

Montana Narrative Report 2012-13

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.

Facilitating Integration of State Initiatives into Daily Practice

Data Quality/Program Improvement Conference: *The Three-Legged Stool (Student Retention Supported Through Curriculum, Data, and Assessment)* was the theme of the statewide Adult Basic Education (ABE) Conference held on September 18-19th, in Helena, MT. A total of 74 adult educators attended the conference. This year's conference followed the format of the conference the prior year featuring three state initiatives as the foundation of a program improvement. Directors and staff were engaged in hands-on activities focused on weaving the initiatives together in plenary and breakout sessions throughout the conference. The morning of day one of the conference focused on providing the tools for implementing engaging curriculum and analyzing data to monitor the impact of curricular changes. Curricular ideas were presented in a unique, infomercial format with exemplary teachers sharing strategies and resources employed in their program that had positively impacted student engagement and retention. Infomercials demonstrated how to integrate eBooks, I pads, U Tube, TV4211, and wikis into existing practice. Other infomercials introduced new curriculum; this included innovative curriculum to revise the intake process and support student transition to postsecondary. The afternoon of day one was the data analysis portion of the agenda. Participants moved from a plenary session reviewing statewide reports on student retention and academic gains to meeting with participants from programs of similar size to analyze individual program data and discuss which of the curricular ideas presented they would incorporate into their program's curriculum to improve student outcomes. Day two of the conference provided more support for teachers striving to enhance curriculum through a focus on standards-based instruction. The authors of the Montana adult education standards presented concurrent half-day sessions for ESOL and ABE teachers on teaching to the standards. Participants received a multitude of standards-based lesson plans that they could use in their classrooms immediately after the conference. While teachers worked collaboratively on standards-based instruction, the program directors participated in a breakout on performance based funding (PBF) dedicated to creating a clear understanding of the impact of student retention and academic gains on the programs' allocation. The purpose of the PBF breakout was to garner directors' support of standards-based curriculum and innovative instruction that leads to student outcomes that are rewarded through PBF. Participants moved from the morning breakout sessions to meet as a program to discuss what they had learned over the past day-and-a-half. Program discussion ended with the *parade of programs*; each director provided a one minute report on his/her program staff insights and ideas for their annual Work Plan. At the conclusion of the conference, participants had acquired a plethora of strategies to support student retention, which would automatically lead to an increase in the number of students making educational gains.

Activities to Support Curricular Enhancements

Standards-in-Action (SIA) Mathematics: The state director continued to provide professional development designed to support state ABE teachers in aligning math instruction to the state standards. The Technical Assistance Team (TATT) comprised of teachers who completed the pilot SIA project and wanted to share their knowledge of the innovations with all MT teachers entered into Phase II of their outreach activities. The TATTs presented two regional trainings created to give the 24 participants standards-based activities to expand on the instructional strategies presented at the regional trainings in the prior year. The TATTs also allowed time during the trainings for the participants to investigate the Montana Math Wiki; the wiki is the hub for all ABE teachers to share resources and collaborate with teachers throughout the state. Throughout the program year, the TATTs

maintained the wiki to ensure continued professional dialogue and sharing. These trainings enhanced the teachers knowledge of the principles of teaching math aligned to the standards. The teachers were able to return to their classrooms with new research-based techniques to improve student learning. Through the state's ongoing professional development ABE math teachers are positioned to revamp curriculum to meet the demands of a new assessment aligned to the common core standards.

