DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 465 890 CE 083 536

TITLE	Adult General Education Performance Improves; However, Placement Rates Need Improvement and the State's Residency Policy Needs Definition. OPPAGA Program Review. Report.
INSTITUTION	Florida State Legislature, Tallahassee. Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.
REPORT NO	OPPAGA-R-02-33
PUB DATE	2002-06-00
NOTE	17p.; Project was conducted by Deborah Wagar and supervised by Jane Fletcher.
AVAILABLE FROM	OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 West Madison St., Room 312, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475. Tel: 850-488-0021; Tel: 800-531-2477 (Toll Free); Fax: 850-487-3804; e-mail: oppaga@mail, Web site: http://oppaga.state.fl.us. For full text: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/educ/r02-33s.html.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Persistence; Accountability; *Adult Education; Adult Learning; Adult Literacy; Adult Programs; Audits (Verification); Basic Skills; Community Colleges; Definitions; Delivery Systems; Disabilities; *Educational Attainment; Educational Policy; English (Second Language); *General Education; High School Equivalency Programs; *Literacy Education; Outcomes of Education; Policy Formation; Prevocational Education; Program Effectiveness; Public Policy; School Districts; Secondary Education; *Statewide Planning; Two Year Colleges; Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Florida

ABSTRACT

The adult general education programs administered by the Division of Workforce Development in Florida's Department of Education were subjected to a justification review. To assess the programs' performance, the number of literacy completion points (LCPs) earned by each program and system and the number of LCPs earned per enrollee were analyzed. The analysis established that both community college and school district adult education programs have demonstrated measurable improvement in literacy completion. Both the community college and school district systems attained higher numbers of LCPs and generated more LCPs per student in the academic year 1999-2000 than in that of 1998-1999. Both systems also improved in LCPs per student in adult high school and adult basic programs, and both systems produced comparable numbers of LCPs per General Education Development student in the 1999-2000 school year. However, school district job and education placement rates remained low for adult basic education and English for speakers of other languages programs, department guidelines for assessing and documenting student progress were not being consistently applied among institutions, and school district adult education programs lacked a clearly defined and enforced statewide residency requirement. Nine exhibits are included. A list of community colleges and school districts in each of Florida's workforce development regions is appended. (MN)

oppaga

Program Review

June 2002 Report No. 02-33

Adult General Education Performance Improves; However, Placement Rates Need Improvement and the State's Residency Policy Needs Definition

at a glance

Florida's adult general education programs are operated by school districts and community colleges. Both community colleges and school districts improved their performance in terms of the number of literacy completion points earned by students between 1998-99 and 1999-00. Yet, school district placement rates are low for adult basic and English for Speakers of Other Languages programs.

School districts and community colleges have acted to improve their adult general education programs, including strengthening student retention efforts. Some of the apparent performance improvement could reflect better record keeping in tracking student progress.

Although the state's performance funding initiative is a key aspect of improving student outcomes, department guidelines for assessing student progress leading to outcomes are not being consistently applied by the institutions.

The lack of a clear statewide residency requirement and statewide procedures for documenting residency can lead to the state providing free education programs to non-residents who are required to pay the full cost of instruction.

Purpose

This report reviews the adult general education programs administered by the Division of Workforce Development in the Department of Education and is part of the justification review of the Workforce Development Education Program required by s. 11.513, *Florida Statutes*. In this report, we provide a description of the program and identify conclusions and recommendations for the effective delivery of these services.

Background

In 2000, nearly two million Floridians over the age of 18 did not have a high school diploma, and more than 1.7 million Florida adults had reading skills below the eighth-grade level. Florida's adult education programs help address this problem by enabling adults to acquire basic skills necessary to attain basic and functional literacy, as well as training and education to allow them to become employable, productive citizens. Specific services for adult education students are described below

- **Adult basic education** provides instruction to improve students' employability through instruction in mathematics, reading, language, and workforce readiness skills at a grade-level equivalency below the ninth grade level.
- **Adult secondary education** provides instruction with high school credit leading to a high school diploma. It also provides courses of instruction preparing students to successfully complete the five General Educational Development subject area tests (mathematics, writing skills, science, literature, and social studies) leading to qualification for a State of Florida high school diploma. Coursework is at the high school grade level.
- **General Educational Development Preparation and Testing Program (GED)** provides instruction to prepare adults to successfully complete the five subject area tests leading to qualification for a State of Florida high school diploma.
- **Vocational-Preparatory Instruction** provides students with instruction to attain academic and workforce readiness skills ranging from functional literacy through the eighth grade level or higher, so that students may pursue certificate career education (vocational education leading to a certificate) or higher-level career education.
- **Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)/Adult English as a Second Language** provides non-credit English language courses designed to improve students' employability by developing communication skills and cultural competencies that enhance the ability to read, write, speak, and listen in English.
- **Adults with Disabilities** provides specialized services to disabled adult general education students. Areas of instruction include literacy, work-related behaviors, and daily living skills, with the goal of the student participating in home and community activities or obtaining employment.
- **Workplace Readiness Skills** provides basic skills necessary to function in entry-level occupations or to receive training for technological advances in the workplace.

