

Virginia Narrative Report 2014-2015

STATE LEADERSHIP FUNDS

In 2014-2015, the Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) used leadership funds to provide opportunities throughout the state for professional development, technological advances, and technical assistance.

Professional Development

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC)

The passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) brought significant changes to the field of adult education in 2014-2015 as we continued the transition to the role of a core partner in work force development. The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) provided timely and relevant resources, publications, technical assistance, and training to Virginia adult educators during this critical time to address new and changing priorities set forth by WIOA.

Online and On-Site Training

In program year 2014-2015, the VALRC delivered 80 training events, or a total of 563 hours of training, to 2,713 participants for a total of 144,065 participant hours. VALRC also offered six- and eight-week facilitated online courses on topics such as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) basic literacy and multilevel classes, component-based reading instruction, writing, and numeracy and self-paced, non-facilitated courses that provided policy and assessment certifications. Thirteen sessions were delivered at the Virginia Institute for Lifelong Learning (VAILL) by VALRC staff and trainers. Topics included technology-mediated instruction, ESOL instruction, career pathways/PluggedInVA, College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) integration, and program management.

Virginia's adoption of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for adult education was announced in July 2014, resulting in CCRS alignment as the primary focus of instructional training for 2014-2015. Several trainings were updated to make CCRS alignment more explicit, while new face-to-face trainings focused on CCRS (generally in the context of a specific subject area) were developed or substantially revised. All training focused on Adult Basic Education (ABE)/Adult Secondary Education (ASE) instruction was reviewed and aligned to the CCRS, and the Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program (VAECP) training was revised to include CCRS content. A CCRS Resources page was launched on the VALRC Web site. A new three-hour *Introduction to the ELA College and Career Readiness Standards for Adults* training was developed, and new facilitators from around the state were recruited and participated in a two-day train-the-trainer session focused on CCRS-aligned professional development that included English Language Arts (ELA)/literacy and math training. VALRC staff coordinated the filming and dissemination of two standards-aligned lessons to be used during training events.

Several new trainings were implemented in 2014-2015, many integrating technology as a delivery tool. All online self-paced policy trainings (Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), Assessment, Goal-Setting) were updated and delivered using the Knowledge Center learning management system. An online, self-paced course on CCRS basics was designed, developed, and piloted. This process will be used as a model for the development of additional self-paced online instruction. An instructor study circle for integrating technology into instruction was developed and piloted. High School Equivalency (HSE) instructional gaps were reviewed and new CCRS-aligned trainings in content areas such as science were developed to meet identified needs. National External Diploma Program (NEDP) training, using a hybrid approach, was conducted to initiate five new programs across the state.

Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program (VAECP)

VALRC continued to promote high quality, research-based program and instructional practices through the Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program. Program year 2014-2015 saw 38 level completions across three strands, bringing the total number of VAECP level completions to 552. The Program Manager Strand was revised and delivered to new regional program managers and specialists with an emphasis on the requirements of Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funding. Eighty percent of participants completed all requirements.

VAECP Instructor Level 2 online training was developed, integrating ABE/GED® and ESOL instructional strategies, and piloted in the fall of 2015. The VAECP Instructor strand is now delivered fully online, offering participants the ability to achieve certification in both levels within a single calendar year. The shift to the online format in the instructor strand increases depth of learning and reflection of geographic regions.

Regional Program Manager Training

After the passage of WIOA, new program manager training was developed to focus on the anticipated requirements for program planning. Seven regional data summits were held that included training in finding and using facts and statistics for program goal setting to aid regional leadership teams in the development of program improvement plans. Updates to *the New Teacher's Handbook* were completed and added to the VALRC Web site. Training on the handbook was conducted during the VAILL Conference held at Radford University (RU) in July 2014.