Standards-in-Action (SIA) Reading: The state broadened the SIA state-level work to include the reading standards by bringing the SIA state leaders, the reading standards writing team, and exemplary ABE reading teachers to Helena in June 2012. This initial meeting led to the formation of a sub-committee to evaluate and rewrite the reading standards. Over the course of the next six months this committee met virtually using VYEW. VYEW is a real-time virtual meeting room that provided the team the ability to upload the standards into the meeting room, as well as contribute to the project outside the designated meeting times. A face-to-face meeting was held in December in Bozeman, Montana for the team to finalize the standards and prepare for SIA innovation work in the coming months. The team continued to meet virtually through the VYEW to unpack the standards and align resources to the standards. The state scheduled monthly conference calls with the team to support the collaboration. The state SIA leaders met with the reading standards team in another face-to-face meeting in April. The purpose of this meeting was two-fold. First the team members were asked to present the resources they had aligned and determine how to best combine all aligned resources into one state document. Secondly, the teachers were asked to bring sample student assignments for work in Innovation III, ramping up curriculum. Also at this meeting the national College and Career Readiness Standards were discussed, and it was determined a crosswalk with the national standards needed to be conducted prior to releasing the revised reading standards. Future professional development and defining the next steps for sharing the standards with program teachers would be discussed at the completion of the crosswalk.

Standards-in-Action (SIA) Reading and Mathematics: The SIA reading and mathematics subcommittees were asked to complete a cross walk with the Career and College Readiness standards released by OVAE in April 2013. The cross walk was to be completed by August of 2013. A cross walk with the national standards ensures that the state level standards are adequately preparing adults for entry into employment and postsecondary training.

Activities to Support Data Analysis

Program Data Analysis: An overriding theme of the September conference was that the lynch pin of all state initiative work is data analysis. To support local program staff with guidance on how to effectively manage and monitor data, the state renewed its contract with a local program director that facilitated follow-up data activities with the local program staff after last year's conference. This contractor continually demonstrates expertise and a keen desire for our state to achieve NRS performance goals and outcomes. This year the contractor prepared local program data reports that were distributed at the September conference for staff to refer to in their breakout discussions on using data for program improvement. Following the conference, the contractor sent each program director a Work Plan template requiring that he/she collaborate with staff to use the data reports to outline program improvement activities for the coming year. After reviewing a program Work Plan, the contractor then scheduled a one-two hour conference call with each director to discuss the Work plan. Prior to the call the director was sent an analysis of their program educational gains, student outcomes, and student attendance. The objective of the call was to determine if the Work Plan truly aligned with their performance data. When necessary, program directors were asked to submit Work Plan modifications. In order to assistance program staff in Work Plan implementation, the contractor created a Best Practices Manual and Data Calendar for data entry staff and teachers to refer to throughout the program year. The staff was then encouraged to continue to email ongoing data questions to the contractor throughout the program year. Through a contractor, the data analysis conversation was sustained and personalized.

Regional Data Conference: Two regional conferences were scheduled to provide a time for directors and teaching staff to receive additional support in achieving their Work Plan goals, as well as prepare them for the transitioning from student self-selected goals to cohort reporting. The data meetings began by presenting a summary of the Work Plan goals submitted by all the programs. Participants were able to see how other programs were addressing retention and post testing; the two predominant issues identified on the Work Plans. Each program director was asked to provide a brief summary on the progress they had made in implementing their Work Plan strategies; it was hoped participants would glean valuable information about success and challenges others have experienced. Program staff was encouraged to sit in groups interested in similar strategies during lunch. The remainder of the day was focused on understanding the new cohort designation and the state level report created to assist them in this analysis. The cohort discussion started with student scenarios to examine; this laid the foundation for moving from the theoretical to practice. Participants were guided in moving from the scenarios to their own Table 5 data to look at trends to determine how what they had learned about cohorts will impact their practice. These trainings prepared 30 ABE staff for training their program colleagues to understand the cohort designation and its implications for classroom instruction.

Data Quality Team: In order to maintain ongoing professional dialogue between ABE teachers and state staff, a Data Quality Team consisting of four teachers and state staff (state director, programmer, and IT support staff) organized in 2012 continues to work collaboratively. All enhancements and updates to the student information system are vetted by this team prior to integration into the system. This team has become the liaison between state staff and the field. The teacher representatives are able to bring the practitioner perspective to all of the data work and system development; the creation of this team has had a profound impact on the working relationship between the state and local program staff. All work was completed via conference calls and emails. Working together as one entity has systemized ABE, and data discussions have become part of our infrastructure, not reactive conversations.

