, 172 local programs maintained their student data and submitted performance data through NYSED's web-based management information system. The ASISTS system provided NYSED staff, the seven RAEN Directors, and the Accountability Specialist with access to local program data in real time. The data results determined strategies for program improvement and design changes. Technical assistance and troubleshooting are accomplished through an online system through conference calls and webinars, eliminating costly travel for on-site consultations and data reviews. For the past four years, New York State has contracted an Accountability Specialist for adult education. This specialist conducts over 130 virtual data review sessions annually with local programs. Through conference calls/webinars, programs can view their data with the specialist's guidance and implement data management strategies in real time. At the conclusion of the virtual session, a customized Task Master is designed for each program that is recommended to the Individual Technical Assistance Program. This tool integrates data management strategies that address the data concerns and any mistakes uncovered during the virtual session. The Task Master provides daily,

weekly, and monthly guidance to these programs so they can implement changes through data mining and analysis.

In FY12, NYSED introduced a new data review process. During the month of February, every program in the state received a scheduled virtual conference call with the NRS specialist, their respective NYSED Regional staff and their RAEN director. The calls centered around five items: entry of Quarter 1 & 2 data, correct funding codes, number of students served under each funding source, goal setting targets, and assessments. The calls proved to be a successful strategy enabling programs to make necessary corrections to their data processes earlier in the fiscal program year.

In 2012, for the seventh consecutive year, New York State issued each funded program an Adult Education Report Card. A weighting system, used since 2008, provides additional credit for agencies performing well with students in Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) in which gain is harder to achieve. This methodology discourages programs from providing service only to populations where it may be easier to show educational gain. Programs are subsequently ranked in quartiles to allow for a fair and calculated comparison in and among all 172 local programs. Follow-up outcome performance and post-test rates are also quartile ranked among all local programs; this caveat encourages programs to strive for scores above the state mandated benchmarks. In FY12, the NYSED benchmark for post-test rate was 65 percent, the average for all programs resulted in 78 percent. Similar trends were seen in Educational Gain and Follow Up Outcomes. The average for Educational Gain was 56 percent, exceeding the state benchmark by 7 points and similarly, the Follow Up Outcomes achievement was 82 percent, exceeding the state benchmark by 13 percent.

In addition to the quartile rank, predetermined state benchmarks are set in Post Test Rate, Educational Gain and Follow-Up Outcomes. These benchmarks are formulated using the average from the prior year's data. Total scores are then quartile ranked as "highly proficient", "proficient", "in need of improvement" or "unacceptable". Any program that meets or exceeds the state benchmarks in Educational Gain, Post Test Rate, and Follow-

up measures are "proficient". Those identified as "unacceptable" are placed under corrective action.

In 2012, 14 agencies were placed under corrective action. . Programs under corrective action must submit a corrective action plan and form a program improvement team to monitor progress and recommend new strategies. Agencies under corrective action must demonstrate satisfactory incremental improvement over three years or less to be considered for continued funding. . These programs are also required to register on the State's accountability website (www.adult-education-accountability.org). Each program is provided a secure account on the site where they must post their corrective action plan and correspond with both their NYSED regional staff representative and RAEN director. The site is maintained by the NRS specialist.

Overall program enrollment declined from 122,833 in 20010-11 to 115,699 in 2011-12. The decline is partially attributed to reduced state and federal funding while program costs continue to increase. With a fixed amount of funding and continually rising costs, fewer hours of instruction can be provided each year. However, the decrease in student population has been offset by an increase in student persistence resulting in higher educational gain. The average number of hours per student increased from 115 in 2011 to 121 per student in 2012. Fewer students were served overall but student retention was higher, resulting in higher educational gain and learner outcomes.

For the fourth consecutive year, New York State met or exceeded all federal targets for educational gain and for follow-up outcome measures. The work being done across the state regarding the collection, recording, and reporting of data has affected the ability to move programs beyond state and federal performance targets. Through desktop monitoring and the use of Individual Technical Assistance Plans (ITAP), NYSED staff, the NRS Accountability Specialist, and RAEN Directors are able to monitor and support programs in need of improvement. Underperforming programs have received support based on needs reflected in their data. The effectiveness of this ITAP process is evidenced in the progressive increase in statewide performance. The accountability

website also enables NYSED to share statewide the strategies that work well for program improvement.

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 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 New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) have worked collaboratively to implement the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for New York State. The New York State Commissioner of Education represents WIA Title II on the State Workforce Investment Board. New York State has 33 local workforce investment boards. Each local workforce investment board has a Title II representative identified by NYSED and recommended to the county elected official for approval. The Title II designee represents NYSED at local negotiations meetings with the local workforce investment boards. NYSED works closely with the local Title II designee to develop and approve the local Memorandum of Understandings for each of the 33 local workforce investment boards.

Many activities have been occurring with the local workforce investment boards. The New York City local workforce investment board has begun researching high school equivalency alternatives for students in New York City. The education and workforce partnership is working together to look at alternative pathways for adult education students.

In the upstate area four local workforce investment boards work together and created a formal eight county partnership. A goal this past year was to create a Regional Talent Pipeline to identify the skill sets that are required of staff to meet the needs of emerging

local industries and respond to local workforce needs .One of the adult education programs serving as the Title II representative on the local workforce investment board has introduced the concept of the National Work Readiness to the board and provided training to staff, and aided the workforce board to become a testing center.

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.

New York State has the nation's greatest linguistic and cultural diversity. In 2010, according to the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, the foreign-born population of New York State was 5,506,992. In 2008, the New York State Education Department issued a Request for Proposal for Workforce Investment Act Title II for English Language/Civics Education programs and 53 successful applicants proposed to identify, recruit, and educate immigrants in English language acquisition and civics education. Approximately 67,171 students are enrolled in English literacy classes and of those, 15,204 students are in English Language/Civics Education programs. The majority of the immigrant population resides in the New York City area, although foreign-born populations are increasing in other regions of the state. In the five boroughs of New York City, nearly 47 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home. To reach the non-native English speakers, the diversity of grant recipients included nationality-specific community-based organizations, public schools, BOCES, the City University of New York system, and three public library systems in Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens.

A voluntary literacy program in the North Country has developed a financial literacy program, Banking on Women, for English Language/Civics Education. The class was developed for low income women with little experience in handling financial matters in their native country or in the United States. The class was designed specifically for women as their needs and life experiences are different from men, who may have had more experience in the financial arena. The women in this class are from China, Algeria,

Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Korea, Indonesia, Tibet, Morocco, Mexico, and Canada. Three of the women are married to natural born Americans and are employed. None of these students is a recipient of public assistance.

Another literacy volunteer program in the central part of the state provides English Literacy and Civics Education instruction in an immersion program and the instruction is mainly student driven depending on their needs to function in the United States. The civic needs are met by as reading and responding orally and in writing to immigration letters and questions, local government, utilities, school issues related to their children's education. The student population represents numerous nationalities including migrant workers, refugees and students applying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). Their goals are to acquire the skills to enter employment, to complete a high school equivalency and to improve employability skills in a professional field. A variety of curriculum is being used Citizenship Now, Oxford Picture Dictionary, Read and Think English.

A third program for English Language/ Civics in New York City is sponsored by a community based organization which worked to assist an Afghani doctor who came to New York without any English speaking skills. The Afghani doctor attended an English Language/ Civics, improved her English fluency and studied and passed the Registered Nurse examination. During the summer of 2012 she became a registered nurse and is employed by the Visiting Nurse Association. Her long term goal is to work in the Emergency Room and assist with surgery.

These three program examples represent the variety of successful programs in English Language/ Civics that are offered in New York State.