

Maine Narrative Report 2012-2013

Introduction

On August 1, 2012 a statute went into effect that formalized the transformation of Maine Adult Education into a college and career readiness system of service delivery. Maine Adult Education is now defined by law, and more importantly, by practice, as “...an education program ... that includes intake, assessment, career advising, instruction and individual learning plans; is guided by data management, annual monitoring and annual professional development plans; uses appropriately certified staff; is designed to meet identified local needs; and offers at least 3 of the following:

- A. Basic literacy instruction or instruction in English as a Second Language;
- B. High School completion courses;
- C. College transition courses;
- D. Career pathways services; and
- E. Enrichment courses.

Further in the legislation career pathways services were further defined as “...career counseling and education for individuals who seek to secure employment and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment by following a pathway, each step of which is designed to prepare the individual for the next level of education or employment”. *(Note: In the spring of 2013 the legislature modified the language of the adult education definition to more accurately define it as a career pathways system. The revised language adopted in August 2013 reflects this important clarification. “...is administered...through a career pathways and service system that includes intake, assessment, advising, instruction and individual learning plans, is guided by data management and analysis, annual monitoring and professional development plans; uses appropriately certified staff; is designed to meet identified local needs; makes use of partnerships and alignment with workforce development, postsecondary institutes and support services; and offers at least 3 of the following:*

- A. Basic literacy instruction or instruction in English as a Second Language;
- B. High School completion courses;
- C. College transition courses;
- D. *(Repealed)*
- E. Enrichment courses;
- F. Adult workforce training and retraining; and
- G. Adult career and technical education.)

All steps taken by Maine Adult Education in the areas of data management, professional development activities, and external partnerships were untaken with the goal of fully implementing career pathways implementation. As an end result of this process, Maine learners will have access statewide to local adult education programs offering comprehensive services and adhering to statewide standards of rigor.

State Leadership Activities and Programs

1. Career Pathways Plans

To provide local programs with an overview to the college and career pathways legislative changes, *Charting Our Pathway*, a series of state created webinars were offered. A general overview of the legislative changes was delivered at the State Directors Meeting in October of 2012 followed by a more comprehensive presentation in November of 2012. These webinars clearly explained the new expectations for career pathways services, definition of terms, implementation process, the impacts on data collection and analysis, and the supports that would be available through the state office.

A *Career Pathways for Education, Career and Life Success* template addressing 11 required career pathways components from the legislation was created for all programs to complete. Every local program was to provide their current activities, planned new activities, action steps and a timeline regarding the eleven required components. These required elements are: 1. Partnerships and Alignment; 2. Intake; 3. Individual Student Learning Plans; 4. Ongoing Assessment and Learning; 5. College and Career Advisement; 6. Instruction; 7. Support Services; 8. Data Management; 9. Annual Monitoring; 10. Professional Development; and 11. Educational Programming.

The months of December 2012 – March 2013 were focused on providing extensive group and one-on-one technical assistance to local programs on the development and implementation of local career pathways plans. In addition, a face-to-face symposium was held on January 25, 2013 to assist local programs in the development of their plans. Every program that wanted to continue as an adult education site submitted a draft proposal which was reviewed by two members of the state team. The reviewers either approved the plan as submitted or returned it for changes. Of the 99 plans submitted, all but three received final approval within the required timeframe and are on an action plan.

Outcomes to date of the Career Pathways Plan Process:

- The state office now has a tool that highlights each initiative local programs are addressing, their best practices and areas they are working on to improve.
- The Career Pathways Plan has become instrumental to the ongoing desk monitoring efforts.
- Smaller programs discovered they could offer a full range of services by partnering with other nearby adult education programs, increasing their use of technology, and partnering with other agencies.
- Three programs decided they were not willing to meet the requirements of the pathways process, chose not to submit a plan, and will no longer receive state subsidy or be eligible to receive other adult education funding. To ensure that local citizens were not deprived of services, arrangements were made with nearby centers to provide critical services. Though these were difficult decisions to make, it is not prudent to allocate shrinking resources to adult education programs that were not willing to deliver the types of services needed by our adult learners.

