

Wyoming Narrative Report 2011-2012

1. 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.

Professional Development Activities

The Wyoming Leadership grant funding continued to focus on activities and training which would support the Corrective Action Plan (CAP), create higher accountability through local program improvement, and teacher training in reading.

State Director & Staff Training

The State Director, Marcia Hess, presented local directors' workshops focused on the following in face-to-face meetings which were highly successful:

July 12-13 - Financial Management, Data Management and new teacher training.

- 1) Locals are to write their own procedure manuals to align to state policies and processes performed in their ABE programs such as intake, orientation, fiscal drawdowns, student data, etc.
- 2) Data analysis and data checklists were reviewed for data quality.
- 3) Each program has a different teacher orientation to their local program. The state put modules on the website to have a uniform introduction to ABE in Wyoming and requested that all teachers go through the information. ESL modules for new ESL teachers are also there.

August 16– Met with TEAL project team. They benefited from the Washington DC training and are looking forward to presenting at the Fall Institute. Dissemination of TEAL training was at the Institute and many teachers went back and applied it. One program reported a 40 point increase in the average scores on the GED writing test.

September 20-22 - Fall Institute included strands addressing math, reading, writing, English as a Second Language, and data training. Programs met their 80% attendance requirement. This institute was successful in meeting the training needed to increase teaching strategies and techniques of teachers.

Sept 27 - Leadership Excellence Academy (LEA) began the second year and worked on pilot projects. Webinars were held and success was reported by all programs. Local Directors expressed more enthusiasm on the process their programs were making on performance, retention, and average hours of attendance.

March 1 – EL Civics RFP was distributed and competed. This grant completion helped meet the CAP requirements.

May 3 – Final LEA meeting and completion of projects.

There were online trainings held during the winter months to train on the following topics:

LACES Training – Nov 7th, Feb 23rd, and May 31st.

These trainings cover queries, reports, updates, end-of-year process, diagnostics, data history files, and common errors and corrections.

ESL Assessment Training on BEST Plus

One local ABE director was contracted through Leadership funds, Kelly Willmarth, has been certified as a BEST Plus trainer and trains our ESL teachers on the BEST Plus assessment instrument. Programs notified Kelly when they had new teachers and they create the training schedule.

Of Statewide Significance

- ABE contracts with LACES to host and train in order to meet data collection and reporting requirements.
- A state report card was developed and printed for distribution to the Wyoming Community College Commissioners, legislators, and local program providers. This was our second year of distribution.
- April 10-13 – Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Conference was attended by all ABE local directors and State staff to learn more about the application of Career Pathways.
- ESL New Teacher Training – 15 modules were developed, piloted, and posted to the WCCC website (<https://www.communitycolleges.wy.edu/training.aspx>) for all ABE Program directors to use with new ESL instructors. Diane McQueen, Eastern Wyoming College's ABE Director, created and ran an English language school in Thailand for twenty years. WCCC contracted with her to write these modules for the state. Most ESL teachers have been through them.
- ABE New Teacher Training – The State staff posted 8 modules on general ABE requirements and information. Three modules are planned for this next year.
- The average retention rate of enrolled students was 78%. This is higher than the 68% just one year ago.

Leadership Excellence Academy (LEA) Training for Local ABE Directors

All ABE program directors participated in the second year of the LEA training program. There were two face-to-face workshops and three webinars which supported a practical program project which utilized surveying, working with program data, and research in the adult education field. They designed and implemented pilot projects. All directors completed the course work and were issued certificates as "Certified Manager in Program Improvement".

The LEA pilot projects helped local directors target specific areas to improve. Retention and post-testing were the most common areas addressed. Many are continuing this process into the new program year.

One program redesigned the intake and orientation process that included an interactive orientation video that walked students through online registration to Wyoming at Work, Kuderjourneys, a learning styles inventory, individual goal setting and how to complete the required forms. Then students met with the instructor. This was created for three groups: 1) the general ABE students over 18, 2) age waiver students 16 and 17, and 3) ESL/EL Civics students. The ESL portion is translated into multiple languages (Chinese, Romanian, Spanish and Russian). Their second goal was to establish a Student of the Month and offer the National Adult Education Honor Society awards.

Monitoring & Technical Assistance

The ABE State Director serves as the main point of contact for general technical assistance. Troy Tallabas is being trained to manage more of the data system and to work with the State longitudinal data system as the ABE representative.

Technical assistance for the LACES data collection system is available to all programs and the State office through LiteracyPro Systems, which provided online training three times this year. The LACES support staff are available by e-mail Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are pleased with the quality of training we receive. The proficiency of our data-entry staff has improved. The data is more reliable than at anytime in the past. Our goal is continual improvement in data quality and management. Transcripts of the training were distributed after each session and posted on the ABE website under the Tech Talk section. See <https://www.communitycolleges.wy.edu/tech-talk-laces.aspx>

The Corrective Action Plan activities completed this year included 1) an EL Civics RPF was written and completed. 2) The MOU with the Department of Workforce Services was signed. Data matching information was used to help negotiate the performance goals for employment in February 2012. Data matching will begin in the 2012-13 grant year for the cohorts.

