

## Pennsylvania Narrative Report 2012-2013

### Introduction

Program Year (PY) 2012-13 was the second year of a multiyear grant cycle resulting from the competition in the spring of 2011. Direct service grants, both state and federally funded, were renewed at level funding. Programs continued to develop their case management services to help students persist in their instruction and plan for and achieve their educational and career goals.

Division of Adult Education staff continued the monitoring process that was developed as a result of the March 2010 OVAE monitoring visit and fully implemented during PY 2011-12. Staff conducted thorough, on-site program and fiscal monitoring of thirteen agencies. The agencies were selected using a risk rubric.

- **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.**

PA used state leadership funds to support projects that helped the state and its funded direct service providers implement PA's three main goals for PY 2012-13: 1) continue to build local providers' capacity to support the workforce development system by addressing the education needs of adults eligible for Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Title II services; 2) build on and improve previous work to develop and implement career pathways for adult students that meet the needs of the local communities and employers; and 3) implement a professional development system supporting research-based, job-embedded professional development leading to program improvement and high quality and effective teachers and program staff.

### Management Information System (MIS) Support

The e-Data Tech Support project provides technical assistance, training and support to the Division and programs in the collection, reporting, use and analysis of program data with the goals of ensuring accurate data and improving program services and student outcomes.

In PY 2012-13, e-Data Tech Support provided training and technical assistance to programs in several ways. Training for e-Data v2, PA's data reporting system, was provided face-to-face and online. Tech Support created a new online chunked training format that gave participants the opportunity to practice with the data and develop questions as the course progressed. Participants used the e-Data v2 training site, a mirrored version of the live site, to work in the system and develop a level of comfort with data entry. The project also provided technical assistance to programs by email and phone on topics ranging from data entry to the development of effective data collection and entry policy and procedures. Tech support reviewed each agency's data on a bimonthly basis and sent reports highlighting potentially inaccurate or incomplete data to both the agency and its Division advisor.

To support both the Division and agencies to conduct ongoing monitoring and use data for decision making and program improvement, e-Data Tech Support continued to update the Access templates linked to the data reporting system. The templates contain many reports, including the NRS tables. In the agency templates, reports can be produced for individual teachers and individual classes, allowing programs to analyze the impact of program improvement and professional development activities. The

project provides training and technical assistance on creating additional reports. In PY 2012-13, e-Data Tech Support also provided training on the use of the Access templates to Division and Professional Development System (PDS) staff. The project also produced reports on request from the Division to address questions from interested parties, such as other state agencies, legislators, and the field.

Although much of the project's prior work had focused on the effective use of quantitative data, in PY 2012-13 the project began to assist the Division and agency staff in using qualitative data. The project developed a series of research-based webinars to help programs look more closely at their data in regard to persistence and educational gain as well as another series of webinars that focused on data collection methods and the use of qualitative data to inform quantitative data. Project staff also worked with five programs to look more closely at their data, ask questions and assist with data related needs. Project staff visited each site and participated in a program improvement team meeting. Technical support was tailored to the needs of the individual programs. One program developed a protocol for use of the data system that was then shared with the rest of the field.

### The Workforce Development System Liaison Project (WDSLP)

During PY 2012-13, the Workforce Development System Liaison Project (WDSLP) provided leadership and support to help funded programs build capacity to address the goals of the WIA and function effectively as partners in PA's workforce development system (WDS). In PY 2011-12, twenty-one agencies in eight Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) were chosen to receive extra technical assistance from the WDSLP to support development and implementation of locally relevant career pathways that integrate contextual learning and workforce readiness opportunities; align basic skills curricula with the skill needs of local industry; achieve student transitions to postsecondary education and training; and increase employment outcomes. In PY 2012-13, this effort was expanded to include all funded agencies who wished to participate. An additional 25 agencies opted to receive this technical assistance.

