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ABSTRACT

A California program to train childhood educators so they can, in turn, attract, train, and motivate limited-English-proficient (LEP) individuals for child care occupations is evaluated based on three participant case studies. In in-depth interviews, three of the 30 program participants discussed what they had learned during training, the variables with greatest impact on ability to implement program training locally, successful and unsuccessful training elements, the forms of training they anticipated implementing locally, program experiences most useful in local problem-solving, and whether they would recommend the program to others. Findings are summarized here. Three major recommendations for future trainer training programs are made: incorporation of a cultural diversity component; inclusion of institutional administrators early in the training of their staff for innovation; and ensuring that participant needs and institutional readiness for training, especially when concerned with innovation and change, are compatible with project objectives. (MSE)

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CASE STUDY EVALUATION

of

Training for ACCESS

**(Attractive Careers in Childhood Education
for Second Language Speakers)**

A FINAL REPORT

prepared for

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Acknowledgements

This final report presents the results of an external evaluation of Training for ACCESS: Attractive Careers in Childhood Education for Second Language Speakers, conducted by the California Institute on Human Services of Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California, March 1994 through July 1995.

The evaluation was based on data collected from three resource persons who served as case studies of the local implementation of Training for ACCESS. Many thanks are due the individuals who extended their time, effort, and courtesy in meeting with the evaluator to discuss their approaches to serving students with limited-English skills. They are:

Sharon Hawley, Modesto Junior College
Nancy Brown, Cabrillo College
Janet Gonzales-Mena, Napa Valley Community College

Critical to the overall utility of the evaluation process were the key personnel of Training of ACCESS itself. Many thanks to them for their cooperation and for running such a well-organized project. Judith A. Appleby, M.A., Research and Evaluation Consultant, however, is solely responsible for the contents of this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Case Study Evaluation of Training for ACCESS (Attractive Careers in Childhood Education for Second Language Speakers)

Sponsored by the California Institute on Human Services
Sonoma State University

Conducted by Judith A. Appleby, M.A.
Research & Evaluation Consultant

Training for ACCESS was the third of three 18-month grant awards to CIHS to provide statewide inservice educator training to improve the quality of vocational instruction for limited-English proficient (LEP)* youth and adults. It was based on a "spread-of-effect" model that trained trainers to bring about change in their own institutional settings. Essentially, it trained 30 early childhood educators (resource persons) from private and public institutions across the state to train 150 other early childhood educators in the core instructional concepts of the project:

- Attracting LEP students to vocational childcare/early childhood programs
- Training LEP students by providing linguistically-comprehensible vocational instruction
- Retaining LEP students by providing a culturally affirmative curriculum
- Preparing LEP students for employment by teaching American workplace culture
- Motivating LEP students to advance up the childcare/early childhood career ladder

Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation used a case study approach with indepth interviews of three of the 30 early childhood educators prepared through Training with ACCESS and analyzed their responses to six questions:

- Question 1. What do you know after training that you didn't know before?
- Question 2. What variables had the most impact on your ability to implement ACCESS training locally?
- Question 3. Of the training you provided, which activities were successful and which were not?
- Question 4. What form of ACCESS training will occur at your site next year? Do you have any plans for ongoing activity?
- Question 5. Which of your ACCESS experiences were relevant for solving problems in working with second language speaking youth and adults in your local setting?
- Question 6. Would you recommend ACCESS training to others? Why or why not?

*The terms limited-English proficient and second-language learners will be used interchangeably throughout this report. Limited-English proficient is the preferred method of address of vocational educators and second-language learners is the preferred method of address of early childhood educators.

The following criteria were used to select three representative persons to participate in the case study evaluation:

- *Diversity Awareness Profile* type and degree of change between pre- and post-test administration
- ACCESS training group assignment
- Type of instructional setting in which the resource person worked

