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ABSTRACT

This document details the Ohio Department of Education's Adult Basic Education and Literacy Education indicators of program quality. A chart details the measures and performance standards for the following quality indicators: learners will demonstrate progress toward attaining basic skills/competencies supporting their educational goals; learners will acquire life skills competencies and demonstrate enhancement of personal and social development; learners will advance in programs or complete requirements for further education/training; programs will be housed in physical environments that are safe, accessible, and appropriate for/conducive to teaching adults; the program planning process will be ongoing and participatory, guided by evaluation, and based on a written plan that considers community demographics, needs, resources, and economic and technological trends; curriculum and instruction will be geared to individual learning styles and needs; programs will have an ongoing professional development process that is based on staff needs and includes opportunities for follow-up; programs will identify and provide (either directly or through referral) support services needed by learners; programs will recruit from those populations identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services; and learners will participate in programs until their learner-centered goals are met. (MN)

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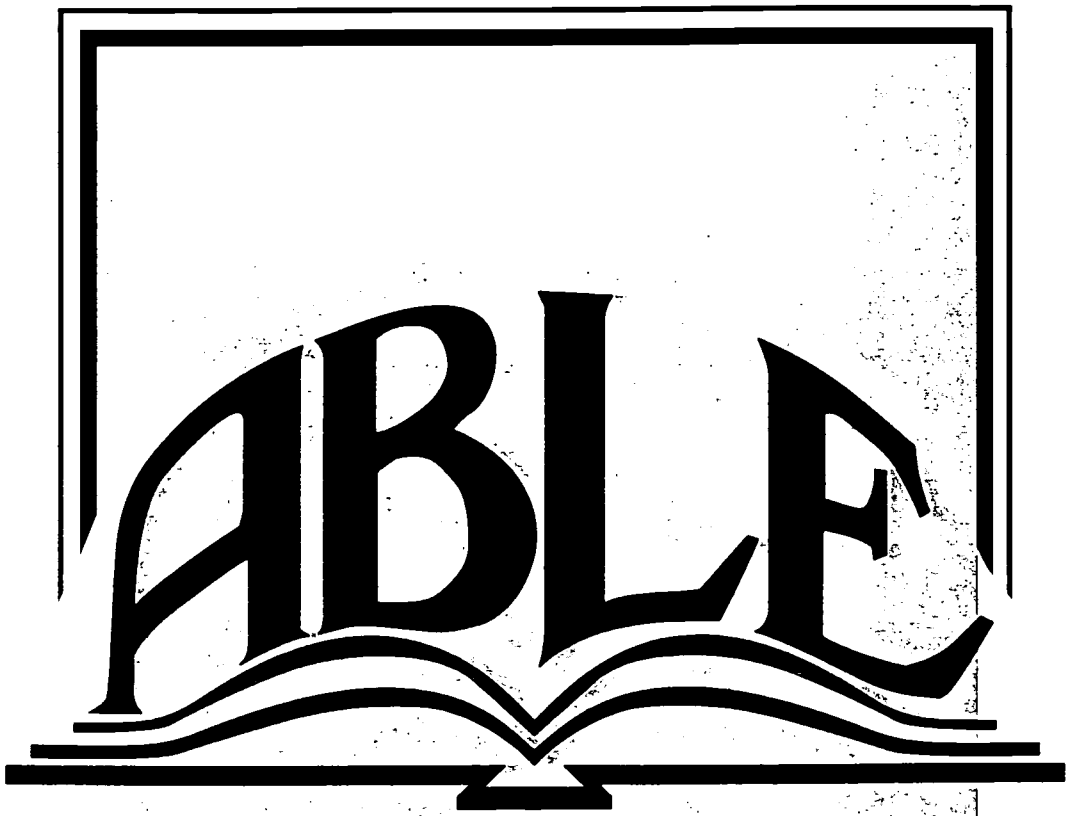
Indicators of Program Quality



Adult Basic and Literacy Education

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Model Indicators of Program Quality for Adult Education Programs

Overview

The Adult Education Act establishes the federal role in supporting the provision of basic skills instruction to educationally disadvantaged adults. The Act authorizes the US. Department of Education to provide basic grants to states that support local instruction to adults in adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), and English-as-second-language (ESL) programs. The Act also promotes quality in state and local programs through requirements for program evaluation. The most recent amendments to the Act, embodied in the National Literacy Act of 1991, highlight the importance of program quality by requiring that

> Within one year after the enactment of the National Literacy Act of 1991, the Secretary, in consultation with appropriate experts, educators and administrators, shall develop indicators of program quality that may be used by State and local programs receiving assistance under this title as models by which to judge the success of such programs, including success in recruitment and retention of students and improvement in the literacy skills of students. Such indicators shall take into account different conditions under which programs operate and shall be modified as better means of assessing program quality are developed (Section 361 (c) of the Adult Education Act).