WDSLP provided leadership and support to the agencies and their teams in several ways. Three kick-off events were held to introduce newly participating agencies to the career pathways model. Each team then completed a self-assessment and developed action steps to integrate career exploration and pathway planning into local adult education services. The action steps included an analysis of local labor market and workforce information as well as an evaluation of local postsecondary education and training opportunities. WDSLP staff used the action steps to determine the need for additional resources, training and technical assistance. It developed and delivered several resources, events, workshops and webinars throughout the year for administrators, teachers, case managers and other interested partners.

WDSLP provided ongoing technical assistance to each of the teams to support them in articulating to program staff, adult students and other stakeholders' clear pathways from adult basic education through transition services into local training opportunities leading to employment that benefits adults, their families, employers and the community. The technical assistance focused on several key aspects of the development and implementation of successful career pathways for adult learners: ongoing analysis of current labor market and workforce information to guide decision making; building and strengthening relationships among the stakeholders; and integrating career awareness and planning into adult education services. Project staff developed customized regional "Career Pathways for Adults" resources with industry specific information and career pathways maps for use in the adult education classroom and case management activities. WDSLP also developed and distributed customized

resources as requested and worked with the agencies to identify and highlight unique career pathways interventions.

To measure effectiveness, the original 21 supported agencies submitted student reports containing information on successful transitions, resources utilized and student persistence. Results demonstrated that participating agencies were successful in transitioning adult students to employment and postsecondary education [105/220 students transitioned to postsecondary education or training (48%), 164/252 met their employment goal (65%)]. Other highlights were the high number of hours that many adult students committed to adult education; the strong collaboration between most agencies and their workforce education partners in providing services; and the increased success of transitioning adult students to postsecondary education if the agency had an established relationship with a postsecondary institution. Of particular interest are the burgeoning partnerships forming between seven funded agencies and Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers. These findings will guide data collection, professional development offerings and other support provided by this project in PY 2013-14.

The WDSLPP coordinated with the PDS (described below) on a variety of projects. They worked with the Facilitation and Consultation Services project to develop a modified workshop-style version of Integrating Career Awareness (ICA) curriculum and piloted it with one agency. Project staff also worked closely with the Communications project to revise and update the Career Pathways section on the Pennsylvania Adult Education Resources website, which houses links to materials and resources developed by project staff and materials used or referenced by project staff during meetings, webinars, institutes and conversations. Project staff collaborated with content experts to develop and co-facilitate a series of five career coaching webinars. With input from the Facilitation and Consultation Services project, WDSLPP staff began to develop a series of career awareness resource guides which will be ready for use in PY 2013-14.

### The Professional Development System

In PY 2011-12, PA's professional development system (PDS) changed significantly. The change reflected the goal in the state plan to shift the responsibility for implementation and evaluation of professional development to funded agencies; to emphasize high-quality research-based professional development opportunities and program improvement based on data; and to support relevant job-embedded professional development.

The new PDS was designed using a process consultation model supported by content area experts, high-quality research-based professional development opportunities and technology and course management support. The core of the new PDS model was the Facilitation and Consultation Services project. The core project staff consisted of the project supervisor/state consultant and four lead consultants. Each consultant worked directly with assigned adult education agencies to provide professional development support and guidance to agency administrators and teachers. They provided consistent professional development support to all funded adult education and family literacy agencies, focusing on helping program administrators and instructional staff support high quality job-embedded professional development. The new model emphasized developing the skills of the agency staff to use data to identify program improvement and professional development needs, use new knowledge in their work and evaluate and document change. In PY 2012-13, the lead consultants met with every agency at least three times, and in most cases, more often. They also initiated monthly professional development team webinars to assist agencies with the integration of program improvement and professional development activities.

The focus of PY 2012-13 was to guide and support agencies in designing program improvement goals supported by quality professional development. The team of consultants continued to meet regularly to review and analyze data collected through their work. Based on this work, a mid-year evaluation of the agency program improvement plans and processes showed that the plans were not capturing all of the elements of program improvement that agency teams were implementing. In consultation with the external evaluator, Cassie Bryant of Drennon & Associates, the decision was made to change and update the Facilitation and Consultation project's processes of documenting, implementing and evaluating agency professional development. The program improvement data collection worksheet was redesigned such that it captured the elements of job-embedded professional development that were driving program improvement. The new worksheet was designed as a form with downloadable data fields, which will provide more useful qualitative and quantitative data to guide PY 2013-14 system development.