PluggedInVA

PluggedInVA was developed at the VALRC in 2007-2008 and, since then, has become Virginia's premier career pathways program. It has also been recognized by the USED and the USDOL as a model career pathways program. VALRC collaborated with the OAEL and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to expand PluggedInVA into 12 regions within the state. The New River Community College (NRCC) adult education program continues to deliver year-round PluggedInVA programs for Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) recipients. This year they delivered three TAA cohorts: two in industrial maintenance and one in medical coding.

The VALRC also worked with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and other partners in the implementation of the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program in the development and implementation of PluggedInVA for adults eligible for services under those grants. VALRC provided training and technical assistance to all PluggedInVA programs.

A new PluggedInVA Web site was launched in October that features information about the model, links to each program's Web site, program completion data, educational resources including newly developed curricula, and a blog for programs to share best practices and success stories. PluggedInVA presentations were delivered at the National College Transitions Network Conference, the Advisory Committee on Adult Education and Literacy to the Virginia Board of Education, and the United States Department of Labor's Trade Assistance Act Symposia in Washington, D.C. (September 2014 and June 2015) and Boston (April 2015).

Mid-year and end-of-year reports from 12 regions implementing PluggedInVA programs were collected and provided data on professional development needs and opportunities related to partnerships with postsecondary institutions, businesses, and state agencies. The data also revealed needs for professional development related to integrated instruction in secondary credential preparation. The data will be used in presentations and in securing future funding.

Digital badges were created for eight Microsoft Office modules that focus on honing skills in Word and Excel. These modules were developed for low-level literacy learners and are composed of illustrated workbook activities with accompanying videos. They are housed on www.pluggedinva.com.

English Literacy/Civics

An Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/Civics) curriculum framework, including ESOL standards and lesson plans, was developed with a working group of ten from VALRC's ESOL Advisory Board representing five IEL/Civics programs. VALRC contracted with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Creative Services to build a cloud-based storage mechanism for housing and disseminating the curriculum framework. The framework will be aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards and workplace skills over the next few years as these are further developed for ESOL at the national level.

A comparative database highlighting goals and objectives for all IEL/Civics grants awarded in Virginia was created and is soon to be housed on the VALRC Gateways site at <http://www.valrc.org/gateways>. The database was presented at VALRC's IEL/Civics Symposium to positive feedback. A new training module focused on the implications of WIOA on IEL/Civics education.

The IEL/Civics Symposium was held in Richmond on April 9-10 and was attended by more than 70 professionals from programs across the state. Two national level speakers gave plenaries: Dr. Patsy Vinogradov, Director of ATLAS, the adult education professional development organization in Minnesota, and Ms. Amanda Bergson-Shilcock from the National Skills Coalition.

Technology Integration

Working with OAEL, VALRC established a Distance Education Panel of adult educators to define the vision and mission of the panel, develop guidelines and a rubric for reviewing distance-learning curricula, and review and recommend distance learning systems and online curricula. This panel updated Virginia's adult education distance learning policy and a Distance Education Listening Session was scheduled for VAILL 2015.

VALRC reviewed regional technology plans to determine technology professional development needs. As a result, technology integration components in all VALRC trainings were explicitly identified in the catalog of training. VALRC staff conducted a technology open lab at VAILL 2014 where adult educators could practice with a variety of technology tools and learn how to use the VALRC Knowledge Center and Northstar, a digital literacy assessment tool that was provided and incorporated into several instructor trainings. VALRC also participated in several phone conferences with representatives of EveryoneOn.org regarding services for low cost Internet and computer equipment for adult education programs.

Publications and Communications

VALRC strives to promote and support statewide communication regarding timely topics among practitioners. The following resources were added to VALRC's main Web site: recommended instructional app resources with monthly updates, VALRC's Survey of Virginia's Foreign Born Population, and a link to VALRC's 2014 GED® discussion forum. To support the transition to WIOA compliance, videos explaining topics of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and monthly facts and statistics updates concentrating on work force information were also added.