Findings and Conclusions

- (1) After Training for ACCESS, participants were more aware of their own biases and their behavior in a multicultural setting.
- (2) Teaming with another resource person increased the effectiveness of the training. The resource materials provided by ACCESS made the resource persons feel well equipped to undertake this training effort. Administrative support enhanced the ability of the ACCESS resource trainers to conduct their training, but a lack of support didn't prevent it from happening. An adequate budget for expenses associated with training helped.
- (3) Activities that allowed people to experience others' feelings and experiences were important in opening the group to new insights. Sharing of personal feelings and experiences was most valuable to group members in an atmosphere of safety and trust. The lack of material translated into the participant's native language was a barrier to success.
- (4) The format of the "back-home" training reported in the three cases studies was that of facilitating a support group rather than providing training. All the support groups plan to continue meeting next year.
- (5) The ACCESS training provided participants with experience in interacting with limited-English proficient students and with teaching these students. Experience in how to handle sensitive cultural issues as they arise and to bring closure to difficult situations was most valuable. Comprehensible instruction in English techniques provided participants with the ability to communicate with students whose primary language was not English.
- (6) The participants in the case studies would recommend ACCESS but would like more time devoted to diversity issues and to teaching strategies/curriculum development. Diversity is such an important issue that it must be infused into any training program that deals with working with limited-English proficient adults.

Recommendations

The evaluation offers the following recommendations to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education:

- Incorporate a diversity component in instructor training projects that provides mentoring experiences with teachers skilled in teaching in multicultural classrooms.
- Include the administration of the institution in the early stages of instructor training projects concerned with innovation and change.
- For instructor training projects seeking change, allow ample time for assessing potential participants and their organizations to ensure that participant needs and institutional readiness for training are compatible with the goals and objectives of the project.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This study is an evaluation of a federal teaching training project called Training for ACCESS: Attractive Careers in Childhood Education for Second Language Speakers. Training for ACCESS was conducted by the California Institute on Human Services (CIHS) of Sonoma State University under a BVIT grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, from March 1, 1994 through August 31, 1995.

BVIT (Bilingual Vocational Instructor Training) is a national vocational education direct grant program. It provides financial assistance for conducting training for instructors, aides, or other ancillary personnel to assist them in working with individuals of limited-English proficiency.

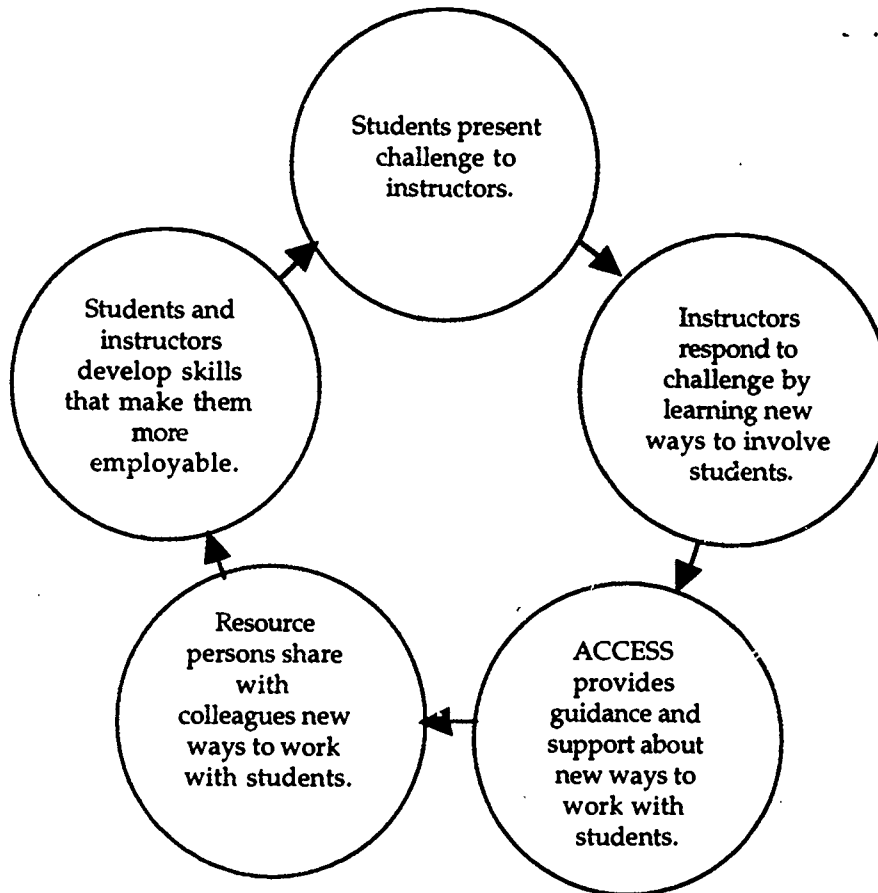
Training for ACCESS is the third of three 18-month grant awards to CIHS to provide statewide inservice educator training to improve the quality of vocational instruction for limited-English proficient (LEP) students. It is based on a "spread-of-effect" training model. Essentially it trained 30 early childhood educators (resource persons) from private and public institutions across the state to train 150 other early childhood educators in the core instructional concepts of the project:

