

Delaware Narrative Report 2013-2014

This year's theme for Delaware's Adult Education was "hitting the ground running"! The primary objectives centered on preparing adult learners for the 2014 GED[®] assessment; continued adaptation of Common Core Standards to adult education instruction; continued emphasis on workforce development strategies; and professional development that supported teachers and benefited students in attaining their goals.

State Leadership Activities

During FY14 leadership dollars enabled the ACE Network, Delaware's Adult Learning Resource Center, to provide 44 different training and workshop events with attendance of 488 staff members from adult education programs. The events held ranged in length of time from 1 hour webinars to training institutes lasting six days. The professional development trainings consisted of 18 activities related to curriculum with 267 attendees and 23 activities related to NRS/data with 154 attendees and 3 activities related to assessment or policy training with 67 attendees.

Professional development workings and projects focused on evidence based research including:

- STAR Institute training was offered statewide to teachers for six days in FY 14. In addition, teachers were offered technical assistance in how to access the online STAR training in case the scheduled trainings conflicted with other responsibilities. This training is provided to ensure that every program has at least one STAR trained instructor. Delaware's coordinator of professional development is also certified as a STAR trainer so she is available for technical assistance at any point during the year.
- ANI (Adult Numeracy Project) Training was provided throughout the year to seven Delaware adult education programs in coordination with New Jersey Adult Education PD efforts. The goals of this year long project were to increase math content knowledge and instructional skills for adult education instructors and increase competency in the use of math content standards. This program was offered through LINCS. Participants in this training noted that the training was extremely valuable and began using content immediately upon return to their classrooms.
- Two workshops for ESL/EL Civics teachers were presented. In Fall 2013 a LINCS trainer presented Professional Development for Teaching Adult Emergent Readers and in April 2014 another LINCS trainer presented Supporting ESL Learner Persistence.
- To better serve learners with special needs, "Learning to Achieve" training was made available to all programs through this project. Two programs participated in face to face training and technical assistance in accessing the LINCS online training was also offered. The goal of this project was to ensure that all programs have at least one staff member who has completed this training.

Since FY 14 hosted two versions of the GED[®] test, local programs and state leadership worked simultaneously on providing as many learners as possible with the opportunity to take and finish the 2002 version of the test while assisting program staff in understanding the requirements of the 2014 version of the test. These efforts produced a 30% rise in the number of GED[®] tests administered mostly as a result of learners completing the 2002 GED[®]. While a smaller number of examinees than usual took the 2014 GED[®], pass rates for both completed tests and for individual component tests are being monitored and information shared with all programs at the monthly ABE Administrators' Meetings.

This year was the first year of implementation for the National Career Transition COA portfolios. Selected programs received training in and piloted the NCT process last year with the goal of creating activities that would provide students with needed skills and information while using tools that would lead to a more informed vocational choice. Use of college and career awareness activities was integrated into writing activities for all levels leading students to research information on further work and educational opportunities. This project in combination with the requirements for all programs to explore opportunities for developing career pathways outside of the state developed career pathways ensured that all ABE providers are envisioning their services as part of a workforce development system. Various strategies and options were shared and discussed at monthly meetings including: partnering with local private business and trade schools offering trainings in specific areas; collaborating with local vocational-technical schools to allow for entry into adult apprenticeship classes; developing processes for students to enter certification programs offered by the local community college; and working with local employers to hire students. Community college and vo-tech based ABE programs are also exploring dual enrollment opportunities.

Monthly information sharing and combined efforts to deliver quality services are hallmarks of Delaware's Adult Education community. Some of the other outstanding activities in FY 14 included:

1. Increase the use of technology to enhance adult education services and processes:
 - During FY14 ACE staff members and local programs beta tested the new GUI for the anticipated LACES upgrade. The upgrade allowed users the ability to search, select, and find data across multiple data tables in a more user-friendly manner. ACE continued to support programs using the NRS Cohorts for the surveying and data matching of student outcomes.
 - Monthly ABE meetings were offered in two formats, in person and via our distance learning platform, Moodle. Through these alternative methods of communicating, administrators were able to keep abreast of new legislation, reporting requirements, and local innovations used to enhance student learning.
 - Workgroup areas were designated on the ACE Network Moodle site to host all information and resources pertinent to initiatives, curriculum changes, revised modules and instructor manuals used in FY 14. These areas allow ABE staff to have easy access to current information and provide a space for staff to communicate with one another during the year on specific ABE topics.