Local Program site reviews. Four of the programs had an on-sight monitoring including financial, administrative processes and student records. Audit Clearinghouse records were checked and A-133 audits were collected. The other five programs are scheduled to be completed Fall 2012.

- 2. 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.**

Wyoming Adult Education Performance Measures 2011-201

Core Indicator #1: Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition and other literacy skills

Performance Measures	Year Target	Actual
1. Beginning Literacy ABE	25%	13.33%
2. Beginning Basic Education ABE	28%	27.11%
3. Low Intermediate ABE	29%	35.94%
4. High Intermediate ABE	32%	39.06%
5. Beginning Literacy ESL	28%	24.16%
6. Low Beginning ESL	52%	33.33%
7. High Beginning ESL	39%	34.52%
8. Low Intermediate ESL	39%	36.49%
9. High Intermediate ESL	37%	36.63%
10. Advanced ESL	28%	25%
11. Low Adult Secondary Education	48%	45.65%

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

Performance Measures	Year (9) Target	Actual
12. Placement in Postsecondary Ed/Training	82%	69.68%
13. Placement in unsubsidized employment	61%	79.44%
14. Retention in unsubsidized employment	62%	87.78%

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

Performance Measure	Year (9) Target	Actual
15. GED Completion	86%	90.1%

Significant Findings

Wyoming improved performance in both Intermediate ABE levels. This was the first year that all local programs implemented managed enrollment and managed classes. All class sites with large enough student attendance are implementing this. Open labs have been incorporated for those waiting to get into the classes. The TEAL writing techniques are being integrated and GED scores reflect an increase in scores.

The state monitored the local programs' performance and overall post testing rates. The state post testing went from 38.8% in 2010-11 to 46.4% in 2011-12. It is not at the level we set of 60% but should continue to improve now that local directors are trained in data analysis and all reported focusing on post-testing results this year.

Local staffs have been networking across the state on reading and instructional strategies through the Instructional Leaders Forum being led by Neil Sturomski. This has been an active forum during the last quarter of the year and will continue into the 2012-13 grant year. Resources, lesson planning, and coaching is an ongoing process on this interchange.

English as a Second Language experienced difficulty in completing the post-testing assessments this year. Two factors contributed to this. First a large group of ESL students left the resort areas to return home due to loss of jobs and did not return. The second factor was that ESL class hours did not offer enough instructional hours or retain students for the number of hours to posttest which has now been corrected. Only ESL High Intermediate met the performance measure. Four of the ESL levels increased over last year but did not meet performance. Local directors and teachers are focused on the low performance and working on solutions. Each program set Program Improvement goals at the beginning of the year and then watched these more carefully as a result of the Leadership Excellence Academy training.

The two goals of enter and retained employment performance targets were met. For the Placement in Postsecondary Education or Training goal we asked all the programs to work with their colleges to get the National Student Clearinghouse matches completed, which they did. The post-secondary goal was not met.

This year we also developed a tracking instrument that we are asking the Institutional Research Directors to complete on students entering the college's Developmental Education classes from ABE. We hope to establish a baseline in the Fall of 2012 and compare the success of these students to the cohorts that follow. Preliminary results indicate the math skills of ABE students need to be significantly increased to have them at the credit bearing level. More analysis is needed and I am working with Commission staff on this.

The MOU for data matching was finally signed and we have attempted to run a data match for the 2011-12 year to compare to the survey results but have not been successful to date. The MOU is with our Research and Planning Department which is part of the Department of Workforce Services. They have data agreements that will allow us to track more people outside of the state. The only drawback is that we do not get the data at the granular level only as aggregated data. We are continuing to work with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Department to see if we can get a direct information exchange so that data may be entered into the LACES system.

The employment information on Table 5 clearly illustrates the implementation of goal setting for entered and retained employment:

	2010-11	2011-12
Entered Employment	170	812
Retained Employment	46	412

There is a greater commitment by ABE staffs at all levels to accurate reporting and reliable data. This is a clear reflection of the work being done across the state.

Influences on the Overall Program

The 2011-2012 contract year has had four factors influencing program activities.

Federal review in September 2009 – This year (7/1/2011 to 6/30/12) has been spent writing guidance, policies, and developing statewide forms. This CAP is now completed.

Funding Formula Model – The state used the funding formula for the third year. It is working as expected. The bounded impact was held to five percent so each program that was over funded has a gradual impact over approximately three years. There will be an increase in the bounded impact to ten percent (10%) in the 2012-13 grant year.

Three programs are experiencing the decrease with only one expressing difficulty in adjusting to the change. We intend to let a request for proposals in the first quarter (January to March) of 2013.