- Attracting LEP students to vocational childcare/early childhood programs
- Retraining LEP students by providing linguistically-comprehensible vocational instruction
- Retaining LEP students by providing a culturally affirmative curriculum
- Preparing LEP students for employment by teaching American workplace culture
- Motivating LEP students to advance up the childcare/early childhood career ladder

Training for ACCESS provided its training through two week-long institutes in summer 1994 and summer 1995. The overall goal was for early childhood instructors to be able to assist LEP adults to develop the employability skills they will need to get get jobs in early childhood education, be successful in these jobs, and advance up the career ladder.

Figure 1 provides a model of Training for ACCESS.

Figure 1
The Training for ACCESS Model



The aim of the ACCESS model is to help the educational system become more adaptable, more open to change, and more able to change in needed ways. To accomplish this aim, the system uses both internal and external resources for planned change rather than relying only on outside help. In the case of Training for ACCESS, the model views the Resource Persons as local-level leadership who will bring about change in their own institutional settings through the development of peer support networks.

II. GOAL OF THE EVALUATION

Staff development programs do not operate in isolation. They operate within an organizational climate and culture, in this case, institutions with their own unique methods of handling a diversity of students, systems which are made up of individual instructors, counselors, and administrators with their own unique attitudes, approaches, and strategies of teaching, all operating within a larger context of the community in which the students of concern—those with limited-English speaking skills—will be seeking employment. Many external factors, in fact, influence the relationship between staff development activities and changes in behavior. This evaluation will highlight some of those factors.

Training for ACCESS and its spread-of-effect model seeks to bring about a general state conducive to change, i.e., to facilitate institutional improvement efforts to serve a multicultural student body. As a single element, it cannot accomplish this alone. It must be viewed as one of many elements which, together, are capable of producing notable and enduring gains in learning outcomes in a way that no one single element alone can accomplish (Guskey and Sparks, 1991).

Many studies indicate elements necessary for lasting and significant improvement (Stringfield, et al., 1991). These elements include a variety of processes and conditions: a clear vision and goals, a multi-year process, strong instructional leadership, appropriate technical assistance, early success, sustained interaction among stakeholders, and staff development for everyone involved. In keeping with this, the evaluation looked at each of these facets and makes its recommendations within this framework.

III. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation uses a case study approach to answer six questions about the training the 30 resource persons received and the training they gave to 150 of their peers.

- Question 1. What do you know now that you didn't know before?
- Question 2. What variables had the most impact on your ability to implement ACCESS training locally?
- Question 3. Of the training you provided which activities were successful and which were not?
- Question 4. What form of ACCESS training will occur at your site next year? Do you have any plans for ongoing activity?
- Question 5. Which of your ACCESS experiences were relevant for solving problems in working with second language speaking youth and adults in your local setting?
- Question 6. Would you recommend ACCESS training to others? Why or why not?

The evaluator selected 3 of the 30* resource persons participating in Training for ACCESS to serve as case studies to document the implementation and degree of institutionalization of the project at local sites. Sharon Hawley (Modesto Junior College), Nancy Brown (Cabrillo College), and Janet Gonzales-Mena (Napa Valley Community College) were selected from among those trained by project staff to provide information on their experiences in implementing Training for ACCESS at their respective sites.

The three persons were selected using the following criteria in the order listed:

- Diversity Awareness Profile type and degree of change between pre- and post-test;
- ACCESS training group assignment; and
- Type of instructional setting in which they worked.

Diversity Awareness Profile. The DAP is a 40-item questionnaire designed to assist people in becoming aware of ways in which they discriminate against, judge, or isolate others. An individual responds to a series of statements by indicating how often (almost never, seldom, usually, or almost always) he or she acts in accordance with a given statement. The instrument is based on information gathered in more than a hundred focus groups and in one-on-one interviews over a period of three years with members of protected classes. The questions include subtle things people do or do not do that lead diverse populations to feel humiliated, isolated, powerless, or in some way "less than" adequate. The DAP is based on the belief that most people do not intend to discriminate against, isolate, or judge others with these actions. The purpose of the instrument is to help the respondents to become aware of their behaviors, to evaluate them, and to have an opportunity to modify them in order to be respectful to all types of people. The test was administered to the 30 resource persons prior to the first summer institute and at the end of the second summer institute.

