

<b>Strengthening Adult Reading Instructional Practices</b>	OMB#:	Exp. Date:
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## **ABE Program Protocol**

### **1. DEVELOPMENT AND GOALS (Director, Administrator)**

#### **1a. Program Goals:**

- When did the program first begin?
- What types of funding were used to begin the program?
- What are the goals for the program? Have the goals or target populations for the program changed over time? Reasons for change? (Impact of shifts in public policy? Funding?)

#### **1b. Overview of Program Services:**

- What is the range of instructional and other services offered by the program (e.g., ABE, ESL, GED, high school diploma; job training; counseling; other)?
- How many clients participated during 2007-2008 in the whole program?

### **2. STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION (Director, Administrator)**

**Obtain a copy of the organizational chart, if possible.**

#### **2a. Program Organizational Structure:**

- What type of agency is the fiscal agent for the program (e.g., school district, community college, community-based organization, volunteer organization)?
- What is the administrative structure for the adult education services portion of the program?
- Where does adult education fit in the overall program's structure?

#### **2b. Program Location:**

- Where are the program sites located (e.g., city/town, type of building, collocated with other agency or dedicated space)?
- Describe location and type of space used for administrative offices, classrooms/instructional sites, computer labs, staff offices, reading rooms.

#### **2c. Interagency Collaboration:**

- Does the program collaborate with other agencies? (If so, please describe the types of collaborations that take place (determine funding, staff, data, resources that are shared).)
- Are there any formal or informal interagency agreements in place? If so, what activities do these govern?

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- Is the program involved in a One-Stop Center? If so, describe the nature of the relationship, the involvement of the ABE program, the location of services.
- What is the relationship between referral agencies and the program? If there an exchange of services and benefits?

**2d. Advisory Council:**

- Is there a formal/informal advisory group established?
- What role does it play?
- Composition of group?
- How it is selected?
- Frequency of meetings?

**3. STAFF (Director, Administrator, Staff)**

**3a. Staff Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Describe the number of staff and their roles and responsibilities: project director, coordinator, teachers, counselors (in ABE, GED, ESL), and other staff.
- How many are full-time or part-time? How many hours equals full time, part time? Do staff receive benefits? How many hours must staff work to receive benefits?
- Are there volunteers? How many and what program services do they provide?

**3b. Qualifications:**

- What minimum requirements, educational background, previous experience, personal characteristics are considered in staff hiring (e.g., ethnicity, languages, other qualities)?
- Is certification required? If yes, what types?
- Who makes staff hiring decisions?
- How are tutors/volunteers selected for the program?
- Are there any criteria?
- What is the educational background and work experience of the project director?

**3c. Staff Turnover:**

- How long do staff usually remain with the program?
- What are the main reasons that staff leave the program?
- Are there any strategies for reducing turnover?

**3d. Staff Planning Time:**

- Do staff have planning/preparation time?
- If yes, how is the time used? Is it paid time?
- If no, are staff reimbursed for their time spent planning lessons?

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**3e. Staff Leadership:**

- Who has responsibility for programmatic decisions--curriculum, instructional approaches, scheduling, and materials? How does this person carry out her/his responsibilities? What authority does s/he have? Does this person consult with other staff and, if so, how is this undertaken?
- Who has responsibility for fiscal decisions?
- Are there any particular leadership strategies or activities that are undertaken with regard to instruction or other aspects of the operation of the program?

**3f. Staff Management/Evaluation:**

- What supervision is provided to staff?
- Are staff evaluated on a regular (define) basis?
- Who conducts the evaluation? What does the evaluation involve?
- Are the instructors observed? If yes, what instruments/processes are used?
- How frequently and by whom?
- Do the instructors receive feedback on their teaching?
- How much autonomy do they have in determining the curriculum, materials?
- Are volunteers (what are their roles) supervised?
- By whom and in what ways?

**4. STAFF SUPPORT SERVICES (Director, Administrator, Instructors, Tutors)**

**4a. In-service Training:**

- Describe staff development activities for the instructional staff (frequency, topics, duration, location, times held, who offers, specific training, types of training most helpful). What staff development activities have been available this past program year?
- Which staff are able to participate?
- How is participation determined? Who usually participates (is there a core group who attends events or does most of the staff access activities)?
- What is the structure of these activities--one-time workshops; multi-day events (describe activities, who sponsors workshops, training, outside consultants brought in, etc.)?
- Are staff provided released time, fiscal support to participate in staff development?
- Do staff receive a certain amount (days) of staff development each year?
- Do they have choices in the staff development that they receive?

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- Is there discussion among the staff after they participate in activities?
- Is there a focus for staff development (e.g., reading difficulties)?