In addition, the National Literacy Act requires that states develop and implement their own indicators of program quality to be used to evaluate programs assisted under this title "to determine whether such programs are effective, including whether such programs are successfully recruiting, retaining and improving the literacy skills of the individuals served in such programs" (Section 331 [a][2] of the Adult Education Act). The indicators must be integrated into the state's evaluation system for local programs. States have until July 1993 to develop and implement their indicators.

Quality Indicators, Measures, and Performance Standards

The National Literacy Act specified that indicators were to be developed in the areas of recruitment, retention, and learning gains. In addition, the Department identified two general topic areas for which indicators were to be developed: program process and content, and student outcomes. *Program process and content* refers to components of the program that define how it operates, such as program planning, recruitment of students, intake, assessment, staff characteristics, curriculum and instructional content, materials and equipment, assessment of student progress, evaluation, and follow-up. *Student outcomes* refers to the impact of the program on students, such as learning gains and goal attainment.

To guide the development of the model indicators, the Department established a framework for the quality indicator development process. It was especially important to distinguish *quality indicators* from *measures* and *performance standards*. The three terms are often used interchangeably, yet they differ conceptually. Defining them clarified the development process and the meaning of a quality indicator.

Quality Indicator. A quality indicator is a variable that reflects effective and efficient program performance. Indicators were defined for each of the above topics.

Measures. A measure is defined as the data used to determine the quantitative level of performance. For example, retention may be measured by the number of hours students remain in the program.

Performance Standards. A performance standard defines a level of acceptable performance in terms of a specific numeric criterion. For example, a retention performance standard may be established for a single point in time or to measure changes in performance over time.

To meet the requirements of the National Literacy Act, the Department limited its work to the development of model indicators of program quality, although some sample measures were also developed to clarify the quality indicators. States may select their own specific measures and standards of program performance after they have developed their own indicators of program quality.

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INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
1.1 Learners demonstrate progress toward attainment of basic skills and competencies that support their educational goals.	Learners' performance on standardized and/or competency assessment instruments or alternative assessments such as teacher and learner reports of achievement, student surveys, student journals, and student performance.	At least 70% of all students show progress in basic skills and competencies based on one or more of the following: 1. standardized tests 2. competency assessment 3. student surveys 4. student journals 5. student performance 6. teacher and learner reports of achievement
1.2 Learners acquire life-skills competencies and demonstrate enhancement of personal and social development.	Learners' performance as measured by life-skills competency checklist, life-skills activities, and/or documentation of improvement of personal and social skills and attitudes.	At least 70% of all students show progress in life skills and personal and social development based on: 1. life-skills competency checklist 2. life-skills activities 3. documentation of personal and social skills

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
1.3 Learners advance in the instructional program or complete educational requirements that allow them to continue their education or training.	Number and/or percent of learners who advance to higher level skills and competencies in the adult education program.	Average range of 18-28% rate for student advancement (skill level or competency) or average range of 10-20% of candidates enrolled in GED classes receive GED or Adult High School Diploma.

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
2.0 Program is housed in a physical environment that is safe, accessible, appropriate for adults, and conducive to teaching adults.	Students, teachers and administrators feel classrooms are lit so that learners can read comfortably.	Meets individual student's needs.
	Students, teachers, and administrators feel that buildings are readily identifiable as instructional sites and posted directions to classrooms are present.	1. Clear verbal and written directions to the building are available 2. Interior sign at the entrance identifies the room number 3. Signage must be visible 4. The room itself is identified by sign
	Facility and grounds are clean and well maintained, secure, and free from hazards. Facility is in compliance with fire and safety laws and regulations for facilities' normal use.	Students and staff evaluate this measure with a checklist.
	Facility is accessible to learners and (1) on a bus line, if available, (2) accessible to persons with disabilities, (3) has adequate parking, (4) is in an area where the target audience lives.	1. On a bus line, if available 2. Accessible to persons with disabilities 3. Has adequate parking 4. Is in an area where the target audience lives
	The facility maintains temperature and noise levels which are conducive to teaching and learning.	Students and staff evaluate this measure with a checklist