According to Florida law, adult general education programs are designed to improve the employability skills of the state's workforce. [1]

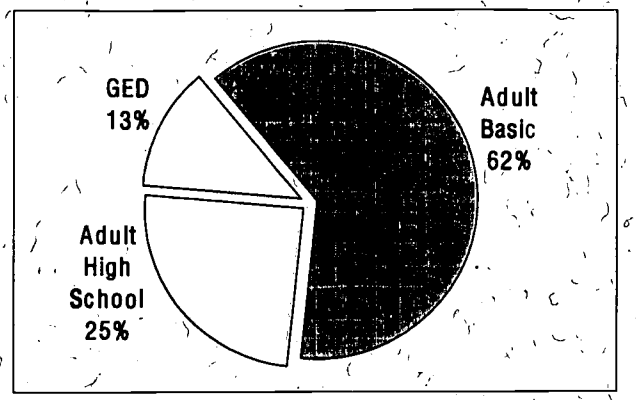
Florida's adult general education program is part of a dual-delivery system for postsecondary workforce education programs. In this system, both school districts and community colleges provide adult general education programs. [2] These programs are provided at vocational-technical centers, county adult education centers, or high school or community college campuses. Community colleges and school districts also contract with private organizations, such as churches, hospitals, and volunteer organizations. The providers also establish partnerships with their local workforce board one-stop centers to provide literacy, job counseling, and placement services.

Adult education programs funded by the Workforce Development Education Fund served over 365,000 adults in 2000-01. School districts served most (87%) of those students. Most community college and school district adult education students are enrolled in adult basic education programs, followed by adult high school and GED, as seen in Exhibit 1.

[1] Section 239.115(1)(a), *Florida Statutes.*

[2] Twenty of the 28 community colleges and 57 of the 67 school districts provide adult general education programs. See Appendix A for a listing of county school districts and community colleges that provide adult education. programs.

Exhibit 1
Most 2000-01 Adult Education Students Were Enrolled in Adult Basic Education Programs



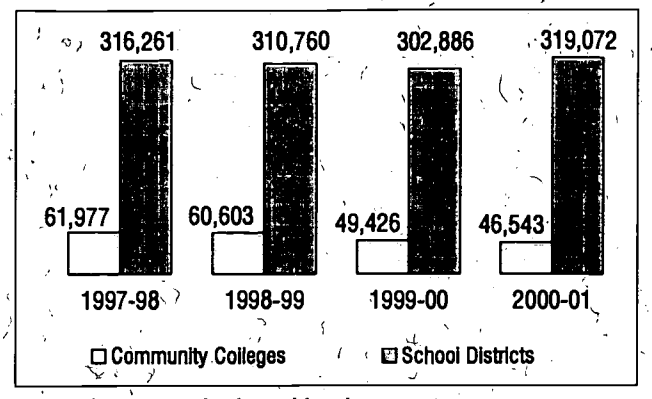
Note: Adult Basic Education includes ESOL, Vocational ESOL, Citizenship, and Workplace Readiness Skills since these programs are not provided separately in the community college database. Vocational Preparatory Instruction is also added to this category. Duplicated enrollment is used for this chart since some students may be enrolled in more than one program.

Source: OPPAGA analysis using data from Workforce Education Outcome and Information Services and Division of Community Colleges.

Adult education enrollments decreased between Fiscal Years 1997-98 and 1999-2000, as shown in Exhibit 2. Enrollments decreased in all workforce development education programs during the latter part of the 1990s due to the corresponding improvement in the economy. When jobs are plentiful and employers are seeking workers, educational enrollments tend to decrease. Enrollment decreases could also be attributed to 1998 Legislative action removing $20 million in the adult disabled appropriation from the budget. The following year, the Legislature distributed the adult disabled funds through a competitive process. The 1999 funds shifted from being based on enrollment to funding for a variety of adult disabled activities and services. These services did not necessarily require enrollment in courses, resulting in an artificial enrollment decrease.

However, program enrollments increased by 3.8% in Fiscal Year 2000-01, reflecting the recent downturn in the economy and resulting return of displaced people to school in order to improve their job skills.

