

Wyoming Narrative Report 2012-2013

1. Describe successful activities, programs and projects supported with State Leadership funds and describe the extent to which these activities, programs and projects were successful in implementing the goals of the State Plan.

Professional Development Activities

The Wyoming Leadership grant funding continued to focus on activities and training which would support and create higher accountability through local program improvement, and teacher training in reading.

State Director & Staff Training

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

- July 17 Wyoming will host the Mountain Plains Adult Education (MPAEA) conference in the spring. Local directors gave input to this conference and what we should sponsor at this meeting.
- August 13 Meeting held with Family Literacy programs to discuss the changes the GED and how we are going to make changes in ABE due to Common Core Standards and the implication for instruction.
- August 21-22 EL Civics Training for local teachers and directors. Training on writing measurable goals and objectives for program improvement.
- September 20-22 Fall Institute included strands addressing math, reading, writing, Unpacking the Common Core, and data training. Programs met their 80% attendance requirement. This institute was successful in meeting the training needed to increase an understanding of the Common Core and to train Instructional Leaders from each program.
- February 22 Bidders Conference offered in-person and by webinar for the ABE program, which had not been re-competed since 2000. Eleven agencies and colleges attended. RFP was posted online, advertised in the main newspapers and call-in requests were sent out. Eight submitted applications and all were funded. One previous program, which was very small, became part of Western Wyoming Community Colleges outreach satellite programs. They had been part of that college previously.
- April 9 Instructional Leaders Training and Directors meeting held in Casper.
- April 29- May 1 Team taken to Kentucky for Common Core Standards training for instructors. The information was piloted by the trainers at their sites and plans were made to give the training to all ABE instructors at the Fall 2013 Institute.

June 6 Directors meeting where we had a planning meeting for rolling out the Common Core Standards, preparing instructors to use the standards, and what local programs need as support.

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

LACES Training – Nov 7th, Feb 13th, and May 23rd.

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

ESL Assessment Training on BEST Plus

One local ABE director, Kelly Willmarth, has been certified as a BEST Plus trainer and trains our ESL teachers on the BEST Plus assessment instrument. Programs notify Kelly when they have new teachers and they create the training schedule.

Of Statewide Significance

- ABE contracts with LACES to host and train in order to meet data collection and reporting requirements.
- A state report card, Wyoming Adult Education Profile, was developed and printed for distribution to the Wyoming Community College Commissioners, legislators, Workforce Development Council and local program providers. This was our third year for the distribution.
- April 10-13 – Mountain Plains Adult Education Association Conference was attended by all ABE local directors and State staff to learn more about the application of Career Pathways. Over 200 people attended from the intermountain region.
- ESL New Teacher Training – 15 modules were developed, piloted, and posted to the WCCC website (<https://www.communitycolleges.wy.edu/training.aspx>) for all ABE Program directors to use with new ESL instructors. Now there are online courses provided through Eastern Wyoming College for credit which teachers are enrolling in during the year. They are based on the above modules.
- All ABE programs are using managed enrollment and many have managed classes. The most rural sites are too small for leveled classes or managed classes except for writing classes. This managed class approach is helping with the standards implementation.
- The average level completion is up eleven percent (11%) from 2010-11 to 2012-13, and is four percent higher than just one year ago. Local directors have led the way and training on data over the past 3 years has definitely made the difference.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS TRAINING

All ABE program directors and two instructional staff from each program participated in the second year of the Instructional Leaders training program with Neil Sturomski. An online blog was created so instructors could ask for assistance from Neil between sessions. A continued emphasis was placed on lesson planning, peer to peer coaching, and integrating the subject areas to build linkages for students and their learning.

Monitoring & Technical Assistance

The ABE State Director serves as the main point of contact for general technical assistance. Troy Tallabas assists in the data match process.

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

Data matching began in the 2012-13 grant year for the cohorts in Table 5. This match process for Entered and Retained Employment is produced through the State Research and Planning Department which has access to not only the UI data but several other resources that allows us to track employment and match individuals. The only drawback has been that the information is reported back to us as aggregated data and does not allow us to upload this information back into the LACES system. We are told that this is because they are using third party data and cannot give the individual information back to us. We may look into working with UI data only but this limits the results we would be able to access.

Local Program site reviews. Five of the programs had an on-sight monitoring including financial, administrative processes and student records. Audit Clearinghouse records were checked and A-133 audits were collected. We monitor half of the programs each year. One program chose not to continue as a program and their B.O.C.E.S. decided to go under the community college umbrella for various reasons, but the primary reason was that the college could provide many resources not available to this program as an independent agency. With cuts to both state and federal funding everyone is trying to conserve resources.

2. Describe any significant findings from the Eligible Agency’s evaluation of the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on the core indicators of performance.