The Facilitation and Consultation Services project also included contracted teacher coaches in the content areas of workforce, math, reading, learning differences, ESL and technology. These teacher coaches were effective teachers from the field, recommended because of their content expertise, people skills and interest in developing coaching skills. Workforce teacher coaches worked with five teachers in the fall of 2012; two learning differences teacher coaches worked with agencies to develop learning differences toolkits. An additional twenty-one teacher coaches participated in a series of professional development/training activities from January-June 2013 to prepare for work with agencies in PY 2013-14.

As the core of the PDS, the Facilitation and Consultation Services project worked with the other projects in the PDS (described below) to provide seamless services to the local adult education and family literacy programs. Those projects were the federally-funded Course Management, Content Experts and Communications projects and the state-funded projects, Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth and Family Literacy Consultation Project.

The Course Management project played two key roles in the PDS: management of formal professional development activities and technical assistance to staff of the Division, PDS and local agencies to maximize the effective use of MyLearningPlan (MLP), a web-based professional development management system. In PY 2012-13, project staff assisted the PDS and the field in expanding their use of MLP to support continuous program improvement and professional development. Project staff worked with the MLP developers to create Program Improvement-Professional Development Worksheet forms that have fields that can be downloaded to a database, providing a rich set of program improvement data that will inform course offering in PY 2013-14. Project staff again created "hubs" for each agency. These hubs provide each agency with central repository to house agency continuous program improvement documents that are accessible to agency staff, consultants and Division staff. The model was expanded to include hubs for in-house professional development specialists, consultants and tutor coordinators to facilitate file sharing. These hubs supported job-embedded professional development by providing a vehicle for ongoing communities of learning for agency staff, who often do not have many opportunities to meet, and for staff across the state who have similar roles in their agencies.

The Course Management project worked closely with content experts, online course instructors and other facilitators of professional development activities to develop and enter formal professional development activities, both online and face-to-face, into MLP. This support included guidance on

accurately describing the activity and its objectives. Based on needs identified from the work of the consultants with local agencies, project staff integrated existing professional development activities offered through World Education/ProLiteracy, LINCS, CASAS and Wonderlic into the professional development catalogue. The project leader worked with the facilitators of those courses and content experts (described below) to develop appropriate follow-up activities to help participants implement course content into their work. Staff provided technical assistance to course registrants to ensure that they fulfilled all steps to complete the course. This included completion of course evaluations. The Course Management project used a portion of its funding to reimburse agencies for registration fees when staff completed a course. Project staff also produced reports from MLP for Division and PDS staff to support ongoing monitoring and improvement of professional development services.

The Content Area Experts project contracted with experts in the areas of workforce education, ESL, adult learning differences, assessment, math and reading/writing to enable the PDS to offer content rich professional development activities to agency staff. The content experts supported quality professional development in several ways during PY 2012-13. All of the content experts were involved in planning for the Summer Institute, held in August 2012. After the institute, they were available to provide technical assistance to and answer questions from the participants as they implemented the techniques they learned. Each content expert maintained a Wiggio and/or blog to share information and support a community of learners in their content areas. During PY 2012-13, less time was spent vetting and developing online courses, leaving more time to meet the needs of agency staff and to assist the teacher coaches (part of the Facilitation and Consultation Services project) as they learned to combine content with the coaching process.

The Communications project used available technology to support communication within the PDS and to share news and resources from the Division and PDS with the field. The project updated and redesigned several areas of the Pennsylvania Adult Education Resources website, which houses the information and resources from the various state leadership projects and the field of adult and family literacy education in general. During the second half of the year, project staff began to use website analytics to track web traffic. This information was shared with the entire PDS and several website updates are planned for PY 2013-14 based on this data. The project publishes a monthly online newsletter that includes links to both local and national resources. Current research in the field is highlighted so that instructors will have easy access. This newsletter was disseminated via an email marketing program and was able to reach many practitioners at the same time, including administrators, instructors and volunteer tutors. Project staff also provided technical support to Division staff for the Division's bimonthly update webinars.