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INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
3.0 Program planning is a planning process that is ongoing and participatory; guided by evaluation; and based on a written plan that considers community demographics, needs, resources, and economic and technological trends and is implemented.	Use of data reflecting community needs	1. Presence of census data 2. Presence of data on poverty levels 3. Presence of data on education levels and dropout rates
	Community has input into the planning process	1. Community environmental scan/needs assessment completed every two years 2. Advisory committee meets formally for planning at least two times a year and meetings and minutes are taken 3. Monthly staff planning meetings and minutes are taken
	Existence of a plan that specifies program goals and objectives and is regularly reviewed and revised	Completed annually or biannually
	Existence of a plan that provides services matched to community needs	1. 100% of sites serving at least 80% of students most in need 2. 100% of sites teaching basic skills in response to documented community needs 3. 100% of sites teaching basic skills in response to participants' goals
	Level of congruence between planned activities and actual activities	75% congruence between stated goals and objectives and reported outcomes
	Existence of local program evaluation component and evidence that results affect the plan	1. Availability of local formative and summative evaluation data such as effectiveness of recruitment activities and effectiveness of instructional approaches 2. Written response to on-site reviews and other performance reports 3. Written annual plan that considers findings from local evaluation

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
4.0 Program has curriculum and instruction geared to individual learning styles and needs.	Use of student assessment information to guide the instructional progress. Existence of student long-and short-term goals linked to decisions regarding instructional materials, approaches, and strategies. Instructional content addresses educational needs and goals of individual students. Variety of instructional strategies used and flexibility with which they are used, based on individual learning styles and needs.	Instructional materials chosen correlate with skill levels as determined by appropriate assessment instruments. 1. student-teacher conferences 2. anecdotal records 3. student information forms 4. teacher logs Instructional materials chosen are consistent with student goals and skill levels as indicated by assessment and documentation of student goals. Instructional strategies chosen are consistent with individual learning styles and needs as indicated by teacher-student conference, anecdotal records based on observation, and/or assessment.

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
5.0 Program has an ongoing professional development process that considers the specific need of its staff and volunteers, offers training in the skills necessary to provide quality instruction, and includes opportunities for systematic follow-up.	Individual program staff needs assessment is conducted annually.	Have on file documentation of staff responses.
	All new and current staff will participate in a minimum of two local, consortia, regional, or state staff development activities annually.	Have on file documentation of attendance and agenda.
	Training will be provided for all new instructional staff members during their first year with the program.	Have on file documentation of participation in new teacher training such as (1) video presentations, (2) peer assistance, (3) mentor-shadowing, (4) follow-up by regional resource center staff, (5) combination of above.
	A plan for staff evaluation must be implemented by every program.	1. Formal written instrument to be used. 2. Evidence of collaboration between the evaluator and the evaluatee (e.g. signatures of both)

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
6.0 Program identifies learners' need for support services and makes services available to students directly or through referral to other educational and service agencies with which the program coordinates.	Presence of agreements or linkages between the program and other educational and social service providers.	1. Linkages exist with community support agencies such as County Departments of Human Services, JTPA offices, Community Action Agencies, Crisis Centers, Substance Abuse Counseling, Mental Health Services, Emergency Services, Job Placement/ Employment Services, Child Care, and Transportation Services 2. A listing of community support services is available to staff and students
	Presence of a process for identifying student support service needs.	A mechanism is in place for referral and follow-up.
	Student referrals to appropriate agencies for support services.	Documentation of referrals will be evident by both number and type.

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
7.0 Program successfully recruits from the population in the community identified in the Adult Education Act as needing literacy services.	Percentage of target population enrolled compared with the demographics of the service area.	1. No less than 80% of the learners enrolled shall be level I and II 2. No less than 2% of the total target population in the service area shall be enrolled
	Percentage of target population enrolled compared with the state demographics.	No less than 2% of the target population in the state shall be enrolled.
	Percentage of target population enrolled compared with the state average.	

INDICATOR	MEASURES	STANDARDS
8.0 Learners participate in the program until learner-centered goals are met.	Percent of learners who meet their learner-centered goals.	Percent of learners who meet their learner-centered goals shall be no less than 40%. The goal-setting process should include: 1. Mandatory career assessment, assessment, short- and long-term goals 2. Updating goals with teachers and counseling as needed 3. Goal setting beyond agency requirements 4. Happens during first class 5. Student-centered learning

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