One program, Valley Learning Center, used to be part of the Western Wyoming Community College outreach system. The B.O.C.E.S. may consider rejoining the college due to a decline in enrollment (from 46 to 27 students).

Professional Development – A variety of approaches were taken to meet the heavy demand for professional development.

Face-to-face: Training was offered for all new policies and guidelines written for the ABE program at local ABE director’s meetings. A new fifteen section ABE Policy and Guidance Manual was developed. As updates are made the sections are sent to be replaced in each provider manual. We plan to put this manual online during the next year.

Online modules: Free ABE and ESL new teacher training modules are now available. More information on the outside vendors online classes are sent out regularly.

Tuition Assistance: Some programs help pay tuition for teachers when the classes apply to their assigned areas of instruction.

LACES Dashboard – This has been one of the most utilized features the local program directors have at their fingertips. Directors used this at monthly staff meetings, as a constant check for post testing, and to track how they are doing on performance targets.

(See dashboard sample below)



When title on a graph is selected, each bar becomes interactive and will display a list of students populating the different indicators or issues. More features are planned by LiteracyPro for both the provider level and for the SEA level. This instrument inspired the local providers to become more involved with their data and attempts to clean the data upon its release in the last quarter. One program was so engaged that the entire staff worked tirelessly to meet level completions until all the red bars turned green. Most programs use the “Post-testing Rate” and “Students Needing Post Testing” charts as a tool to keep teachers and students aware of testing periods.

3. 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.

Description of State

Wyoming does not have local Workforce Investment Boards but functions under a single service delivery area. In our communities, which are all under 60,000 in population, programs from all state agencies work very closely with their local partners, including non-profit service agencies, libraries, family literacy programs, jails, and local education agencies to meet the specific needs of their communities, counties, and their unique populations. The hospitality industry, oil fields, coal and uranium mining, ranching, and service industries have different constellations in various parts of our state.

Several activities were completed this year integrating services and increasing ABE visibility in our state:

- a. New courses at Eastern Wyoming College (EWC) are being created for ESL certification
- b. Student of the Month and National Adult Education Honor Society were initiated
- c. Interactive video sessions for ABE Orientation that are learner centered for three types of students: age waiver, ABE and ESL (in four languages)
- d. EWC director wrote state ESL New Teacher modules

Outside funding also allowed coordinated service that sequence well with student goals. These funding sources supported:

- e. Soft skills employment training and computer skills
- f. Work readiness training
- g. Reopened two underserved communities in Lincoln county
- h. Evening ESL classes which included workplace literacy

Board of Cooperative Education Services and Board of Cooperative Higher Education Services which are independent taxing districts, provide collaboration and augmentation to adult education services. They provide additional funding in some areas to our ABE programs to expand services over the summer or during the year. Each board has as a part of its mission to broaden or deepen the educational services for its community.

The Workforce Development Council consists of 35 members with Dr. Jim Rose, executive director of WCCC, representing the community colleges and the ABE program. He supports the development of the ABE program and its importance in the larger scope and mission of educational services to Wyoming adults.

Data Matching Achieved

A memorandum of understanding has been developed and signed for data matching with the Department of Workforce Services - Research and Planning Department. In the Fall of 2012 we will be data matching for employment goals.

Integration of Activities

Many of the one-stop offices send their clients to the ABE programs for TABE assessments. Those needing ABE services are enrolled to improve their academic skills while others are referred back to Workforce Services for skills and certificated training or employment.

Family Literacy – After the Even Start Family Literacy program discontinued funding, the Wyoming Family Literacy Program received funding from the state legislature to not only back fill the lost funding but expanded the funding so that each community college service area could apply for a grant(s) to continue the four family literacy components with community partners such as ABE, Headstart, and the local school district(s).

Workforce Services and WorkKeys – The Department of Workforce Services continues to work with the local providers and their WIA clients to remediate clients with goals of obtaining their Wyoming Career Readiness Certificate.

4. 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.

Five EL Civics grants serving 447 were funded during the 2011-12 grant year. A new RFP competition was competed but will not start until the 2012-13 year. The competition demonstrated a need for technical assistance for all recipients which was planned for August, 2012. After the training and goal setting for activities for the new year we should see more measurable activities and results in the 2012-13 report.

The basic subject areas covered in the EL Civics classes were US history, geography, government, and English literacy. Other areas that were taught were financial literacy, health literacy, educational and workplace systems. Contextualized instruction was offered as support for students with goals for taking the citizenship test. No “citizenship” classes were offered at the ABE centers.

An effort was made to customize instruction to meet the unique needs of each EL Civics program population. The students’ families came from the tourist industry, oil fields, migrant workers, foreign worker visas, and construction or ranching.

An emphasis was also put on understanding the local community and on volunteerism. One group worked with Habitat for Humanity.