### State funded state leadership activities

In addition to the activities funded under WIA Title II Section 223, PA has two state-funded statewide projects to support adult education and family literacy programs: Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC) and the Family Literacy Consultation Project (FLCP). These programs are an integral part of the PDS and work collaboratively with the projects funded with state leadership dollars.

Throughout PY 2012-13, TLC staff worked with administrators and tutor coordinators from 42 adult education programs. TLC staff used current research to help agencies identify and address gaps in the functionality of their tutoring component. In some cases, this work prompted changes to long-standing practices. In other cases, programs faced challenges in accurately developing a gap analysis of this aspect of their agency. To support improvement in this area, TLC continues to work with the programs

to clarify expectations of tutor coordinators and tutors. TLC also helped programs collaborate and share resources to best utilize the time of all paid and unpaid adult education practitioners. TLC provided guidance to tutoring programs on tutor participation and created more virtual channels to facilitate networking and sharing throughout the state. By combining knowledge and resources, they were able to make the most of programs' training dollars. In response to identified needs of tutors, TLC offered 35 tutor trainings during PY 2012-13: 28 face-to-face basic tutor trainings, six ESL tutor trainings and one GED® training. Throughout the year, 16 agencies received these trainings, and a total of 428 tutors participated. In addition, TLC began offering a self-paced, online Basic Tutor Training course. Eight participants successfully completed this course.

TLC's director worked closely with the Facilitation and Consultation Services project. She participated in all of the consultant meetings. When providing tutoring-specific support and training to other agencies, she communicated with the consultant for that agency to ensure seamless services.

In PY 2012-13, the FLCP provided consultation services and professional development to family literacy programs. The project also continued its collaboration with external partners at the state and local levels. The FLCP aligned its services with those of the other PDS projects to ensure seamless services to agencies, while preserving the intensity and unique aspects of family literacy professional development. The FLCP used the process consultation model described above in coordination with the consultants; one staff member was part of the consultant group. FLCP focused its work on professional development related to parent education, ILA, and early childhood education and assessment; the other projects supported professional development for the adult education component. The FLCP communicated with the 20 funded family literacy programs to assess professional development needs and as a result, the Family Literacy Foundations course was enhanced and additional ECE assessment trainings were offered. The project also supported family literacy programs in developing and sustaining collaborations required in the four component model. The FLCP itself maintained strong partnerships and collaborations with other entities to provide family literacy expertise and assistance to those entities, maximize resources, share experiences and provide the highest quality services to families. Partnerships included: Commonwealth Libraries; Office of Child Development and Early Learning; PA One Book, Every Young Child; Keystone Kids Go! Workgroup; Family Development Credential; and Striving Readers/Keystone to Opportunities.

### System integration

Staff members from all of the projects in the professional development system also worked with the Division of Adult Education to plan and hold the Summer Institute, the largest face-to-face professional development opportunity during PY 2012-13. There were six strands: administrator, case management, math instruction, reading/writing instruction, tutor coordinator and ESL. Content experts and lead consultants provided support for follow up activities for participants who requested the help.

The collaboration and coordination of services among the various federal and state-funded state leadership projects strengthened the work of adult education and family literacy providers to integrate data-driven program improvement and professional development, as well as to begin to evaluate the impact of that work on program services and student outcomes. As a team, the system worked to coordinate methods of documentation, data collection and service delivery to ensure that programs receive collaborative, seamless services that ultimately benefit learners.

Progress is being made to create a truly integrated professional development system that supports high quality, job-embedded professional development with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes. Due to the substantial changes this requires for everyone involved (Division staff, PDS staff and direct service program staff), the Division decided that an ongoing evaluation was important. Cassie Bryant of Drennon & Associates is conducting a three-year evaluation of all aspects of the PDS. PY 2012-13 was the first year of the evaluation. The focus of the work during the year was the viability of the new system's structure and processes. Ms. Bryant interviewed Division staff and staff from the state leadership projects, as well as program administrators and in house professional development specialists. Based on her work, Ms. Bryant made recommendations to the consultation project staff during the year leading to the revision of the program improvement/professional development worksheet as described above. In addition, she provided a formal report in September 2013 with findings and recommendations that are guiding the work of the PDS in PY 2013-14.