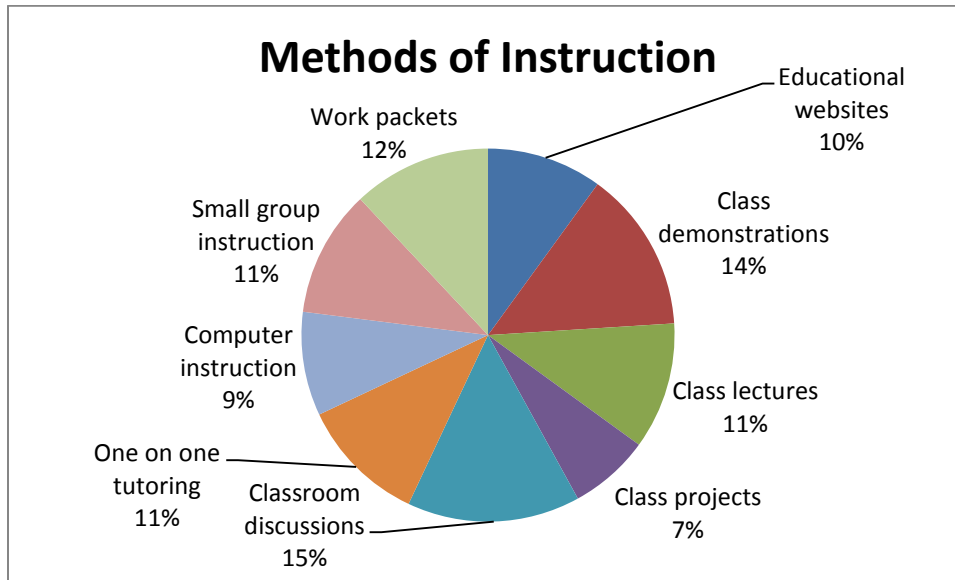
- The ABE 101 Course for new ABE staff members was conducted twice this year. All 12 participants successfully completed the course. The course will be updated as the state continues to unpack the CCR. The delivery of the course will be modified from a distance learning format to a blended delivery method to assist staff in fully understanding what works in adult education classrooms.

2. Enhance the leadership capacity of program administrators

Leadership, both instructional and programmatic, needs to be based on data. Towards this end, various data sets were reviewed and their significance discussed at monthly meetings. Indicators that were routinely reviewed included pretest-posttest administration, attendance, EFL gains, quarterly performance updates, core outcome student responses and student satisfaction. Information was provided on statewide and specific program levels. Programs with high performance levels shared their strategies and processes; while programs with lower performance levels were able to ask questions during the meetings or talk with the higher performing programs and/or the state team privately after the meeting providing administrators with a process for enhancing capacity. Through discussions, programs could also determine a need for new data sets. Processes for pulling the new data were shared and if all programs found specific data sets to be valuable, hardwired reports were developed.

3. The Annual Adult Education Student Survey was revised to better serve student and program needs.

- One thousand five hundred and seventy students responded to the OAASIS Student Survey regarding the Adult Education services they were receiving.
 - 97% of students would recommend the program to others
 - 62% stated that they had access to technology devices outside of class
 - 86% stated that they would use technology to complete class assignments
 - When asked how attendance could be improved, students responded:
 - 15% have classes on weekends
 - 27% have more daytime classes
 - 20% have longer classes for a shorter periods of time
 - 34% use more distance learning opportunities
 - 4% other
 - When asked what technology devices are available to you outside of class, students responded:
 - 20% desktop computers
 - 31% laptops
 - 16% tablets
 - 32% smartphones
 - 1% other