In addition, VALRC published the *Progress* newsletter with an educational technology theme including tips for using Web 2.0 tools, search/save/share, and choosing apps for instructional outcomes. Facebook and Twitter updates and LINC discussions were posted on social media and the Virginia Adult Educators Learning Network (VAELN).

To support learners seeking their GED® credential, VALRC operated the GED® Helpline totaling 1,400 interactions in program year 2014-2015. Three-fourths of calls originated in state. Call purpose was logged with the following breakdown: 30 percent GED® test, 23 percent transcripts, 19 percent in search of a class, 13 percent certificate questions. Seventy percent of calls were by individuals, 8 percent by parents, 6 percent by agency, and 5 percent by schools. Eighty-two percent of callers discovered the helpline through an Internet search, while 10 percent were referred by a school, 3 percent by the OAEL/VDOE, and 2 percent by an agency.

Knowledge Center (KC)

VALRC coordinated the implementation of a new online learning management system for adult educators statewide. Over 3,000 individual records were transferred and verified from the former learning management system to the KC and the KC portal was launched in fall of 2014. A phone and email assistance and support team was designated and job aids for most common workflows were created and published in the OAEL publication, *First Mondays*. VALRC is considered a “power user” of the Knowledge Center and participated as trainer at the spring 2015 statewide users’ meeting.

Radford University (RU)

During the 2014-2015 program year, the Office of Adult Education and Literacy Projects at Radford University (RU) supported OAEL through the organization of regional trainings and conferences, as well as professional development initiatives. RU planned the Virginia Institute for Lifelong Learning (VAILL) by coordinating five VAILL Advisory Board meetings. One hundred twenty three workshop sessions were offered by 73 presenters for 350 registered participants at the Institute held in July at Radford University. RU organized the New Regional Program Managers Meeting (20 participants) held in September 2014. RU coordinated meetings for all regional program managers and IEL Civics program managers in September 2014 (82 participants) and March 2014 (70 participants). Also in October of 2014, RU coordinated six regional data trainings for adult education regional program staff and EL/Civics staff (105 total participants). RU also brought together a total of 50 participants for two WIOA listening sessions in January and February 2015.

Learning Management System (LMS)

In 2014-2015, OAEL continued funding the development and testing of the Learning Management System (LMS) application. The application is being developed to enable local and regional adult education providers to collect and update student data using laptop computers and tablets with Wi-Fi connectivity and generate reports as needed. Once finished, LMS will allow local program staff to collect and track student information electronically, which is more secure and reliable than the paper-based methods commonly used by programs.

A crucial step in the development of the application is to have the application reside in a cloud environment. Achieving this step has proved to be more challenging than originally thought. Because the standards of the state’s information security policy are demanding, OAEL has had a difficult time identifying a suitable cloud solution. Working with the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), which is responsible for providing cybersecurity, IT infrastructure, and IT governance support for the state, OAEL is working to identify a suitable network system to host the application and establish a cloud solution agreement in 2015-2016.

In addition, the successful incorporation of enhancements to LMS during 2014-2015 has allowed OAEL to consider broadening the pilot project. If the application can successfully operate within the broader pilot environment, LMS should be available for use statewide following completion of this phase of the project.

PERFORMANCE DATA ANALYSES

NRS Target Performance

Virginia’s NRS performance remains relatively steady since last year (2013-2014). In 2013-2014, Virginia met four educational functioning level (EFL) targets and three follow-up outcome targets. In

2014-2015, Virginia met four EFL targets and preliminary data match results indicate Virginia having met two follow-up outcome targets.

In terms of the state's enrollment target, Virginia reported an enrollment total of 20,598 in 2014-2015, which is 84 percent of the state enrollment target of 24,617. The enrollment total of 20,598 also represents a 10 percent decrease in enrollment since 2013-2014.