Activities to Support Assessment

TABE Training: The state required TABE training was held on April 9, 2013 for 20 participants. Due to the state's emphasis on integrating data analysis into daily practice, the state maintained a unique approach to TABE training that was instituted two years. In collaboration with the state data team and Mike Johnson, McGraw Hill/TABE representative, the TABE training was designed to expand beyond test security, development, and administration, to include specific instructional strategies and show the connection between TABE testing and student success. The training opened with TABE Basics (information required to cover for individuals new to TABE) and moved to *Strategies for Success with TABE*, a segment focused on using TABE effectively with students. *Strategies for Success with TABE* gave participants in depth information on: administering the correct pretests based on locator analysis; understanding the benefits of the survey and complete battery, using the Norms Book, preparing students for the post test, providing instruction in areas of difficulty, and providing instruction in test taking strategies. The last segment of the training was entitled *TABE and the Teacher*. This training gave participants a new perspective to share with their staff; proper administration of the TABE must be coupled with routinely referring to the student information system, MABLE, for assessment analysis. This was defined as best practice. This TABE training is more than test administration training; it directly connects testing to helping students achieve learning gains.

Activities to Support Program Improvement

Program Monitoring (Site Visits): The importance of the integrity to data entry at the local level has increased in significance since the adoption of a performance-based funding formula, so the state employed a site-monitor to conduct a review of every program. A majority of the monitor's time was spent on a thorough review of the local data. She assessed the following components of the local data system: attendance records, proper release forms, testing information, student goals, default class attendance, and career counseling. The monitor also conducted an exit interview with each local director to share findings of the data audit that would be included in her final report. She also spent time with them going over program improvement. The directors were asked to provide information on several areas program work. They responded to questions regarding current success with student transitions, integration of the Work Plan, intake protocol, interagency collaboration, and marketing.

The employment of a monitor will be continued in the next program year, as the state is able to provide follow-up technical assistance when necessary. Also, the process maintains confidence in the systemic approach to entering data. This confidence is necessary for support of performance-based funding.

State Directors' Meeting: The seventh annual directors' meeting was held on April 9, 2013 in Helena, Montana. The agenda of the meeting was developed to provide updates on state level activities and receive input from the directors to assist the state in planning appropriate professional development activities for the upcoming program year. The meeting agenda items included: student transition policy (best practice and state models), development of an ABE teacher credential, standards-based instruction, cohort impact on the current funding formula, and continued support managing data. The state will continue to bring the directors together annually, as the meeting is essential in assisting them in short-term and long-term planning, or in helping them gain clear understanding of current initiatives. Open discussion at these meetings leads to local program improvement, as the directors' use networking opportunities and the focused, relevant information presented to begin strategic planning for the upcoming program year.

E-Grants Training: The state ABE director worked with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) grants management staff for several months to transition from paper-based applications to an electronic grant application process. Through this collaborative effort ABE programs now have the ability to submit their annual extension application electronically, and once approved all budget draw-downs and updates to approved local program activities are submitted electronically. On April 10th the ABE program directors received an all-day in-service on how to use the E-grants system. Directors left the in-service with many of the sections of their 2013 application completed and ready for submission in June. The transition to E-grants was another major step in bringing ABE into the statewide education system.

Distance Learning: A state goal for this year was to support distance learning for programs that had incorporated distance delivery into their instructional practice in the previous years. State support included the purchase of Missouri GED Online (with limited Skills Tutor seats) and staff training. In spite of the challenges that distance learning poses, 29 students completed more than 51% percent of his/her instructional time using the distance learning curriculum for a total of 872 student learning hours. Thirty-one percent of the distance learning students made an educational gain. In the seven participating programs, the distance learning students also achieved core goals; two entered employment, fourteen retained employment, fourteen obtained high school equivalency, and 7 entered postsecondary. This data validates that distance learning is helping some students in meeting their core goals and making educational gains. Program staff in the eastern half of the state participated in the Rural Services Education Grant in 2007-08, and this appears to have given them the skill sets required to sustain distance learning, as almost all of the students enrolled in distance learning are from two programs in the eastern part to the state. It is incumbent upon the state to continue to support distance learning in these programs and to continue to provide technical assistance for teachers interested in developing a successful distance learning model.