Wyoming Adult Education Performance Measures 2012-2013

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

Performance Measures	Year Target	Actual
1. Beginning Literacy ABE	36%	41.18%
2. Beginning Basic Education ABE	24%	36.96%
3. Low Intermediate ABE	27%	38.61%
4. High Intermediate ABE	28%	39.42%
5. Beginning Literacy ESL	22%	32.97%
6. Low Beginning ESL	32%	50.75%
7. High Beginning ESL	41%	45.74%
8. Low Intermediate ESL	37%	47.06%
9. High Intermediate ESL	34%	27.37%
10. Advanced ESL	25%	44.44%
11. Low Adult Secondary Education	34%	44.77%

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

Performance Measures	Year (9) Target	Actual
12. Placement in Postsecondary Ed/Training	21%	33%
13. Placement in unsubsidized employment	40%	53%
14. Retention in unsubsidized employment	65%	77%

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

Performance Measure	Year (9) Target	Actual
15. GED Completion	56%	95%

Significant Findings

Core Indicator #1 Comments

Wyoming improved performance in all literacy skill levels. We are in the second year that all local programs implemented managed enrollment and managed classes where classes are large enough to support this activity. Open labs have been incorporated for those waiting to get into the managed classes or for those whose schedule does not permit this level of commitment.

Distance Learning is being used in our most remote areas or as an extension to classes to help students get the required hours for post-testing and to move quickly toward their goals. This has contributed to the success in meeting all but one of the educational functioning level performance goals.

Many programs had local goals for hitting the sixty percent (60%) post testing rate. With both directors and instructors communicating on a monthly basis on who needs post-testing, the overall outcome was very good. One program director calls her weekly report the "State of the State" of their program. More teachers are utilizing LACES reports and the desktop feature to manage post-testing now.

Local staff have been networking across the state on reading and instructional strategies through the Instructional Leaders Forum being led by Neil Sturomski. This has been an active forum during the 2012-13 grant year. Resources, lesson planning, and coaching are an ongoing process and even more important as we move into the adoption of the College and Career Readiness Standards.

The "Intermediate High ESL" level was not met. One program in the western part of the state had transient workers in their ESL program. There was a larger number than expected that left the area for work or quit attending when the weather turned cold, especially those mothers with young children. The second program had a large community of Somali relocate to her city. They started, but as soon as they found jobs they left the classes.

Core Indicator #2 Comments

The post-secondary or training goal was met. We asked all the programs to work with their colleges to get the National Student Clearinghouse matches completed, which they did.

The two goals of enter and retained employment performance targets were met. We attribute this to the analysis that our Planning and Research Department did by analyzing the previous year's data as if they were cohorts and negotiated those levels.

The MOU for data matching for employment is with our Research and Planning Department which is part of the Department of Workforce Services. They have data agreements that will allow us to track more people outside of the state. The only drawback is that we do not get the data at the granular level, only as aggregated data. We are continuing to work with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Department to see if we can get a direct information exchange so that data may be entered into the LACES system, but this has not happened to date.

The employment information on Table 5 clearly illustrates the difference between utilization of goal setting for entered and retained employment and the use of cohorts where the outcome is assigned:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13 Cohorts
Entered Employment	170	812	782
Retained Employment	46	412	900

There is a greater application of data by ABE staff in program planning for improvement, use in staff meetings with instructors, and in reporting to assure accurate reporting and reliable data. This is a clear reflection of the work being done across the state.

Influences on the Overall Program

The 2012-2013 contract year has had four items or activities to note.

Monitoring - The state monitored the local programs' performance and overall post testing rates. The state post testing went from 46.4% in 2011-12 to 52.4% in 2012-13. It is not at the level we set of 60% but should continue to improve now that local directors are trained in data analysis and are focusing on post-testing results each year. These performance rates do affect the funding formula. With higher post-testing rates also comes the opportunity for higher performance. Higher performance means higher funding.

High School Equivalency Scores – All five subtests on the GED now have average scores over 500 for the state. The target trainings are paying off.

Math: 506.96 average is 7 point higher than last year.

Reading: 577.67 average is within a point of last year.

Writing: 516.69 average is 3 points higher than last year.

Science: 544.96 average is down 4 points but still very good.

Social Studies: 544.96 average is 1 point higher than last year.

Funding Formula Model – The state used the funding formula for the third year. It is working as expected. The bounded impact was held to five percent so each program that was over funded has a gradual impact over approximately three years. There was an increase in the bounded impact to ten percent (10%) in the 2012-13 grant year. The competition was held in the spring and the award of new contracts for the 2013-14 year will do away with the bounded impact and put everyone in balance with the formula as it

was designed so they earn or loose funding by performance which is forty percent (40%) of the formula.

One program, Valley Learning Center, used to be part of the Western Wyoming Community College outreach system. The B.O.C.E.S. has rejoined the college due to a decline in enrollment and limited resources. The college offers licenses, professional development and instructor support which cannot be matched locally.