Staffing

Virginia's adult education providers continue to rely on staff employed on a part-time basis to support adult education service delivery. Overall, part-time staff comprised 87 percent of adult education personnel hired in 2014-2015. Full-time staff comprised 10 percent and unpaid volunteers comprised three percent. Local teachers represented the largest group by job function with 918 out of 1,135 staff hired, or 81 percent of all adult education personnel. The three remaining job function categories, local-level administrators, local counselors, and local paraprofessionals had number of hires of 100 or fewer.

With regard to local teachers, 92 percent are part-time staff, five percent are full-time staff, and three percent are unpaid volunteers. Approximately 60 percent of local teachers have taught adult education for more than three years, while 20 percent have one to three years of experience, and 21 percent have been teaching adults less than a year.

Student Enrollment

Local and regional Virginia adult education programs enrolled 20,598 adults in 2014-2015. The three largest adult student populations in ranked order by race-ethnicity are Hispanic or Latino (8,557 students; 42 percent of total enrollment), black or African American (4,654 students; 23 percent of total enrollment), and white (4,562 students; 22 percent of total enrollment). Hispanic or Latino enrollment increased by 21 students over last year; however, both black or African American and white enrollments decreased dramatically by 21 and 18 percent, respectively, during the same period.

Despite the changes to enrollment by race-ethnicity, enrollment by age group remained relatively unchanged in 2014-2015 from a year ago. Last year, the highest enrollment age range groups by enrollment percentage were 25-44 years of age (54 percent), 19-24 years of age (20 percent), and 45-59 years of age (18 percent). This year, the highest enrollment by age range groups were 25-44 years of age (54 percent), 19-24 years of age (20 percent), and 45-59 years of age (17 percent).

Efforts to Improve Outcomes for Core Indicators

Virginia continues to ride the wave of improvement in 2014-2015. After having not met any of the 11 EFL targets or any of the follow-up outcome targets in 2011-2012, Virginia met three EFL targets in 2012-2013 and four EFL targets in 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. While Virginia has met two or three follow-up outcome targets during the past three years, the one follow-up outcome target that it has consistently missed is Enter Postsecondary Education or Training.

Virginia will continue to conduct regional data trainings that emphasize using data to improve program performance. OAEL introduced this approach to local and regional providers in a series of regional face-to-face training sessions in 2013. More extensive training was provided in the fall of 2014. OAEL staff provided adult education program staff with guidance on how to use the state management information system (MIS) to extract performance data at the regional program level down to the classroom level. Training session participants also learned to construct spreadsheet-based tools to manipulate and analyze program data.

OAEL staff began discussions to develop a more comprehensive site-visit system that will incorporate target performance as part of site visits. The intent is to evaluate whether programs have implemented policies and practices that encourage minimizing high-risk behavior. Under this new system, programs that do not actively or regularly include program improvement as part of their short-term and long-term planning will be considered high risk and will be required to perform appropriate corrective action.

OAEL staff has been in discussions with the Virginia Department of Education’s Educational Information Management (EIM) division to develop reports and query-based tools that will provide more meaningful information to adult education providers to support program improvement. Many of the current reports available to providers have been in place since the state MIS was built in 2001. Although adult education programs rely on these reports to help them with program improvement, a number of programs have clearly indicated that many of the reports are outdated and have lost their relevance. OAEL staff is in the process of revamping these reports to provide programs with more useful information.

INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

Integration and Partnerships

Moving Career Pathways Forward

For the second year of project participation, Virginia used a career pathway survey at the state and local level. Results indicated that strengthening partnerships was a need at both levels. As a participant of the state Career Pathway workgroup, the OAEL director shared the results with the group and each agency participant shared characteristics of their program and identified connections that enabled Virginia to win federal grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Employment and Training (SNAP-ET) as well as the USDOL, Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT). These grants were written to develop career pathways at all levels of instruction. Bringing our state’s PluggedInVA model to the lower levels has increased opportunities for learners who are assessing below an adult secondary level. In addition, local level agency partnerships have strengthened and developed across the state. Through participation in the Moving Career Pathways Forward Project, Part II, we worked with two local pilots to develop a focused plan to expand career pathway partnerships for those who were not included in the areas awarded by the federal grant. We continue to work toward the project goals of the development of a plan for a systematic approach to career pathways integration for all of our state-funded adult education programs, including instructional support, partner building, incorporation of credentialing, and professional development.