Montana LINCS: MTLINCS continues to be the virtual vehicle for supporting statewide initiatives and keeping all adult education teachers on the cutting edge of state and national activities. The state renewed its contract with a state ABE teacher, who has worked on the MTLINCS Web site since it began as a collaborative effort between the Northwest Consortium and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). The original site was developed to provide a variety of teacher/student resources. MTLINCS has evolved from a teacher/student resource center to become the linkage for ongoing professional development tied to the state initiatives. The homepage for MTLINCS now features a star with a link to the current program improvement initiatives (L2A, distance learning, data quality, ESL, Career Pathways and SIA). Additionally, all state activities related to each strand are posted. In minutes, readers can access Power Points, pictures, and relevant state documents from trainings and meetings. The importance of MTLINCS cannot be emphasized enough; it is our virtual faculty lounge promoting research-based, ongoing professional development. Additionally, a weekly newsletter is sent to all ABE teachers, directors, and volunteers providing links to new information on each component of the star. Upon opening a link, recipients note a snippet of research on the selected strand with additional links to further resources and Web sites. All information in the weekly newsletter is from the LINCS Community of Practice, which provides a condensed version of the national conversation on an ongoing basis. The use of this site is steadily increasing. Below is summary of MT LINCS stats for this year.

SUMMARY OF MTLINCS STATS: 12/31/12 TO 12/01/13

Observations

- Increase in **Data Resource** usage may imply that Montana ABLE educators are comfortable going right to the resource to retrieve posted information about cohorts, etc.
- Even though **distance learning** has not been a viable tool for Montana, there is still interest.
- Access to **Email archives** indicates Montana ABLE educators refer to this link in order to remain informed about state activities.
- Review of current **research** by MTLINCS appears to have generated interest based upon number of visits.
- Montana ABLE educators may be accessing the SIA, **Content Standards**, and **Research** more frequently due to the state focus on both math and reading standards.

General Summary of Number of Visits: Yellow Highlighted Areas Show Growth Green Highlighted Area Show New Pages

Page	2010	2011	2012	2013	Growth/Loss for 2010-2011	Growth/Loss for 2011-2012	Growth/Loss for 2012-2013
Calendar	829	1280	880	557	52%	-30%	-37%
Career Pathways Resource		45	211	291		368%	38%
Content Standards (Condensed Versions)				291			
Data	201	481	302	248	139%	-37%	-18%
Data Resources		326	203	225		-38%	11%
Distance Learning	5452	689278	256	266	Question validity	-----	4%
ELA Standards				40			
Email Archive	8385	605	507	525	-92%	-16%	4%
EQ 2013				181			
ESL	7184	530	369	540	-91%	-41%	46%
HISET Resources				355			
L2A		124	369	322		197%	-15%
L2A Resources		86	360	331		318%	-8%
MT Facts & Statistics				352			
MTLINCS Home				2405			
OPI ABLE	535	602	524	740	13%	-13%	41%
OPI ABLE Update		347	415	428		205%	3%
Policies		104	323	277		210%	-14%
Research Home				491			
▪ Adult College Completion				274			
▪ Improving Adult Literacy Instruction				273			
▪ Student Persistence				185			
Reading Research		51	222	247		264%	11%
SIA		92	318	370		246%	16%
SIA Resources		58	159	230		174%	45%
Student Highlights		52	232	344		346%	48%
Teacher/Tutor				412			

Montana Student Information System: Each program year a portion of the state leadership allocation is set aside to pay for ongoing maintenance and updates to the Montana Adult Basic and Literacy Education (MABLE) student information system developed by state programming staff.

MABLE is viewed as an evolving program that is continually updated and modified to meet the needs of the National Reporting System (NRS) and local programs. This program year the state agency continued its focus on strengthening the relationship between state staff and local programs in order to help them better utilize the student information system. Throughout the program year, state staff consulted with the state data team on every modification to the data system, and the team continually sent questions and ideas for improvement to the state staff for consideration. We relay information on all modifications and enhancements to every local program via e-mail from the state/field data team. Inclusion of representation from local programs in state level data work has promoted ownership and interest in data. This state level activity is the underpinning of all ABE work, as valid and reliable data will drive all innovations. In the 2012-13 program year the data team emphasis was checking the validity of the data and the creation of additional reports to support local programs' data analysis procedures. Reports created include: classroom report, employment report, and the cohort report.