- While there was initially strong reactions both for and against this process, local directors began to see that this thorough analysis of their programs, improved approach to integration of services, and that their efforts were not an “add on” but instead the new way of doing business, their resistance began to subside. One director wrote that after 18 years in adult education, the process was the best thing she and her staff had ever done to benefit their program and learners. Another director later came to understand how the work done on the plan fit right into the work he would have done to prepare for the AEFLA RFP as well as the program’s professional development plan.

Plan updates are submitted twice a year to address timeline items and will be resubmitted each year as the program’s strategic plans. A website was created to collect and store the timeline and resources: <http://www.maine.gov/doe/adulted/admin/policies-regs/careerpathways/index.html>

2. College and Career Readiness Transition

Various members of the state office team availed themselves of excellent training opportunities regarding college and career readiness. The information gathered and follow-up outreach to other states have proven invaluable in aiding our college and career readiness efforts.

Implications on state policy and instructors on CCR transition provided by NAEPDC in November, 2102.

National State Directors meeting presented by OVAE in May, 2013.

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Readiness Training Design Initiative presented by NAEPDC in late April 2013.

Chris Coro presented at the Maine Adult Education Association annual conference, June 2013, on the topic of Career Pathways.

3. Career Pathways and Professional Development Alignment

Professional development offerings are now aligned with our vision of pathways toward success in education, career and life. The specific content is guided first by the direction provided by programs through the annual professional development planning process, secondly by the findings of our program monitoring process and lastly by the initiatives and directives of our state and federal funding agencies.

In addition to the activities provided by the state, we ensure that updates are provided on a regular basis to help inform practitioners of the upcoming professional development activities. Our professional development efforts are aligned with our vision that students will have clear pathways to success in their continuing education, careers and life endeavors.

All adult education programs conduct annual self-assessments to determine professional development needs. Professional Development Plans are then created and submitted to the state office reflecting each programs priorities. These are then summarized to determine the top priorities state -wide. The summary results for 2012-2013 indicated the top three priorities to be Technology Integration, MaineSTARS data management system, and the Common Core State Standards.

Technology Integration

In response to the need for technology integration the state expanded the technology courses offered through the Maine Adult Regional Technology Initiative (MARTI). Four courses using a blended, online, facilitated format were offered through a series of spring and fall cohorts. These courses have involved hundreds of instructors, directors and support staff. The courses included, Technology Integration, Universal Design for Learning/Differentiated Instruction, Teaching in a Blended Classroom and Developing an Online Course.

The technology courses offered also included regional meetings and classroom visits to support and imbed the work in practical application. These courses are offered as eight, ten and twelve week courses and are designed to allow for classroom implementation and time for reflective activities within professional learning communities. This year's Maine Adult Education Association annual conference featured many offerings springing from our focus on effectively using technology to support student success. Examples of these offerings are the Introduction to Moodle for Beginners and the Creating a Low Cost Alternative to a Video Conference Unit.

MaineSTARS Training. MaineSTARS is the new data management information system which replaced the old MAEMIS system in August 2012. Twelve initial user trainings were offered statewide. A variety of trainings have since been offered including full day face to face trainings, workshop presentations, live and recorded webinars. The need to use the new NRS compliant data system made it apparent that many programs did not understand proper AEFLA administration and reporting or Maine's assessment requirements. As a result, additional training was offered on basic elements of the AEFLA to help programs come into compliance. Programs stepped up to the challenge and were supported by these training activities.

Common Core State Standards. Opportunities for trainings, conferences and webinars on the common Core were shared with local programs through news and events on the Professional Development Portal. Recorded webinars and resources were posted for them to access there as well. A *Workshop on Aligning the Common Core* and another on *Using the Change Agent to Teach to the Common Core* were also presented. Programs were encouraged to attend a two day conference on the Common Core. Two staff members from the Office of Adult and Family Literacy at the Maine DOE and a local adult education director attended the National Adult Education College and Career Readiness Training Design Initiative to begin working on a plan to move Maine's Adult Education programs forward with College and Career Readiness Standards.