Career Pathways and PluggedInVA (PIVA)

PluggedInVA is the work force model for the Department of Education’s Office of Adult Education and Literacy. The model is a six to nine month intensive integrated program that prepares learners for life-sustaining careers in regional high-demand jobs. The program employs a contextualized curriculum that includes GED® preparation, Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) preparation, Microsoft Digital Literacy, professional soft skills, 21st century skills, postsecondary readiness, job readiness, and industry-specific credentialing. Adult education programs partner with local businesses, other state agencies, community colleges, technical schools, and community organizations to provide an integrated curriculum and support system that will successfully prepare low-skilled adults without a high school credential for work in high-growth industries.

Since 2009, PluggedInVA completers have attained 644 industry-recognized credentials. During the 2014-2015 fiscal year, 169 students in PluggedInVA programs attained industry-recognized credentials and Career Studies Certificates (CSC) from Virginia community colleges.

Industry-recognized credentials include Microsoft’s Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3), Certified Electronic Health Records Specialist (CEHRS), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Refrigeration Recovery, Phlebotomy, Electronic Medical Records, National Center for Construction Education Research (NCCER), Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA 10 and 30), Medication Administration, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Electricity, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid, Pharmacy Technician (State and National), Welding, Machining, and Commercial Driver’s License (CDL).

Career Studies Certificates issued by Virginia community colleges for PluggedInVA students include Manufacturing Technician, Entrepreneurship, Electronic Medical Records, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC), Welding, Information Technology, Construction and Weatherization, Electrician Helper, Software Quality Assurance, Phlebotomy, and Pharmacy Technician.

Additionally, 102 PluggedInVA students earned their Microsoft Digital Literacy Certifications. Adult education programs reported 110 CRCs awarded.

During 2014-2015, PluggedInVA programs were operating in 12 of our 22 adult education regions. We continue to work on increasing career pathway opportunities for adults and encourage career pathways at lower levels by providing additional professional development at state conferences and at regional programs across the state.

ENGLISH LITERACY/CIVICS (EL/C) PROGRAM

Overview

In 2014-2015, Virginia issued EL/Civics grant awards to 18 programs with an enrollment of 4,616 students. These continuation grants were awarded to address priorities such as meeting NRS accountability targets, incorporating civics education into ESOL classes, providing citizenship preparation, and increasing access to EL/Civics services.

The sub recipients reflect a broad geographic distribution and multiple organizational types, including public school divisions, postsecondary institutions, regional adult education programs, and community-based literacy organizations (CBLOs). Students enrolled in regional adult education programs make up the single largest portion of the funded population, 57 percent (2,635 students).

Statewide Activity

In 2014-2015, 4,616 EL/Civics learners were served, representing an increase of 15 percent from 2013-2014's enrollment of 4,004. During the year, 2,482 (52.59 percent) EL/Civics learners took a post-test. Of those, 1,923 (79 percent) made an educational gain. Of the total enrollment, 41.65 percent made an educational gain, an increase of 9.2 percentage points over 2013-2014.

Comparing the data of the two largest funded groups of providers, CBLOs and regional adult education programs, indicates that they vary in overall retention and EFL gains. Of the 1,211 students served by CBLOs, 33.36 percent of the enrollment made a gain, while 56.56 percent persisted beyond the program year. While this is an increase in both categories, it is not at the same levels as the regional programs. In contrast, almost 46 percent of EL/Civics students in regional adult education programs made an educational gain while 82.46 percent persisted beyond the first year.