Data Research Project: The state requested the MTLINCS contractor and the individual contracted to do program data analysis work collaboratively to conduct a research study to bust myths about adult education and provide information regarding past and future state initiatives. The team was asked to use the state student information system (MABLE) as the basis of their research. The state requested they design the research, analyze the data, and develop a report. A planning model developed by the National Institute for Research was used to frame this work. Two products resulted from this project: *The Montana ABE Student* and a Return on Investment (ROI) Fact Sheet for Montana ABE. At the September Data Quality Conference, the contractors first presented the ROI, which was validating for all participants and the perfect segue into introducing their findings on the Montana ABE student. The story of the ABE student began with an overview of state level data that compared student data from small, medium, and large programs. Each program was then given a series of spreadsheets with their program student data. The data detailed trends in students with twelve or more hours, post testing trends, and demographic information on students staying less than twelve hours. The program directors were asked to use their students' story (research information) as the basis of their annual Work Plan that would be turned into the state after the conference. The outcome of this project was the creation of one state level document demonstrating who we are and what we do. Research and data were combined to "tell our story" in a different way, and prepare ABE staff for creating research-based program improvement Work Plans. Furthermore, the research project can be used for advocacy purpose and provide local program staff a new and unique way to share ABE with community partners

Shop Talks: Monthly *Montana Shop Talks*, modeled after the *Shop Talks* conducted by OVAE for the state directors of adult education, were held throughout the program year. Regularly scheduled talks involving the state staff and all program directors were used to disseminate information, promote instructional leadership, and provide technical assistance. Each month the state includes a minimum of one local director to share information about one or more state level activities in which his or her program is involved.

The National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC): NAEPDC continues to be a source of information and support for the state director. The connection to the NAEPDC has allowed the state director to learn from and network with colleagues both nationally and regionally on issues that are important for successful state administration. The benefit of this type of affiliation is access to important information that can benefit the state.

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.

The state is in year five of using a Web-based data system to gain longitudinal trend data and support a systemic approach for collecting and measuring student data. The data system provides instructors and directors clear understanding of what students need in their learning plan and what they need to do to help students make academic gains and achieve core goals. This has promoted changes in instructional practice, intake, and goal setting. The chart below shows the percentage of students making educational gains over a five-year span. There was a considerable drop in the number of students attaining an education gain in 2009-2010 due to the state's new requirement that all students have 60 hours of instruction prior to a post test. Before 2009, programs allowed post testing after 12 hours of instruction. It is important to note that this year student gains increased significantly in intermediate low and intermediate high. The other functioning levels (excluding Intermediate Low) also demonstrate gains. This does validate that the time and resources spent on analyzing data to improve student outcomes are effective. The state will continue to provide multiple forms of technical assistance to all programs to ensure student education outcomes continue to improve.

<u>Entering EFL</u>	<u>PY 08-09</u>	<u>PY 09-10</u>	<u>PY 10-11</u>	<u>PY 11-12</u>	<u>PY 12-13</u>	<u>Annual Change</u>
Beg Lit	47%	31%	37%	42%	43%	+1%
Beg Basic	33%	26%	33%	35%	37%	+2%
Int Low	40%	23%	33%	30%	37%	+8%
Int High	34%	20%	22%	24%	30%	+6%
ASE Low	46%	18%	25%	26%	25%	-1%

Montana's ESL population remains very small, and the number of students in each functioning level varies significantly from year to year. The list of proactive steps to improve education gains for ABE students was the same for the ESOL teachers, and again the positive impact is evident. The ESL teachers have formed a very collaborative network committed to student gains; their recent efforts have contributed to substantial increases in student educational gains.