Focus in these three important areas did not, however, limit the scope of our professional development efforts. We continued to provide opportunities for growth through a Career Pathways Symposium, a Maine College Transitions Conference, focused on advising and five WorkReady trainings. These trainings were important in supporting our continued work with developing a comprehensive career pathways system. In addition to the conferences and ongoing training opportunities, twenty-eight individual training activities were delivered to support the eleven components of Maine's Career Pathways Programing. Below is a chart which includes the conferences and the individual trainings.

Career Pathways Component	Training Activities
#1 Partnerships and Alignment	Career Pathways Symposium Program Design with Cross-Agency and Employer Collaboration (MAEA) Vision, Principle and work Plan of the Tri-Agency collaboration and What They Mean to Us (MAEA) Adventures of career and college Access Partnerships
#2 Intake	Career Pathways Symposium Getting Students Off to the Right Start: Career Pathways Style (MAEA)
#3 Individual Learning Plans	Career Pathways Symposium Integrating Career awareness and Portfolios for all
#4 Ongoing Assessment and Learning	Career Pathways Symposium CASAS Trainings(5)
#5 Career Advising	Career Pathways Core Values of Advising workshop Advising Basics workshop Advising with Limited Resources Fall Directors Meeting Advising Focus Advising in the University Setting Understanding Students through Transition

	<p>Theory</p> <p>Introduction to the Holland Career Theory</p>
#6 Instruction	<p>Career Pathways Symposium</p> <p>What are Learning Centers and Why are They So successful</p> <p>Contextualized Material</p> <p>Fun and useful ESOL Teaching Ideas</p> <p>Using Learning Centers in All Types of Adult Education</p> <p>Core Skills Mastery</p> <p>Why aren't My ESOL Learners Learning</p> <p>ESOL Learners with Real Special Needs: The Non-Literate</p> <p>Intro to Evidence -Based Reading Instruction</p> <p>STAR Teaching and Learning</p> <p>Career Contextualization</p>
#7 Support Services	<p>Career Pathways Symposium</p> <p>FAME Programs and Services: Planning and Paying for College</p> <p>Women, Work and Community/Online Career Planning Course</p> <p>Financing and the GED Campaign</p> <p>Understanding Online Degree Options</p>
#8 Data Management	<p>Career Pathways Symposium</p> <p>Maine STAR Trainings (See paragraph above)</p>
#9 Annual Monitoring	<p>Career Pathways Symposium</p>

#10 Professional Development	Career Pathways Symposium New Director Training CEH's and Certification
#11 Educational Programing	Career Pathways Symposium Digital Citizenship WorkReady (above paragraph) Structuring Adult Ed Math classes for Student Success

Data

Maine has made a commitment to a continuous improvement process for its data gathering, analysis and use in program decision making. To improve our own knowledge, two members of the state office staff participated in NRS Basics Course: An Introduction to the NRS, offered in March of 2013. Much of that information was then passed along to the field through a number of trainings specific to Maine's data system and NRS reporting. Local program directors, student advisors and data entry personnel were the target audience for a series of trainings on NRS tables 5, 7, 4 and 4b. Comprehensive training on Maine's assessment procedures and student intake processes were also offered. Regular data updates on specific topics were also sent from the state office to the field.

Data Remediation Plan

Maine has seen improvement in its data management practices as a result of its 2011-2012 Data Remediation Plan.

During its first full year in operation, many changes were made to the state's adult education data management system to bring it up to levels of expected reliability. In our attempt to bring historical data from the legacy system into the new system, the data transfer corrupted thousands of student files. To ensure that student data would be as accurate as possible, all inactive students were removed from the system and steps were implemented for retrieving archival information should a student return.

The hiring of a new data person who has both data management and AEFLA program experience has proven to be invaluable. This new employee has spent many hours with the DOE budget person assigned to adult education, participated in the NRS Basics Course and has had ongoing meetings with the developers of the state's data management system as well as meetings with the local program data entry people.

In addition, Maine Adult Education did establish a protocol for DOL to provide regular employment matching reports.