Of the 160 EL/Civics students who set the goal of obtaining citizenship, 44, or 27.5 percent, achieved it. This is an increase of two percentage points from 2013-2014.

Local Program Activity

Rappahannock Area

Activities funded for Spotsylvania County Public Schools (SCPS) this program year focused on enhanced civics based instruction and civics focused activities, both in and outside of the classroom. A comprehensive supplemental curriculum was designed for all EL/Civics classes and covered the following topics: health care, schools, community services, and U.S., Virginia, and local history and government.

All instructors received professional development on the design of the curriculum, the resources on the new curriculum Web site, and ideas for how to share lesson plans and student successes.

Twenty-eight classes benefited from this new resource developed by three veteran ESOL instructors. To address the advanced-level students who have surpassed the traditional ESOL instructional levels but still needed to build academic English skills, four transitional classes to the ABE program were provided. The four transition class instructors met monthly to discuss instructional strategies and share resources to enhance the class experience.

The Spotsylvania Adult Education program provided five orientation sessions for parents of limited English proficiency (LEP) students in local elementary schools, focusing on school topics such as report cards, school lunches, the school nurse, homework, and the importance of parental involvement in schools. At the end of each session, information about classes was shared. Twenty-three students enrolled in adult education classes the following semester.

A result of the civics education program was an increase in preparation for U.S. citizenship. Spotsylvania Adult Education provided a series of study sessions for interested students and saw twelve adults achieve their U.S. citizenship during the 2014-2015 program year. These twelve new naturalized citizens were recognized during a student achievement celebration held in May 2015.

Northern Virginia

The Prince William County Schools (PCWS) Adult Education Program partners with the One-Stop SkillSource Centers in Northern Virginia, part of the nonprofit SkillSource Group (SSG), which is dedicated to bringing educators, job seekers, and employers together.

This partnership and colocation presence in the One-Stop has increased access for non-native EL/Civics students to obtain services. An adult education staff member is responsible for organizing and presenting citizenship classes and seminars for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) naturalization as well as daily individual assistance and counseling as needed for walk-in clients relating to USCIS Naturalization, ESOL, GED®, ABE, and other work force development needs and partner referrals.

One of the highlights of this partnership is the collaboration of the Prince William SkillSource Business Team to create, plan, carry out, and follow up on Community Connections Employment Mixer events including the outreach to student job seekers and community employers, developing event agendas, securing guest speakers, creating follow-up newsletters for partners and community participants, and evaluating results for continuous quality improvement.

The PWCS Adult Education partnerships at the Prince William One-Stop have been recognized and celebrated at the national level, receiving the 2015 National Association of State Workforce Agencies William Harris Equal Opportunity Award citing their initiatives as ones that promote equal employment opportunities for clients.

Commonwealth Catholic Charities

The Commonwealth Catholic Charities' (CCC) EL/Civics Education Program is a combined program in three locations: Roanoke, Richmond, and Hampton Roads. During this fiscal year, CCC's three locations continued use of their Newcomer Intensive English Literacy/Civics model in all three locations. These leveled classes are directed at newly arrived refugee adults, providing English Literacy/Civics instruction in the form of field trips, guest speakers, and Web-based English as a Second Language (ESL) learning classes. CCC staff is now using the same materials and curriculum to provide refugee adults across the state with classes that prepare them for American life and employment. In all, this provider held 24 leveled, four-week classes for 265 students. All instruction is provided by volunteers trained by the local education specialists who attend planned professional development activities. The professional development focus this year was the use of technology in the area of pre-employment preparation for students, particularly job search and job applications. The CCC Program met the federal targets in four out of six ESL educational functioning levels. In the Hampton Roads area, four students transitioned to a partnering regional adult education program with a PluggedInVA Pharmacy Technology career pathway

program. These four students continued with their English acquisition while also completing a CRC, Microsoft Digital Literacy Certificate, soft skills instruction, a capstone project, and the course work necessary for them to be eligible to sit for state and national certification exams. All four of the students passed the state certification exam with one also completing and passing the national exam. By the end of the program year, three out of the four students had obtained employment. Two of these students found employment as pharmacy technicians in a local pharmacy chain.