<u>Entering EFL</u>	<u>PY 08-09</u>	<u>PY 09-10</u>	<u>PY 10-11</u>	<u>PY 11-12</u>	<u>PY 12-13</u>	<u>Annual Change</u>
Beg Lit	44%	38%	52%	41%	54%	+13%
Low	67%	44%	60%	50%	65%	+15
Beg High	56%	39%	67%	56%	69%	+13
Int Low	45%	43%	50%	62%	63%	+1
Int High	65%	47%	46%	47%	75%	+28
Advanced	49%	25%	38%	56%	61%	+5

The outcomes in the core areas are listed in the table below.

<u>Outcomes</u>	<u>PY-12-13</u>
Entered Employment	35%
Retained Employment	50%

GED	87%
Post-Secondary	39% (cohort) 68% (prior year)

This is the first year of tracking student outcomes with cohort designation. The data for program year 2012-2013 will be considered baseline data. The state has created a cohort report that can be used to help program staff identify students' potential cohort designation and plan instruction and goal setting accordingly. Additionally, the state will continue to support professional development to help instructors more effectively prepare students to be workforce/postsecondary ready. Transitioning students beyond earning their high school equivalency diploma will continue to be a focus for the next program year.

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.

State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB): The state Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed the state ABE director as full voting member of the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) in 2012. As a member of the Board, the state director is automatically given a subcommittee assignment. The director is serving on the Life-Long Learning Committee. This committee meets the day prior to the Board meeting and is responsible for making recommendations to Board in all areas addressing the needs of an educated workforce. The state ABE program director was also appointed by the governor in January 2008 to serve on the Youth Council, an ad hoc committee of the SWIB. The Youth Council is responsible for coordinating and researching the most current work force information related to youth education and employment for the purpose of making recommendations to the SWIB. The Youth Council holds quarterly meetings designed to augment the vision and mission of the SWIB. In March 2010, the state ABE director was selected as vice-chair of the Council. The state director continued to serve as vice-chair for the 2013 program year. Montana does not have Local Workforce Investment Boards, but all local ABE program directors serve on their County Management Teams, which focus on regional economic development.

Montana Career and Technical Education Advisory Council: The state ABE director continues to serve on the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Board which provides advice and counsel on career and technical education programs funded through Perkins IV. ABE and CTE are working collaboratively to promote Montana Big Sky Pathways.

One-Stop Delivery Systems: Although only one ABE program is located in a one-stop delivery system, the remaining programs have established strong relationships with the one-stops in their community. Due to the small population in all Montana communities, all adult education programs are able to operate as though they are part of a one-stop delivery system. The flow of information and students between agencies is seamless and continuous. Current partnerships sustain formal and informal communication among the agencies. Students are served efficiently and effectively. This collaboration gives our students the support they need to be successful. One-stop delivery is embraced conceptually in Montana and is in action on a daily basis. ABE's role in the one-stop delivery system has been validated by its presence being required on the governor's Rapid Response Team. The ABE state director is consulted regularly by local community management teams to share information needed to help transition unskilled and low-skilled adults to the workforce.

PEP Talk: Between 2008-10 program years, the Department of Labor, ABE, and the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education utilized their Workforce Incentive grant to develop PEP Talk, a common intake activity to assist adults in developing a Personal Employment Plan (career pathway) to seamlessly transition adults between agencies as client/student needs evolve. Since the Incentive Grant

funds were one-time only, the team produced a sustainable, no-cost program. All materials continue to be available online; this includes workbooks, brochures, and training modules. The continuance of the PEP Talk collaboration does not rely on additional funding, and with each successive year an increasing number of students are completing their PEP Talk portfolio. Enabling unemployed/underemployed adults to gain the skills necessary to attain self-sufficiency and move up the economic ladder was identified as the collaborative goal for this grant, and PEP Talk is now the common language across the agencies. Each month the Department of Labor sends monthly data to the state ABE director showing the number of ABE students creating PEP Talk portfolios, the beginning of the career planning process. This year there 878 ABE students were active portfolio users. Montana agencies are working collaboratively to assist adults in developing a career pathway.