ACCESS Training Group. Three Sonoma State University professors of early childhood education participated in the ACCESS training. Each professor was assigned ten resource persons to mentor.

* In actuality, 33 resource persons were trained at the first summer institute to allow for attrition over the duration of the project.

Type of Instructional Setting. The 33 resource persons who attended the 1994 summer institute represented the following instructional settings.

- 19 community college
- 4 high school
- 2 regional occupational center programs
- 2 four-year college
- 1 graduate school
- 1 elementary
- 4 other

The three persons used for the case study are representative of the range of persons throughout California that were participants in Training for ACCESS. No judgments were made as to the quality or quantity of services provided by the individual resource person. Practical considerations, however, did enter into the selection—considerations such as their availability for interviewing and constraints of the evaluation with regard to time schedule and budget.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Case Study Participants

Sharon Hawley is an instructor at Modesto Junior College. She conducted two full-day sessions for her "back-home" training for 15 people in a study group. Her 15 participants worked with adults whose primary language is Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Cambodian, Hmong, Korean, Lao, Japanese, Farsi, Armenian, Urdu, Filipino, Pakistani, and sign. Sharon co-trained with one other ACCESS resource person.

Nancy Brown is an instructor at Cabrillo College in Aptos. She trained 20 people who were recruited from the entire faculty at Cabrillo. Fifteen of the 20 were from Early Childhood Education, including counselors. They had a study group that met monthly four hours at a time. The study group also participated in a two-day weekend retreat at Big Sur. The study group started in December 1994 and ran through June 1995 and is planning to continue after Training for ACCESS ends. Her participants worked with adults whose primary language is Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Korean, Mandarin, Japanese, Cantonese, Cambodian, and Farsi. Nancy co-trained with two other ACCESS resource persons.

Janet Gonzales-Mena is an instructor at Napa Valley Community College. She worked with 28 persons in seven two-hour sessions over a two-semester span. Seventeen of the participants were from Early Childhood Education. Her 28 participants worked with adults whose primary language is Spanish, Filipino, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Hmong, Mandarin, Japanese, Farsi, Korean, Lao, Tagalog, and Portuguese. Janet co-trained with two other ACCESS resource persons.

Findings

Question 1. What do you know after that you didn't know before?

Sharon gained in personal growth from the ACCESS institute group experience. She had applied to the California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) leadership and training division to take their training and she realized from ACCESS that she needed to take a look at herself before participating in CAEYC. She felt she needed in-depth training in multicultural awareness before she began to train others. She also learned that she needed to define terms related to diversity so that she understood them clearly.

Nancy learned strategies for working with colleagues. She learned how to lead and facilitate study groups. Training for ACCESS furthered her understanding of sensitive issues for people of color. She learned how to be an ally. She also learned about how to integrate diversity issues into her own work with students.

Janet gained a deeper sense of self-awareness of herself. The Training for ACCESS group experience was very important to her. Incidental learnings from the training were particularly useful. She felt empowered by being able to deal with sensitive issues that arose out of group activities. She was able to listen to criticism of herself and learned that issues around diversity can bring out anger in others. She noticed that people of color were often left out of discussions unintentionally.

Summary. Training for ACCESS provided the resource persons with an opportunity to learn more about their own biases and to examine their own behavior in a multicultural setting.

Question 2. What variables had the most impact on your ability to implement ACCESS training locally?

Sharon said that working as a team was a real success factor and their approach of not going in as experts was very effective. The materials provided by ACCESS was a plus factor. The only negative factor was the attitude of faculty who didn't consider working with second language adults a priority issue. Sharon was disappointed in the lack of response of the full-time faculty. They had opened up the training to the entire community college. Concerning the administration, they were neither positive nor negative. No financial support from the district was a real problem. Sharon had to use her own instructional budget for her ACCESS training.

Nancy said having a team approach was a success factor for them. The timing of their effort was also very important. The people they trained were ready for the training and diversity was an issue at their institution. The administration was very supportive. The school has purchased two copies of the film "The Color of Fear" and they are planning to show the films to the entire faculty. The instructional vice president was especially supportive and wants to be trained in the ACCESS program this coming year. They had very good facilities. They used different faculty homes for their meetings and they were meeting monthly. They had adequate funding; AB1725 funded their retreat. The only barriers were the time restraints of the individuals who were being trained. Thirty-five people signed up initially with 20 people completing the training. She also commented that the topic "English as a Second Language" was too big to tackle in the study group so they focused on diversity issues.