**4b. Use of Volunteers:**

- What roles (if any) do volunteers play in the organization (instructional, other)?
- Is training provided to volunteer staff?
- If so, when, how much, how often, by whom, what types?
- How are the volunteers managed/monitored? What type of relationship do the volunteers have with the organization?

**4c. Staff Meetings:**

- Describe content, frequency, purpose, staff involvement in meetings.
- To what extent do the meetings address administrative issues, instructional issues, and other topics? Is there orientation for new staff members?
- Describe focus of orientation.
- Do instructors have an opportunity to meet to discuss instructional issues?
- If so, how often?

**5. RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT (Director, Administrator, Instructors)**

**5a. Description of Program Participants:**

- Describe the characteristics of the program service area.
- Are the program participants from the local community or from a number of communities?
- How many clients were served in adult education services (ABE, ESL, GED, high school diploma during 2007-2008 and what were their characteristics?

**Obtain last NRS report that program submitted to State adult education or funding agency.**

**5b. Recruitment Strategies:**

- Is learner recruitment conducted? If yes, for which populations of learners (e.g., first-level, GED prep., etc.)?
- What is the target population in the community? What target is specified in grant proposals?
- What outreach activities and strategies are undertaken?
- Is the target population different from the individuals who come to the ABE/GED services?
- Are there adults that the program is not reaching who are targets of recruitment?
- Why is the program not reaching these individuals?

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- What are sources of referrals to the program?
- Are some more effective than others?
- Have recruitment strategies changed over the last five years? If yes, in what ways?

**6. ORIENTATION, INTAKE, AND DIAGNOSIS (Director, Administrator, Instructors)**

**6a. Program Orientation, Intake, and Cycle of Classes: ##**

- **Orientation:**
  - Is there an orientation process that is separate than the intake process?
  - If yes, what activities are conducted in orientation?
  - Who conducts it (one staff member or many)?
  - Is there a standard “script” or materials that are used?
  - Is orientation conducted at a scheduled time or whenever there is learner interest (what is the schedule)?
- **Intake:**
  - What is the intake process—what is the sequence of activities that is conducted such as a learner interview, goal setting, and diagnostic testing?
  - When is testing conducted in the sequence of activities? What instrument is used?
  - Are the results from the intake tested provided to learners? If yes, in what form (written, orally)? What specific information is given to learners?
  - What happens when a learner’s goal does not appear to match his/her skill entry upon entry?
  - Are learners’ goals reassessed after a learner enters the program? What is the process for this?
- Can learners enter classes/instruction at any time or only at specified times? Do you have “managed enrollment” where learners can only enter a class/instruction at a specific time? If yes, are learners registered in the program when they enter and then given other activities to do (e.g., computer lab, tutor) until they can enter the class?
- What is the yearly cycle of enrollment?
- In what time period are classes organized--semester, session, term? Has this always been the cycle or did the time period change? If so, why was the cycle changed?

**6b. Learning Disabilities:**

- What, if any, are the special learning needs of first-level learners?

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- How are these identified (formal process, informal); what instruments are used; are records from the school district or a prior educational setting obtained?
- What is the estimate of the percentage of first-level ABE learners in the program who have learning problems and/or special needs?
- How is this determined (formal, informal assessment?)?
- What accommodations does the program make for learners with learning disabilities? For other disabilities?

**7. PLACEMENT (Director, Administrator, Instructors)**

**7a. Use of Reading Diagnostic Assessments:**

- Are reading diagnostic assessments administered? If yes, which assessments?
- Which learners receive these assessments? How are the learners determined?
- Who administers the assessment? At what point is it administered?
- What is done with the assessment results?
- Are learners provided feedback with the results? If yes, who provides feedback? What information is given to learners?

**7b. Other Placement Activities:**

- How are learners other than those discussed above assigned to classes or instruction (e.g., level of class, available openings, student interest)?
- How well does this work (e.g., extent of need to re-assign students)?
- What is the basis for reassignment?
- How is it decided which learners should receive additional one-on-one tutoring (if available)?
- What is the relationship between the tutoring and the class time instruction for these learners?
- To what extent are ESL learners placed into ABE reading classes?
- What criteria are used to place learners?

**7c. Options for Placement:**

- What are the program's options for placing first-level and intermediate-level learners?
- Is there a waiting list for placement?
- How are learners selected (e.g., order of enrollment, individual student need)?