College!NOW Grant: The state director of ABE co-chairs one of five working groups for this grant. In 2012 the ABE work group was reconfigured to focus only on the transition of ABE students to postsecondary through the three College!NOW pilot projects. It was felt that the prior year focus on collaboratively meeting with staff from developmental education had completed its charge of increasing coordination and communication between ABE and developmental education on designated campuses. During this program year, the ABE work group collaborated with a Lumina Foundation contractor in reviewing the findings of the College!NOW ABE Bridge Pilot projects. The goal of these pilot projects was to increase the education, skills, and employability for under-prepared adults for occupations in demand in the grantee's regional area .A report of the findings will be released in 2014; the report will summarize the individual pilot projects including information on student recruitment, retention, and outcomes. The report will provide other ABE programs in the state with strategic information on how the support adult career pathways and ideas on how to message the importance of pathways work with their community partners. The workgroup envisions the final report will assist the state in developing a statewide pathway model for all ABE programs replicate. The second accomplishment of the workgroup this year was the development of a Career Pathway Survey that was distributed to ABE and staffs at all the state community colleges. The results of the survey will be released in 2014. The survey results are intended to help shape state policy and give guidance to support the transition of adult basic education students to postsecondary education and training. This survey coupled, with the pilot project report, will provide abundant resources for ABE program staff to design modification of program delivery to transition a greater numbers of students to postsecondary with little need for academic remediation.

TANF Eligible Support Grant: The 2011 legislature approved an amendment to the budget for DPHHS to include grant dollars to support ABE programs in creating ways to expand service to TANF eligible individuals during the summer months in 2012 and 2013. Five ABE programs were awarded grants to expand services to this targeted population. The awards ranged from \$10,000 to \$30,000 for each summer. The proposals submitted were unique and meet the needs of each area. During the 2013 legislative season, the grant was increased to \$400,000, and there are now seven ABE programs providing services to TANF eligible clients. Ultimately this grant is building a strong bridge between DPHHS and ABE, and it is challenging the ABE culture to think about serving students in different locations through technology integration and innovative strategies.

GEMS: The Montana ABE dashboard was completed and launched in 2013. Through this web site ABE is part of the state's longitudinal data system.

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.

BEST Plus Training: The state is committed to designating some EL/Civics dollars to comply with the state policy's assessment requirement. Each year designated BEST Plus teachers must participate in refresher assessment training. In order to effectively use state resources and staff time, BEST Plus training was held in conjunction with the ESOL teachers' state meeting. Five instructors participated, and the training prepared participants for a perfect transition into the meeting the next day. They would use the BEST Plus training to contrast and compare presentations on other approved ESOL assessments. To ensure readily available assessment training the state has paid for a Montana ESOL teacher to complete the BEST Plus training and serve as our state trainer.

Professional Development: Five programs have been awarded the EL/Civics grant. Each year the number of students served with this grant remains small and relatively constant. This program year 180 students were served. Since the expiration of the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Network Grant that spanned July 2008-June 2010, the ABE director has signed contracts with the state CAELA team to continue to build on the professional development model put in place with the CAELA grant. This year the state supported the team in presenting an ESOL day-and-a-half training on May 15-16th. Fifteen teachers attended, and the team presented a variety of projects and strategies for the instructors to adapt in their own classrooms. This year's training also included a guest speaker from immigration and a Webinar with a representative from TABE sharing the components of TABE-Clas-E. As a result of the Webinar, several of the teachers volunteered to pilot TABE Clas-E during the next program year. At the conclusion of the meeting the teachers revisited the wiki web site that was introduced to them at the meeting last year. The team leaders shared how they would maintain the ESOL professional dialogue by posting monthly professional readings and student activities on the wiki. Teachers learned that this year, students will also have access to cross-program activities to extended friendships and support their learning experience. The conference allowed fifteen ESOL state teachers the ability expand their use of technology, explore assessments, and add to their repertoire of best practice. Our Montana ESOL leaders are engaged in continually promoting a thoughtful professional development process that will enhance instructors' abilities to meet the needs of ESOL students and sustain a statewide ESOL system that can meet the demands of this population.