Janet said that the positive factors were the availability of a college facility and an existing time structure for training because the faculty was used to meeting on Friday afternoons. As faculty they knew and had worked previously with the people who were part of their support group. The administration was not involved.

Summary. All groups focused on diversity rather than second language instruction. Working as a team proved to be very effective. The resource materials that were provided by ACCESS made them feel well equipped to undertake the training effort. Administrative support enhanced the ability of the ACCESS trainers to conduct their training, but a lack of support didn't prevent it from happening. An adequate budget for expenses associated with training helped. Readily available facilities made the process easier and fitting into readily available time slots (such as flex-time) helped. Some knowledge of the people you are going to be training is a definite advantage.

Question 3. Of the training you provided, which activities were successful and which were not?

Sharon said that the comprehensible instruction in English lesson was very successful. The people gained a lot of insight from this activity. The most difficult activity for them was trying to reach agreement on the definition of terms—prejudice, bias, preference.

Nancy said their most successful training activity was the follow-up discussion after viewing the film "The Color of Fear." She said the people were very frank and open in their discussion which had been modeled by the people in the film. She said their weekend retreat was very successful. The casual nature of the retreat allowed them to probe into details such as the grading of classroom assignments for people of color. It allowed time for individual styles to emerge. The ESL instructors shared their classroom experiences when they were students in classrooms where their language was not the language of instruction and what strategies worked with them as students and how they felt about them.

Janet said the most useful moments were when the people opened up. How they started the training was very important. They needed to have the whole group approach at the beginning of the training and then break into small groups. It gave the members a sense of belonging to a larger group. What worked with them was talking about the "goofs" they had made and the problems people had encountered in working with diverse populations. It was valuable because the people being training allowed

themselves to be vulnerable by sharing their experiences and they felt safe doing so in the atmosphere established by the trainers. Barriers to their trained included a negative response from one faculty member to the DAP. A discussion about anger arose from this response. One childcare teacher who was Latina came into the session late and was asked to take the DAP and was thrown by this experience because it was not in Spanish.

Summary. It was important for the trainers to understand the people with whom they were working so that they could structure appropriate experiences. Modeling the frankness and openness that you are expecting others to demonstrate is important in opening the minds of others to issues of diversity creating a safe environment is important for this to occur. A casual structured format allows time to delve into more detailed information. Activities that allowed people to experience others' feelings and circumstances were important in opening the group to new insights.

Question 4. What form of ACCESS training will occur at your site next year? Do you have any plans for ongoing activity?

Sharon plans to continue the support group they started. It won't be structured. They plan to discuss the problems they are having around issues of diversity. About 5-8 people will be involved from this year's group.

Nancy's study group plans to continue to meet monthly. They have a child care center lab and she is expecting that those teachers will break out of the larger group to discuss family issues and lab needs, but they will remain part of the larger group also. They will use each other to problem solve sensitive issues.

Janet is planning to continue with ACCESS training. They will have the same number of meetings at the same time, and some suggestions have already been made by the participants for the topics to be discussed.

Summary. The resource persons saw themselves as facilitating a support group as opposed to providing training. They were sharing rather than instructing. The support groups plan to continue meeting.

Question 5. Which of your ACCESS experiences were relevant for solving problems in working with second language speaking youth and adults in your local setting?

Sharon said the comprehensible instruction in English was the most important experience and the personal exploration activities surrounding diversity issues.

Nancy said that the opportunity to gather with colleagues and share problems allowed them to solve some of their own problems. Typically an instructor is in isolation and doesn't have the opportunity to discuss common problems. "Now we have friends all over the state and we feel very close." Watching the diversity consultants blunder into mistakes heightened their awareness of how easy it is to judge. She gained perspective on how critical we tend to be of our leaders. She said it is a brave thing to be able to lead and to make mistakes and to learn from blundering. Having different facilitators was particularly relevant. Making use of one another's skills was an advantage. The comprehensible instruction in English lesson was very valuable and gave her insight into the problems of non-native speaking students. The lecturer was such a good model as a teacher that she inspired others by the modeling. There was a wealth of information in the handouts they provided. It has given them a lot to fall back on.

Janet said the amount of information and resources provided by ACCESS training was the most important part of the training process. She said the value of training was also being able to talk about the "here and now," in talking with colleagues about similar problems in working with limited-English proficient youth and adults.