**8. CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT (Instructors, Tutors)**

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**8a. Reading Content--First-Level and Intermediate -Level Learners:**

- What subjects/content areas are taught in the classes for first-level and intermediate-level learners (e.g., reading, writing, math, life skills, vocational skills, parenting skills, etc.)?
- How has this changed since the program began using STAR?
- Who determined the content (instructor, program)? What factors influenced the specification of the content?
- Are any standards or guidelines for curricular content followed (e.g., commercially published curriculum such as Wilson, Slingerland, etc.)? Describe these guidelines. If so, with how much fidelity are the instructors using the methods and materials and assessment techniques?
- If a standard curriculum is used, to what extent has it been customized?
- How were the changes determined?
- Does the content for first-level learners vary by instructor? In what ways?
- What methods are used in teaching reading (phonics, life-skills)?
- How great is the emphasis on reading within the instruction for first-level learners?
- Is reading taught in other levels of classes besides low-level classes? If yes, describe in which classes and what is taught.
- If there is a substantial population of non-native learners in the program and classes: is the instruction delivered to the two populations substantially different? If so, in what ways?
- To what extent is writing taught? Why (e.g., what is the rationale)? If yes, what does the writing instruction involve (e.g., penmanship, copying, sentence development, grammar)?

**8b. ABE Program:**

- Is there a particular content that is used in the other ABE/ESL/GED classes--e.g., Equipped for the Future, etc.?
- Is there any emphasis or theme that is encouraged in the curriculum?
- Who selects the content of the curriculum and the materials?

**9. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES (Instructors, Tutors) (Information on study's target instructors will be collected in class observations and interviews.)**

**9a. Instructional Setting:**

- What formats are used to provide instruction to first-level learners (e.g., small groups, large groups, one-on-one instruction, independent study)?

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- For each, describe function, scheduling, use of staff/ tutors/ other volunteers.
- What types of formats are used in other ABE and ESL instruction?
- What types of instructional strategies and classroom management strategies are used for dealing with multi-level classes of learners? What is the rationale for their use?

**9b. Instructional Variety and Capacity:**

- Has the program’s instructional offerings changed over time?
- What is the size of the classes for ABE and ESL instruction other than the class that is part of the study?
- Is there an effort to increase time and intensity of instruction received (e.g., classes smaller, higher frequency of class meetings, shorter class time)? What factors have affected why this has or has not occurred?

**9c. Technology:**

- Is technology (computers, video, audio tape, etc.) used in instruction (e.g., regular part of instruction, special events)?
- How available is it for first-level and intermediate-level ABE learners?
- Where is the technology located (e.g., separate lab, in the classroom)?
- What types of computer programs/software are used?
- Have the staff received training in the use of technology/computers/software?
- If yes, is this sufficient for their effective use? If no, is any planned?
- Do instructors provide an orientation to the software to their students so students are in turn encouraged to use the software on their own?
- How is the technology selected?
- For what instructional purposes is technology used (by type of technology)--e.g., to reinforce what is being taught, to teach skills in a different way than they are taught in class, to teach skills that are not being taught in the class?
- To what extent are computer programs or other types of technology aligned with the curricular content?

**10. PROGRAM EXPOSURE (Director, Instructors, Tutors)**

**10a. Duration:**

- How many total hours of instruction are available for intermediate-level learners per session/term/cycle?
- How many hours of instruction are available for ABE (non intermediate-level), ESL, and high school completion?



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**10b. Participation/Retention:**

- What percent of learners who participate in intake attend classes for at least 12 hours?
- How does your program keep learners engaged so that they remain after the first few weeks of class? To what extent does the program provide incentives for retention (e.g., identify specific practices around retention and motivation)?
- What steps are taken if a learner has poor attendance?
- Do learners sign contracts or another indicator of commitment?
- What are the major obstacles to increasing retention of learners in the program?
- What steps have been taken or might be taken to increase retention of learners?
- Is there a waiting list? If so, is there anything done to keep learners interested in the program while they are on the waiting list?

**11. SUPPORT SERVICES (Director, Instructors)**

**11a. Transportation:**

- Is transportation to classes provided?
- What type (e.g., program van, school bus, tokens for public transportation)?
- What problems have been encountered and what solutions have been tried?

**11b. Childcare:**

- Is childcare offered on-site or at a different location (if so, where)?
- For what ages of children?
- What are the hours of operation?
- Who is eligible for childcare (e.g., only specific program participants)?

**11c. Other Support Services/Community Resources:**

- Are financial assistance, meals, counseling, employment training and support, and training offered to learners? Is counseling accessible to learners?
- Which learners are eligible for these resources?
- Who identifies the need for the resources and how are learners referred?

**11d. Referral to Support Services:**

- Is there a specific staff person responsible for referring learners to support services? If yes, what position does this staff

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member hold and what does she/he do with regard to referral? If no, how are learners referred?