**• 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.**

In PY 2012-13, the Division continued to focus on improvements in the quality, intensity and duration of services in order to improve student outcomes. Many agencies introduced case management in PY 2011-12 and continued to refine the delivery of support services in PY 2012-13. Technical assistance for career pathways was expanded to all agencies that requested guidance. In addition, during the last two program years, approximately half of the program administrators in the field either retired or moved on to other positions; considerable time was spent by PDS lead consultants, MIS support staff and Division advisors to ensure that the new administrators received the proper support to effectively run their programs and provide superior service to their students.

The performance of PA's adult education and family literacy providers continued its steady upward trend in PY 2012-13. The state achieved 12 of its state performance targets. It matched or exceeded the target in nine of 11 Educational Functioning Levels (EFL) and three of the four Follow-up Core Outcome Measures. The state set or matched top performance marks in eight of the 15 performance categories. One area of continued improvement over the last few years has been the educational gains of ESL students.

Some factors that likely led to the continued improvement are:

- Continued increase in the number of managed enrollment classes
- Implementation and enforcement of student attendance policies
- Continued agency evaluation of and changes to the orientation process
- Addition of career coaching to student support services
- Continued emphasis on proper assessment administration
- Increase in the use of data for decision making
- Continued technical assistance for professional development from the PDS lead consultants

While PA has shown overall improvement in educational gains and outcomes over the past 13 years, more work still needs to be done in regard to overcoming student barriers and transitioning students to employment and/or postsecondary education. In addition, educational gains for Advanced ESL students need to improve.

Family literacy continued to be an important part of the services offered. During PY 2012-13, state Act 143 funds enabled 20 agencies to operate programs to provide family literacy services in 40 of PA's 67

counties. These programs provided services to 844 families, with 873 adults who were NRS eligible and 1,024 children. The family literacy programs provided a full range of services that resulted in overall educational level gains of 55%.

Since the inception of the use of distance learning in PA 12 years ago, services have continued to evolve. Distance learning continues to be an important delivery method for providing instruction to students who have barriers to attending face-to-face services. Agencies use distance learning to serve students who are unable to participate in face-to-face instruction, to support students' persistence when situations arise that could potentially interrupt their participation, and to offer blended learning to increase the intensity of instruction.

The Division contracts with Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 to administer the Distance Learning Project (DLP), which provides distance instruction for students and technical assistance to referral agencies. In PY 2012-13, the DLP enrolled 377 distance learners referred by 53 agencies across the state. Distance learners participated in adult basic education, GED<sup>®</sup> Test preparation and English language instruction. The DLP offered classes using subject-specific managed enrollment classes. Students completed online lessons as well as projects that allowed them to customize and create their own learning experiences. English language learners used an online curriculum and also participated in synchronous webinars with a teacher and other students to practice their speaking and listening skills with others. While a majority of distance learning students participated in online classes, a print-based option was available for students who do not have regular access to the internet. Referral agencies administered the necessary standardized assessments and provided additional educational and support services as needed.

Distance learning enrollment numbers continue to steadily increase due to several factors. The Division emphasizes agencies' distance learning participation in monitoring visits and meetings. The DLP staff communicates regularly with staff from referral agencies and provides professional development on an ongoing basis. The implementation of the secure, online application system allows potential students, as well as current adult education students, to easily enroll in the program.

- **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 Division supported the integration and alignment of WIA Title II adult education services with the other services in the workforce development system to varying degrees at the state, regional and local level. During PY 2012-13 Division staff provided career pathways updates to staff at both the PA WIB and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Staff attended quarterly PA WIB meetings and shared important information from the meetings with Title II programs. Division staff also communicated with PA WIB staff on topics with a potential for impact on adult education. Renewed relationship and partnering opportunities with DCED were explored and will be expanded upon.