Summary of Student Data

Overall, Maine's student participation data reflects a decrease in participants by only 60 students from 2011-2012. By program type, the student numbers in ABE decreased slightly by 48 students, from 3,682 to 3,634. The number of ASE students decreased by 127 from 1,481 to 1,358 and ESL students increased by 111 from 1,270 to 1,381. While Maine saw a reduction in the number of 16-18 year olds served (-271), student numbers increased in every other age group, with the largest increase (+93) in the 19-24 year olds. The increase in number of students being served in ESL classes is reflective of Maine's status as a resettlement state.

Since school year 2010-2011, Maine has experienced significant budget reductions to the adult education programs at the local level. As local school systems have struggled to maintain their K12 programs, the reductions in local dollars for adult education have impacted basic skills programs. Some school districts have chosen not to replace a retiring adult education director and have closed their programs. Though our Career Pathways system, we are working to offset these cutbacks through increased sharing of resources amongst adult education programs and with enhanced partnerships.

The Department of Labor was provided 1,845 names and able to provide a match for 1,841. Of that number 33% had entered employment. The match for 1,313 who were already employed showed that 69% had retained employment.

Integration With Other Agencies

Building and enhancing interagency partnerships is an essential element of Maine's career pathways system. Those partnerships are expected to take place at both the state and local levels.

Maine Adult Education is an active participant on the State Workforce Investment Board and represented by the State Director of Adult Education and Family Literacy. A representative from the local programs also participates on each of the four local area workforce boards.

Started in the fall of 2012, the Tri-Agency group has taken root in the way we work with the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services. Based on the tri-agency letter that was signed by the three corresponding federal agencies, the Commissioners of Education, Labor and Health and Human Services drafted their own letter of similar intent. For the first time in anyone's memory, the three commissioners meet monthly to coordinate interagency efforts to meet the needs of common clients in a more efficient and effective manner. A summit was held in the fall of 2012 for representatives from the field of the three agencies. Some of those present had never worked face-to-face with the members of the other agencies. Modeled after the state-level tri-agency work plan, each

area of the state was to form regional tri-agency groups and development their own work plans to address the state goals of increased participation and outcomes for clients. The state director of adult education attends the monthly commissioners meeting and also represents the commissioner on the tri-agency work group which meets regular to carry out the state plan. The scope of the work has extended beyond only dealing with the interests of common clients to include a wider view of a more integrate and better functioning workforce development system.

For much of the 2011-2012 year, there was little interaction between the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Adult Education. Major DOC administrative changes negatively impacted the educational programming. It is good to report that new DOC leadership has made correctional education a priority and as of the spring of 2013, adult education began participating regularly in their newly formed education committee meetings. Additional correctional facilities have also been approved as test sites for the high school completion assessment, ABE instructional courses and hours are increasing, and there is joint planning happening for a conference for local program adult education staff and correctional adult educators. The goals of our work together are to create an effective instructional program within Maine's correctional facilities as well as provide supports for those transitioning back into the local communities.

ELCIVICS

Despite Maine's increasing number of immigrants, only two EL Civics grants have been awarded. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, both of the programs funded continue to have student waiting lists as the demand for instruction cannot be met. With immigrants starting to take up residence outside of the traditional centers of Portland and Lewiston, we are encouraging programs with smaller numbers of new-Mainers to explore how they might work together to provide EL Civics services through a regional approach. Professional development opportunities continue to be offered in dealing with ESL learners as demand grows throughout the state.

In Lewiston, 248 students were served in ESOL courses and 86 in EL Civics. EL Civics curricular efforts were supported by the use of authentic materials and by activities offered in conjunction with a number of their partner agencies such as Career Center, public library, local colleges, hospitals and the police department. Learners became more familiar with the use of forms and procedures that are part of every-day living. Understanding the content and implications of housing forms, consumer tips, parent-teacher requests, reports and other school expectations, medical prescriptions and the interpreting of medical, utility and rent bills are important for successful integration into the community.

At Portland Adult Education (PAE), 839 learners were served in ESOL and 85 identified EL Civics students. PAE works closely with the Portland Housing Authority in the delivery of EL Civics courses. Almost all of the target learners are at levels 1 and 2. To help them navigate the path to citizenship, the program is infused with literacy and

authentic materials. The high point for both Portland and Lewiston are the end of the year naturalization exams.