Summary. Comprehensible instruction in English techniques provided the resource person with the ability to communicate with students whose primary language was not English. Diversity training heightened their awareness of personal issues that affect learning.

Question 6. Would you recommend ACCESS training to others? Why or why not?

Sharon says she is torn on that issue. If the training had been structured differently, she would say yes. She felt that the diversity training needed to take the entire week. The introduction of other topics fragmented the training. She felt the need for more information on the group process that was used to explore diversity issues. Diversity consultants should have stayed the entire time.

Nancy would recommend ACCESS training to others. She did feel that the project had some gaps in it. The first training session was too jammed packed and there was not enough processing time, and they would have to avoid this in their retreat. She would chew off a smaller piece at a time. She would separate diversity and ESL into two issues. The people became emotionally raw because the issues surrounding diversity were not resolved. A result of people becoming so emotionally raw was defiance, fear, and disobedience. They found themselves trying to second guess the trainers to find the hidden agenda. It became a big ENCOUNTER group and the facilitators were not ready to handle it. The participants became a little scared and several were pretty devastated in the end. What they learned was that skilled professionals must be able to support and facilitate any discussions of diversity; such discussions are potentially dangerous, so everyone needs to feel safe before speaking openly. Nancy concluded that closure is very necessary and that they didn't get that. They will continue working as pairs to provide support. Information on preparing a portfolio should have been given to the participants earlier in the year.

Janet would recommend ACCESS training. The second summer institute started to bring closure to activities begun in the first institute. During the first session they thought there was a hidden agenda and felt that it was never made clear in the beginning what was expected of them. They were surprised by the additional assignments that they received between the first and second institutes and wanted the obligations of the resource persons to be made explicit in the beginning. She got a lot out of the training. It was a rich group of people. It has been one step on a path for her. She has done some of it before and she will continue to do more.

Summary. Diversity is an issue that can arouse anger and behind that anger is a lot of pain from personal experience. Facilitators must be trained and able to handle sensitive issues as they arise and to bring closure to difficult situations. Diversity issues tend to border on the therapeutic, so they should be raised only in an atmosphere of trust and safety. Trainees need to feel safe before they can express feelings openly. It is important to start slowly and allow participants to process information at their own rates and to have time to get to know one another and to feel comfortable. It is important not to overload participants with large amounts of information. It is important to avoid letting any situation become an encounter group unless a skilled therapist is present because of the nature of the subject matter. Educators and counselors, by and large, are not trained as therapists.

Conclusions

Diversity is such an important issue that it must be incorporated or infused into any training program that works with limited-English proficient adults. It is a separate issue from second language instruction and adequate time needs to be devoted to each. What is going on in a person's life during these experiences affects what they are capable of doing and learning and affects their relationships with other people.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE INITIATIVES

The Case Study Evaluation of Training for ACCESS offers the following recommendations to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

Incorporate a diversity component in instructor training projects that provides mentoring experiences with teachers skilled in teaching in multicultural classrooms.

At the core of the education system is how an instructor relates with students. Evaluation results confirm this thinking. What the case study instructors wanted most from their training was an understanding of how to handle sensitive cultural issues as they arise and to bring closure to difficult situations. Mentoring experiences in a multicultural classroom, for those who are already sensitized to diversity issues, can provide invaluable opportunities for instructors to watch other instructors deal with sensitive issues and to model such practices later on in their own classrooms.

Include institutional administration as a part of the design component of instructor training projects concerned with innovation and change.

The administrator has a role that extends beyond the classroom and which can ease the bureaucratic burdens that are often encountered with major change programs. Administrators can provide facilities and set aside time for staff development. Financial support for materials, supplies, and audio-visuals indicates a commitment to the goals of instructor training projects.

For instructor training projects seeking change, allow ample time for assessing potential participants and their organizations so that their needs and readiness for training are compatible with the goals and objectives of the project.

Evaluation results indicated that the training project was an organized means for the delivery of instruction to instructors but that its ability to promote change was largely dependent on the readiness of those who participated in the training. Those who are ready for training were most likely to achieve the change goals of the project. Those who are not ready may have produced change but were less likely to do so and with scattered results.

Characteristics of readiness include:

- a positive attitude—participants must want the training
- a recognition of the need for personal change—awareness that past practices must be modified for new conditions
- a recognition of the need for institutional change—participants must recognize areas needing improvement in their institutions and programs.

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