At the local level, Title II providers communicated with their Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIB) as applicable for their area. In Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIA) with multiple Title II providers, those providers are required to coordinate services and present a joint, collaborative report at an LWIB meeting, highlighting Title II provider services and student outcomes.

Adult education representatives involved directly with provision of WIA Title II services served on several of Pennsylvania's 22 Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs). Providers routinely updated LWIBs through presentations and reports about programs and successes of students. Adult education programs provided a range of services in 50 of the Commonwealth's one-stops and affiliate sites. Services provided included GED<sup>®</sup> test preparation, basic skills instruction, WorkKeys preparation, postsecondary education entrance examination preparation, career awareness, case management, support for distance education and subject-specific workshops and clinics. Services were available through classroom instruction, one-on-one tutoring and/or drop-in centers. A two-way referral process at the one-stop centers allowed students to access all workforce development services for which they met eligibility requirements. Providers in one LWIA continue to provide additional, LWIB-funded education and training opportunities for eligible job-seekers in the region. These programs, Job Connections and I'll Succeed, provide additional services beyond the scope of Title II funding. Adult education and family literacy programs contributed over \$2,383,000 in rent, staff costs and other resources and services to the one-stops in PA.

These relationships produced many successes. Of 312 student reports, agencies reported that 59 students received funding for postsecondary education and training through WIA and TAA funding. One small adult and family literacy program in rural Huntingdon County worked with WIA partners to assist 14 adult students to obtain WIA funding to enter postsecondary education and training in the healthcare, transportation and business sectors. Four of these students have completed their training and are currently working, while the remaining ten students have not yet completed training.

- **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.**

In PY 2012-13, there were 16 EL/Civics grants providing funding to 27 agencies. These 16 grants provided services in 10 of the LWIAs that were determined to have the greatest need for EL/Civics services. Grant amounts ranged from \$21,966 to \$307,295. The programs served 2297 students, 2132 of whom received at least 12 hours of EL/Civics instruction. Forty-six percent of students completed one or more educational functioning levels. Programs also tracked the students' success in achieving the secondary outcomes related to civics education: achieve U.S. citizenship skills, register to vote, vote for the first time and increase involvement in the community. The success rate for those goals were 72%, 44%, 40% and 65% respectively. For PY 2012-13, Division Guidelines were amended to include more guidance to help agencies in documenting student achievement of these outcomes.

In addition to data submitted in e-Data v2, EL/Civics programs submit narrative final reports, which include examples of student outcomes related to the required secondary goals. According to these reports, a total of 88 students were in the process of applying for citizenship, while another 102 obtained their U.S. citizenship during the program year. Student participation in civics-related activities was diverse. Several students started their own businesses during PY 2012-13 and used the information learned in EL/Civics class to help them navigate the world of permits, codes and zoning in their respective communities. Students at one program wrote letters to the mayor of their city,

explaining the various problems with public schools, and then wrote follow-up letters regarding his responses. Many students became de facto recruiters for their EL/Civics classes among their international friends and families. Students reported increased levels of involvement in their children's school activities by volunteering as classroom aides and by chaperoning field trips. As a result of increased confidence in her ability to communicate effectively in English, one student is now involved in the school science fair and her child finished in first place at the PA State Science Fair. As a result of classroom learning, many students gained or improved employment situations as they felt more comfortable taking jobs in English-speaking companies.

Students across the state volunteered in a variety of ways. They volunteered at nursing homes, schools, food drives and libraries. Three students even volunteered to answer the phones at their own program when the receptionist left the agency. The hurricane of October 29, 2012 that devastated Lower Manhattan and the Jersey shore was the impetus for a thematic unit on natural disasters, which resulted in some commendable examples of civic duty and volunteerism. One student and former ESL graduate collaborated to repair roofs after the storm. Three students made monetary or clothing donations to hurricane victims through their churches and several other students opened their homes to friends and relatives in their community who were without electricity or water services in the wake of the disaster.