Exhibit 2
School District Enrollment Increased in 2000-01 After Three Fiscal Years of Decline



Note: This is an unduplicated headcount.

Source: OPPAGA analysis using data from Workforce Education Outcome and Information Services and Division of Community Colleges.

In Fiscal Year 2001-02, a total of $271.8 million in state and federal funds were allocated for adult general education programs. State general revenue comprises 89% of total funding. (See Exhibit 3.)

Exhibit 3
Funding Sources for Adult General Education

Adult General Education Funding	Fiscal Year 2001-02
Community College Adult General Education Programs	
General Funding	$. 33,308,050
Performance-Based Funding	5,386,199
Total Community College Funding	38,694,249
School District Adult General Education Programs	
General Funding	156,957,880
Performance-Based Funding	28,376,193
Total School District Funding	185,334,073
Total Adult General Education Funding from Workforce Development Education Funds	**$224,028,322**
Workforce Education Programs for Adults with Disabilities	18,508,431
Total General Revenue Funding	**$242,536,753**
Federal Adult Education Funding	
Adult Basic Education Federal Flow-Through Funds from Educational Aids Trust Fund	$23,457,545
English Literacy and Civics Education Grant under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act	5,799,872
Total Federal Funding	**$29,257,417**
Total State and Federal Adult General Education Funding	**$271,794,170**

Source: Department of Education and Chapters 2001-253 and 2001-367, *Laws of Florida*.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 1999-00, adult education general revenue funds were allocated through the Division of Workforce Development by a funding formula, which is based upon prior year funding (85%) and the attainment of literacy completion points and reported placements (15%). Literacy completion points, or LCPs, were developed as benchmarks of student accomplishment and are earned when students demonstrate that they have mastered certain skills. Literacy completion points earned by students in targeted populations (disabled, economically disadvantaged, or students enrolled in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs) are weighted higher than LCPs earned by non-targeted students. These weights provide higher funding since targeted populations frequently have lower literacy skills and require more time and effort on the part of the institution to generate LCPs. [3]

Adult general education programs use four measures for the attainment of literacy completion points: [4]

- grade level/scale score improvements measured by an approved test;
- improvements in literacy or workforce readiness skills;
- successful completion of curriculum frameworks and course performance standards; or
- attainment of GED or an adult high school diploma. [5]

Unlike other workforce development education programs, most adult general education students do not pay fees. Florida law specifies that adult general education programs are free to students who meet certain criteria, to include [6]

- students who do not have a high school diploma; and
- students who have a high school diploma but have academic skills at or below an eighth grade level on an approved assessment instrument.

However, fees are charged in certain situations. Adults who do not meet the criteria listed above, or who are taking classes for personal interest or enrichment rather than improving workplace skills, must pay fees. Literacy completion points attained by these individuals are not to be reported, as they are not considered students under the Workforce Development Program.

Non-resident students must also pay fees. As shown in Exhibit 4, the department requires that non-resident students pay both the standard fee plus tuition. Non-resident students generate LCPs.

Exhibit 4
Non-Residents Pay Higher Fees

	Standard Fee ($0.62 Per Contact Hour*)	Tuition ($1.84 Per Contact Hour)
Residents	X	
Non-Residents	X	X

*There are 30 contact hours in one credit hour.

Source: Division of Workforce Development, Department of Education.

Findings

Both systems have demonstrated measurable improvement in literacy completion, yet school district job and education placement rates are low for adult basic and ESOL programs

The performance of community college and school district adult education programs for purposes of allocating performance-based funding is based on

- the number of literacy completion points and

[3] Please see OPPAGA Report No. 01-56 for a more thorough discussion of the performance funding formula and literacy completion points.

[4] A listing of Literacy Completion Points for each program may be accessed at http://www.firn.edu/doe/dwdframe/ad/ad_frame.htm.

[5] Rule 6A-6.014, *Florida Administrative Code.*

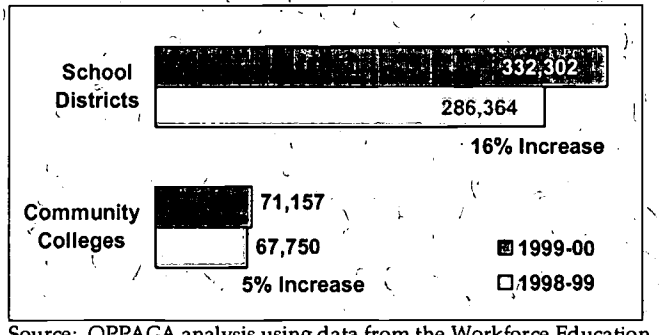
[6] Section 239.117, *F.S.*

- the number of job and educational placements of students who complete programs. Adult education placements are generated when students find employment or re-enroll in other adult education programs at a higher level, or other programs, such as vocational certificate. [7]

We assessed the performance of the adult general education program by analyzing the number of literacy completion points earned by each program and system and the number of literacy completion points earned per enrollee.