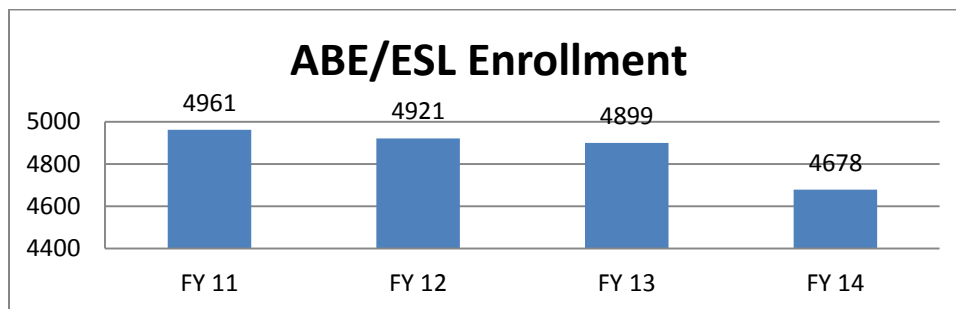


Performance Data Analysis

Last year Delaware experienced an average of 6.7% unemployment, .6% lower than the national average of 7.3%. Job opportunities presented in the following top five areas: 1. Office and Administration; (2) Retail Sales; (3) Food Preparation; (4) Healthcare; and (5) Transportation and Materials Handling. Despite the need to reduce financial obligations, the state legislature continued to level fund community based Adult Education programs.

Enrollment

In FY 14, enrollment in Adult Education classes dropped by 4 percent from the previous year. ABE enrollment decreased by 4%; while student participation in ESL decreased by 6%. The decrease was partially caused by late openings of some ABE programs and a reduction in prison education participation.

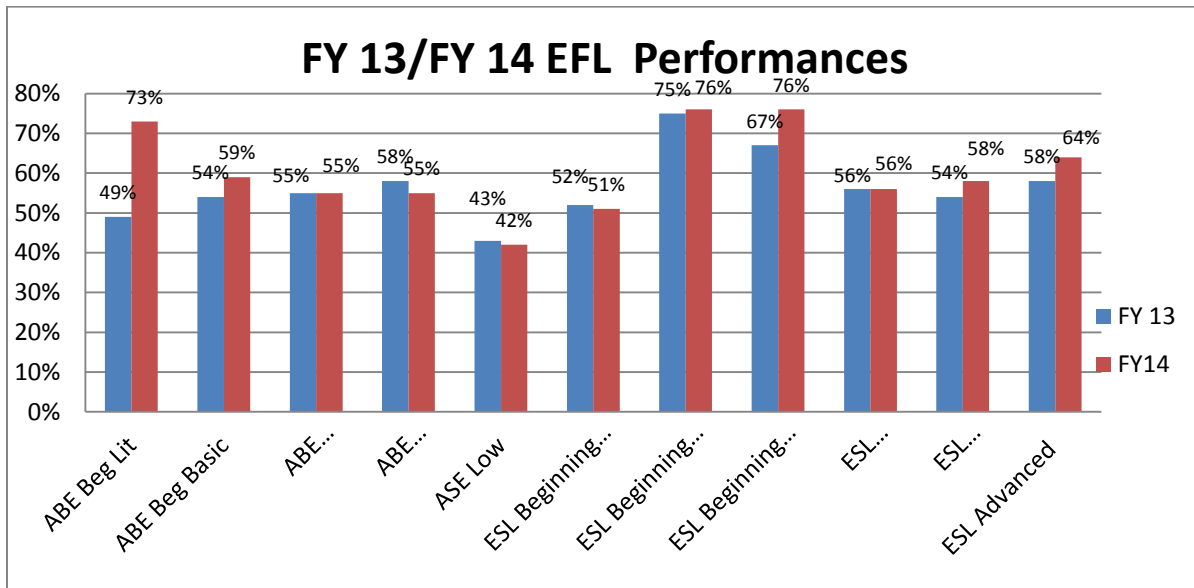


Performance Target Achievements

- *Educational Functioning Level Completions*

Delaware Adult Education met or exceeded target performances in 5 out of 11 educational functioning levels. In three EFLs, Delaware was within 2% of achieving the state targets. The ABE Low Intermediate, ESL Low Intermediate and ESL High Intermediate levels were areas in which performance targets were significantly lower than projected. The ABE Low Intermediate level fell short by 4% or 46 student outcomes. The ESL Low Intermediate level was missed by 11% or 24 student outcomes and the ESL High Intermediate level was 6% lower than the target or 10 student outcomes less than needed. While Delaware’s performance targets are high, we are committed to providing a quality educational service that will benefit learners in their ability to support themselves and their families. Based on this premise, we will explore additional avenues for students to stay in programs longer.