- Does the program keep an updated list of services in the community (formal, informal list)? If yes, how often is this updated?

## **12. MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS (Director, Instructors, Tutors, Data Specialist)**

### **12a. Types of Assessments:**

- How is learner progress measured and monitored (e.g., standardized tests, teacher evaluations, homework, journals, portfolios)?

### **12b. Collection of Assessment Data:**

- Which standardized literacy tests (TABE, CASAS, BEST, etc.) does the program use for its ABE and ESL learners (differentiate between the tests used for each type of learner)?
- Is the placement version (TABE Locator, CASAS Placement) of the test administered? If so, when (at intake or at another time--when)?
- If a placement test is used, is the score used to determine the level of the pre-test that should be administered?
- If no or if a placement test is not used, how is the level of the pre-test that should be administered determined?
- When is the pre-test administered (e.g. during the first week of class)?
- Who administers the pre-test (instructor teaching the class, assessment staff)?
- Where is the pre-test given (in the class, other location—where)?
- When is the post-test administered? By whom? After how many hours of instruction? Is this number of hours mandated by state adult education policy?
- Is there a regular schedule for pre- and post-testing?
- About what percentage of students receives both pre- and post-tests?
- Are the assessment data and other learner data computerized? Which computer system is used (state adult education's system, community college system, TOPS (CASAS states, etc.)?)
- Are the data available to instructors?
- If yes, how do instructors obtain access to the data?
- What other formal assessment takes place?
- What types of informal assessment take place (e.g., teacher judgment, etc.)?

### **12c. Use of Assessment Information:**

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- Is assessment used for other than fulfilling the state’s reporting requirements? If yes, in what ways/
- Do learners receive the results of their assessments? If so, when? Who provides it?
- How is this information conveyed? (If possible, obtain examples of how learners receive the feedback.) Does this process vary by instructor?
- Are the assessment data used to plan instruction? If yes, how?
- Are the data used for program improvement or internal accountability? In what ways?

**13. *ADVANCING LEARNERS TO THE NEXT STAGE (Director, Instructors)***

**13a. Movement/Completion:**

- How is a learner’s movement to the next level or completion of the program determined?
- Is a certificate (or other form of recognition) given to a learner upon completion?
- If yes, what does the certificate say?

**13b. Exit Plans:**

- Are there procedures for assisting learners as they are ready to leave the program to go to the next step?
- If so, what are procedures?
- How and when are exit decisions made?

**13c. Next steps:**

- What are the post-program goals of learners (higher level of adult ed, vocational training, employment or improved job performance, enrollment in community college, etc.)? What are the goals for first-level learners?
- Does the program track participants after they have left to see what they do next?
- Does the program conduct a follow-up of learners after they leave the program?
- If yes, what types of data, who collects it, and how is it collected?
- Are these data used in any ways? How?
- For community college programs: Can learners’ participation in college courses be tracked through the community college’s database?

**14. *BUDGET (Director)***

**Obtain budget data**

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**14a. Fiscal Resources:**

What is the total program budget (estimate of budget by function area -- e.g., instruction, administration, equipment)?

- What are the program's current sources of funding?
- What amount is from what sources?
- What have the levels been for the past three years?
- Where are the program's greatest resource needs?
- What are the performance levels set by the state adult education office that the ABE program must meet?
- Are there performance levels or benchmarks required by any of the program's other funders/

**14b. User Fees:**

- Do participants pay any fees or tuition to enroll/participate in the program?
- Do others pay on their behalf (e.g., WIB, social service agencies, employers)?

**14c. Spending Pattern:**

- What is the average spending level per learner per year?

**14d. Other Resources:**

- Besides financial resources, what other resources are available to the program (e.g., in-kind contributions, material resources, staffing, administration, etc.)?
- How are these resources used?

**15. EVALUATION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING (Director, Data Specialist)**

**15a. Processes:**

- What kinds of data are routinely collected for monitoring the program and planning?
- Who collects the data?
- How is it maintained (computerized or on paper)?
- Is a Management Information System (MIS) used?
- What type?
- What is done with the data collected? If the program does not use the data, why not (e.g., because data are not easily accessible, interpretable, etc.)?

**15b. Strategic Planning:**

- Does the ABE program engage in strategic planning? If yes, please describe the process that is used?
- Does the ABE program participate in planning as part of the larger institution (e.g., community college)?

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**15d. Local Evaluation:**

- Has the program evaluated its own effectiveness?
- If so, by whom and when?
- Has the program participated in state or other external evaluations?
- Do participants complete evaluations of their instructors?
- How is this information used? **(Collect copies of evaluation materials, if applicable.)**