SECONDARY SCHOOL CREDENTIALS AND EQUIVALENCIES

Within the context of adult education, the Commonwealth of Virginia awards a high school equivalency (HSE) and a state approved diploma. Access to these programs varies based on the local county’s determination of adult educational need.

Virginia’s HSE credential is awarded upon successful completion of the requirements of the General Educational Development (GED®) test, a battery of examinations administered by states and jurisdictions to measure the skills and knowledge similar to a high school course of study. Virginia GED® graduates earn a GED® certificate.

Virginia awards the Adult High School Diploma (AHSD), one of the state’s approved diplomas, to Virginia residents who successfully complete the requirements of one of three programs. These programs are the National External Diploma Program (NEDP), the General Achievement Adult High School Diploma (GAAHSD) Program, and the Adult High School Diploma Program (AHSDP). These programs are adult education programs and are conducted through participating adult education centers within the state.

The NEDP is an applied performance assessment system that assesses the high school level skills of adults and out-of-school youth. The NEDP evaluates the reading, writing, math, and work force readiness skills of participants. This assessment evaluates, in life and work contexts, 70 competencies in ten content areas including financial literacy, health literacy, civics literacy, geography, history, science, and twenty-first century workplace skills. Upon demonstrated mastery of these competencies, the individual is awarded an AHSD.

The GAASHD program provides a diploma option for Virginia high school dropouts and individuals who exit high school without a diploma. This diploma is intended for individuals who are at least 18 years of age and not enrolled in public school. The requirements for the GAAHSD include completion of a Career and Technical Education credential, prescribed standard units of credit, and a passing score on the GED® test. Standard credits required for the GAAHSD may be earned in a variety of educational settings.

The AHSD program enables an individual 18 years or older, who is no longer enrolled in public school, to complete the required courses and activities to earn the AHSD. The AHSD diploma is awarded to an adult student who completes the course credit requirements in effect for that individual’s ninth-grade year. These course credit requirements may be earned in varied educational settings in conjunction with local school division requirements.

ADULT EDUCATION STANDARDS

College and Career Readiness Standards Implementation

VALRC staff joined OAEL staff in a fall 2014 trip to Kentucky to collect information on their state CCRS implementation strategies and discuss implications for Virginia, participated in planning and delivering CCRS-focused professional development at two statewide regional program manager/specialist meetings,

and contributed to statewide communication efforts (notably, the *First Mondays* newsletter) surrounding CCRS implementation.

VALRC developed Virginia's successful application to participate in the federally sponsored College and Career Readiness Standards-in-Action (CCRSIA) project, which provides training and ongoing technical assistance from March 2015 through September 2016 to state teams working to implement CCR standards statewide. A VALRC specialist oversees this initiative in cooperation with the Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) in the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). A statewide CCRSIA implementation team was formed that includes ABE/ASE instructors, a regional manager, and a regional specialist along with OAEL and VALRC representatives. The implementation team attended an intensive, three-day institute in March 2015 that focused on translating standards into CCR-aligned curriculum and instruction. Implementation team members also participated in the development of a comprehensive, multi-year CCRSIA strategic plan that focuses on CCRS implementation in Virginia.

This initiative has also involved developing two regional demonstration sites (one focusing on English language instruction and one on math instruction), each with a team that includes administrators, trained implementation team members, and five teachers. The project included training of teachers on the CCRS and lesson revision tools, videotaping classroom implementation of the CCRS, small group observation of and feedback on the filmed lesson, ongoing technical assistance from VALRC, and support from two coaches from the USED.