In FY 14, average ABE student attendance was 91 hours which is similar to FY 13 retention. Average ESL hours of attendance was 77 hours which was 3 hours less than the FY 13 average. Student retention remains a primary focus for all programs. Analysis and discussions with local programs reveal that many ESL students who enrolled in fall 2013 remained in class until mid-November and did not continue classes in winter 2014. To improve retention, some programs are offering classes on designated Saturdays and other programs are offering additional tutoring hours outside of regularly scheduled class hours.



- *Core Completions*

Delaware did meet its target performance in the gained employment category. The employment target was 40% and actual performance was 58%. The economy still remains an “employers’ market”. Previous employed Delawareans who have been laid off from jobs or who are seeking promotions within their field are not being recognized due to the lack of a secondary credential. The upgraded GED[®] and new high school diploma requirements are frustrating many entering and re-entering the workforce. Likewise, Delaware’s retained employment target attained a 71% performance level, six percent points higher than the target goal of 65%. Delaware’s ABE collaboration with DOL remains supportive to DOL clients in need of a secondary credential prior to accessing further skills training or promotions within their field.

The target performance for GED[®]/Diploma was also achieved with a 100% performance rate and a target of 88%.

Delaware did attain its performance target in the entered post secondary category with a 38% performance rate, 18% over the performance target of 20%. Adult learners, both younger adults entering the workforce and dislocated workers, are finding that available jobs require different skill sets that can only be attained by continued education. However, the expense of post-secondary education/training remains a barrier for some. The Department of Labor is offering training but its capacity to fulfill client needs is remains limited.

Integration with Other Programs

Integration of services to maximize return on investment were enhanced in 2014. Through collaboration with various state agencies, adult education was able to support employment and training objectives; statewide career development plans; and post incarceration reentry goals.

- ABE classes located at One Stop Centers continue to be some of the most attended classes operating throughout the state. ABE classes are currently operating at three One Stop sites with plans for classes at the fourth center in 2015 when the Dover One Stop Center moves to a bigger facility. The Departments of Education and Labor and the Workforce Investment Board collaboratively funded these classes sharing the costs for space, furniture, salaries, instructional materials and assessments. At these sites, DOL refers clients to these classes in preparation for further DOL training, employment or job promotion. Instructors at ABE classes not co-located at One Stop Centers inform students of DOL services and how the services can be accessed through visits and use of the DOL website, <https://www.delawareworks.com/jobseekers.php>
- During FY 14, Adult Education piloted a distance learning project with selected DOL clients who were on unemployment insurance. The goal of the project was to prepare the participants for the National Work Readiness Credential Exam. Participants attended an orientation on how to access the software “Workforce Connects” which would provide academic refreshment based on test content. The orientation also explained the point of the project, the online learning expectations, consequences for not meeting the expectations, and opportunities to access face to face and/or telephone instruction when

participants encountered difficult content on the software. The outcomes of the project were not promising though much was learned from the project. Many clients were not happy with being forced to take academic refreshment when they felt they didn't need any. Consequently, when they encountered a technical or academic problem, their perseverance in resolving the issue wasn't strong. This combined with unanticipated MIS issues resulted in inconclusive findings. We did learn that motivation, technological know-how, employment patterns and credential awareness were factors that needed to be addressed more intensely in any follow up work.

- FY 14 evidenced continued progress in the development of Career Pathways. Adult Education was a partner represented on the Strategic Planning Committee of the Workforce Investment Board as Delaware determines which pathways are most appropriate based on employment data. This year “gateway” career pathways (retail, hospitality, food service) were mapped out. These career clusters were chosen because the soft skills needed in these areas could be readily transferable to other career clusters, thereby resulting in opportunities not only within these fields but also in a variety of other occupation areas. DDOL employment projects also indicate that these areas are the most likely to offer continuous employment in the future. Adult Education and the Workforce Investment Board met throughout the year in developing these pathways and have started to work with DOE’s Career and Technical Education Workgroup to align career pathways efforts throughout the educational continuum.
- Adult Education’s partnership with the Departments of Health and Social Services, Labor, Correction, and Housing in the Governor’s Reentry Project continued through the I-Adapt (Individual Assessment, Discharge and Planning Team) Process. Based upon information gathered last summer in the Criminal Justice Council’s Recidivism Report, it appears that those participating in I-Adapt services including adult education are experiencing lower rates of re-incarceration than those offenders not participating in the project.
 - Of the total number of I-Adapt participants to date:
 - 1,043 participated in the Prison ABE Program in Level 5 facilities
 - 236 attained their GED
 - 97 attained their diploma
 - 210 completed at least one prison college course
 - 458 reentering offenders enrolled in community ABE programs.
 - Prison Education supervisors meet once a month with DOL, DHSS, DSHA and DOC representatives to review exiting offenders’ needs and to refer them to community services.
 - DOC and Adult Education continue to meet regularly to enhance educational opportunities within the facilities, e.g. extending educational hours, providing additional services to students with special needs, and developing new vocational/academic opportunities
- Adult Education continued to work with K12 administrators to provide information on available adult education services. All Adult Education programs operating within a local