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

Face-to-face: Training was offered at the Fall Institute this year. Donna Elder from the National Center for Family Literacy, who has been doing training in Kentucky's successful efforts to incorporate the Common Core State Standards, led our instructors and directors through a session on "Unpacking the Common Core and what it means". The second presenter was Neil Sturmoski whose session was geared toward increasing instructional leadership within each program. These leaders would learn strategies for reading and writing and take back to their local staff this training which was presented in staff meetings. Neil mentored this group and answered question online through a private portal the state set up.

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

Tuition Assistance: Some programs help pay tuition for teachers when the classes apply to their assigned areas of instruction. Local professional development instructor plans also target training or conferences which support these plans.

- 3. Describe how the Eligible Agency has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities. Include a description of how the eligible agency is being represented on the Local Workforce Investment Boards, adult education's involvement on the State Workforce Investment Board, the provision of core and other services through the One-Stop system and an estimate of the Title II funds being used to support activities and services through the One-Stop delivery system.**

Description of State

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

ranching, and service industries have different constellations in various parts of our state.

Several activities were completed this year integrating technology into ABE and contributing to the success our state has experienced:

- a. Casper introduced “In 2 Win” for Math and Reading/Writing classes. ESL classes were moved to the same site as the ABE program on the main campus.
- b. Central Wyoming College used distance learning online to increase instructional hours in a hybrid format that augments classroom instruction.
- c. Eastern Wyoming College is offering professional development and math classes to their ABE district online. This allows the more remote sites to have quality teachers in math.
- d. Laramie County Community College used technology in their orientation and classroom which keeps students plugged into what assignments are given in class and a way to keep up if they have to be absent.
- e. Northwest College is using technology in classroom instruction, instructor awareness for data collection, and post testing rate reports which increased due to these notifications sent from the main campus.
- f. Northern Wyoming Community College has increased their follow-up timing to help with retention of their students with technology tools in LACES.
- g. UINTA B.O.C.E.S has expanded their career awareness in lower levels with the integration of technology into classroom assignments, planning for employment, and have found this to be the integral motivator for success with their students.
- h. Western Wyoming Community College has broadened its outreach efforts and expanded both managed classes and leveled classes with more computer lab time for ESL and ABE students in their study center and classrooms.

All programs continue to offer and support the Career Readiness Certificates. This effort is supported by Workforce Services, but more needs to be done for employers to understand and accept this certificate in many locales.

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

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) consists of 35 members with Dr. Jim Rose, Executive Director of WCCC, representing the community colleges and the ABE

program. He supports the development of the ABE program and its importance in the larger scope and mission of educational services to Wyoming adults. The ABE annual report to the WDC is the Wyoming ABE Profile which is delivered in January or February. It covers information on the ABE program, GED results, and Family Literacy in charts and graphs. This Profile is similar to a state ABE report card and is also delivered to the Legislature during this same period.

Data Matching Achieved

A memorandum of understanding for data matching has been developed and signed with the Department of Workforce Services - Research and Planning Department. This has been implemented, but not without its problems. The Research and Planning Department has multiple contracts for databases that are available to it, but we are a third party to their agreements and therefore can only get aggregated information for employment goals. This aggregated information cannot be imported into LACES and has to be tracked and entered separately into the OVAE NRS website. This is the initial year for this and we hope to get this into a less cumbersome process. The addition of cohorts has made it more difficult to compare to previous years.

Integration of Activities

Workforce Services - The local offices have been working with ABE in various capacities this year. Workforce Services reinstated an Academic and Workforce Education program at Eastern Wyoming College. Four of the five students completed and two continued on to postsecondary education. A TANF/Employment and Training for Self Sufficiency program is working on Adult Career Pathways with the ABE program at this same college.

Community Colleges – They are increasing their support for the ABE program and its students transitioning to campus with study skills programs, financial aid assistance, bridge programs, study tutors, and childcare. Another activity the colleges are performing is the National Student Clearinghouse data matches which have been easier this year. Several colleges are also reporting increased numbers of ABE students attending college from ABE programs. Some colleges offer a free credit class to entice students to experience their first step into postsecondary education.

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

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

4. Describe successful activities and services supported with EL Civics funds, including the number of programs receiving EL Civics grants and an estimate of the number of adult learners served.

A new RFP was competed but did not start until the fall of the 2012-13 year. Six programs were funded which increased the number of programs in Wyoming. Technical assistance for all six recipients was held in August, 2012. The applications demonstrated a limited knowledge of what the EL Civics program could offer. Miriam Burt from CAL engaged all programs and lead staff in EL Civics training. A specific goal setting for activities in EL Civics for the year was also held. Then measurable goal setting for their activities was conducted on the second day.

The basic subject areas covered in the EL Civics classes were US history, geography, government, and English literacy. Other areas taught were financial literacy, health literacy, educational and workplace systems. Contextualized instruction was offered as support for students with goals for taking the citizenship test. Each program set measurable goals for the year and tracked their successes and challenges.

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

An emphasis was also put on understanding the local community and on volunteerism. The program served 309 participants in either blended ESL and Civics classes or in specifically designed EL Civics activities. More programs want to blend the EL Civics into all of their ESL classes and we may see this during the next program year.