educational agency now have websites outlining program services. Two LEAs are operating family literacy programs that provide services to adult learners and to children in early elementary school grades. Some LEAs are providing adult education programs with the names of drop-outs so adult education programs can contact these potential students and encourage them to complete their high school diploma or GED®.

During 2013-2014, five local programs participated in local day long monitorings that included discussions with program administrators, teachers, and students. These monitorings focused primarily on program performances and implementation of state policies and procedures. Commendations to programs included dedication and commitment to serving adult learners; collaborations with community partners; and use of innovative scheduling to increase student enrollment and retention. During these monitorings, any confusion regarding LACES data entry and/or the Assessment Policy was clarified and rectified, if necessary. Innovations discovered during these visits were shared with other program administrators during the monthly Administrators Meetings.

- This year, Delaware and New Jersey offered professional development events in order to maximize training dollars and be cost efficient. These combined trainings centered on ANI Math initiative.

EL/Civics

This year's EL Civics project involved partnering with the DHSS financial literacy program, \$tand By Me Hispano. The program is a public-private partnership endorsed by the Governor and delivered free of charge to state agencies and community based organizations. Based on this program's previous success with ABE students, partnering with \$BM a second time with EL/Civics students was a win/win decision. The new version of this project focused on the unique financial needs of the Hispanic population, especially newly arrived immigrants, in a way consistent with the Hispanic culture.

\$BM provided information, resources and counseling to adult learners in EL/Civics programs statewide in both English and Spanish when needed. Specific topics covered included: learning how the American financial organizations work; different types of loans; purchasing a house; saving for college and personal financial coaching, if requested. Eight programs received funding through the EL/Civics grants and approximately 500 students received services.

Secondary School Credentials and Equivalencies

Delaware awards high school diplomas to adult learners who are enrolled in and complete the required graduation requirements for the James H. Groves Adult High School. The number of credits required to graduate reflect the Delaware Department of Education's graduation requirements the year that the student was in 9th grade. This diploma is the same diploma that is awarded to any student who completes high school in the state.

Since Delaware issues a Groves High School diploma to adult learners who complete the required high school credits, adult learners who attain passing scores on the GED® are awarded a

state recognized secondary credential. Currently, the state is only issuing secondary credentials based on GED® administrations. However, State Code was changed in Spring 2014 to allow other assessments, in addition to the GED®, to be the basis for issuing a state recognized secondary credential. The approval process application will be available in early 2015. Following a review process of the applicants, there may be additional assessments leading to a secondary credential in 2015.

Adult Education Standards

Delaware has adopted the Career and College Readiness Standards. We are currently in the second year of a three year plan to fully implement the standards. Three Standards Coordinating Committees have been established, one each for reading /speaking and listening, writing/language, and mathematics. Each committee consists of a facilitator and three additional members. All committee members were screened for content certification and experience in teaching all EFL levels. These committees are currently in the process of unpacking the standards.

Delaware has already begun supporting all programs in the use of the CCR Writing standards. Our ABE programs piloted a Career Writing Manual in September 2013. This manual consists of CCR standards based writing instruction specifically aligned to career readiness writing. In February 2014, revisions to the Career Writing manual were made based upon pilot program feedback, and teacher training was provided in August 2014, for full implementation in September 2014.

Throughout FY 14 Delaware has provided many CCR professional development opportunities for both teachers and administrators. These include: CCR and the 2014 GED® for Reading, Writing and Math, CCR in ABE for Reading, Writing and Math, and specific professional development for our Career Writing manual.

Leadership funds have fully funded Delaware's plan to implement the CCR standards. These funds have been used for professional development, CCR committee work, and for purchasing resource materials.