Community colleges and school districts increased the average number of literacy completion points despite declining enrollments. As shown in Exhibit 5, school districts increased the number of LCPs awarded by 16% and community colleges by 5% from Fiscal Year 1998-99 to 1999-00. This occurred despite a 5% drop in student enrollment during this period. This increase in performance shows that both community colleges and school districts have been more successful in advancing students through their programs and increasing student skills, since awarding of LCPs equates to mastery of skills. Improvements in data reporting are also likely responsible for this increase.

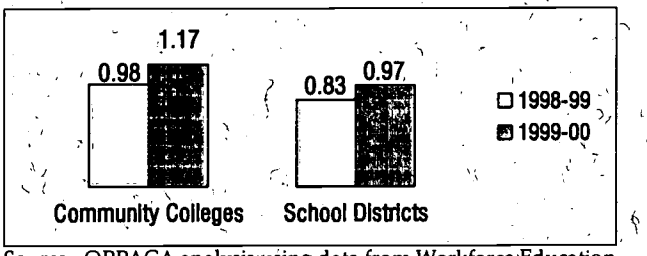
Exhibit 5
Both Systems Attained Higher Numbers of Literacy Completion Points (LCPs) Between 1998-99 and 1999-00



Source: OPPAGA analysis using data from the Workforce Education and Outcome Information Services, Department of Education.

Community colleges and school districts also increased the average number of LCPs per enrollee. Students in adult education programs also, on the average, earned more literacy completion points during the period. From Fiscal Year 1998-99 to 1999-00, community colleges increased the number of LCPs earned per enrollee from 0.98 to 1.17, while school districts increased LCPs from 0.83 to 0.97 per enrollee. (See Exhibit 6. [8]) This is important, as it shows that the programs have provided more benefit to individual students and have improved data reporting, as noted earlier.

Exhibit 6
Both Systems Generated More Literacy Completion Points Per Student in 1999-00



Source: OPPAGA analysis using data from Workforce Education and Outcome Information Services, Department of Education.

As shown in Exhibit 7, both systems improved in the number of LCPs per enrollee for adult high school and adult basic education programs. Community colleges performed better than school districts in the adult high school program. Community colleges generated 1.73 LCPs per adult high school student while school districts generated 1.39.

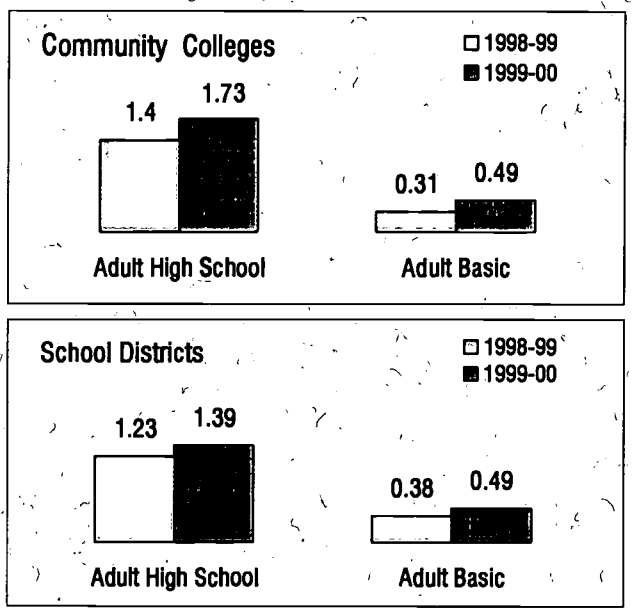
Smaller gains were made in the adult basic education category, which includes ESOL programs. Fewer numbers of LCPs are earned in adult basic programs due to the literacy level of the student. Many adult basic and ESOL students have to be brought up to an educable level before proceeding with their programs. Further, institutional administrators report that

[7] The Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) of the Division of Technology, Department of Education, collects job placement data.

[8] We excluded data for school districts that showed enrollments with few or no LCPs reported. These school districts include Hendry, Liberty, Nassau, and Okaloosa.

many of these students do not earn even one LCP.

Exhibit 7
Both Systems Improved in Literacy Completion Points Per Student in Adult High School and Adult Basic Programs



Note: Adult Basic Education includes ESOL, Vocational ESOL, Citizenship, Workplace Readiness Skills, and Vocational Preparatory Instruction. Duplicated enrollment is used for this chart, since some students may be enrolled in more than one program.

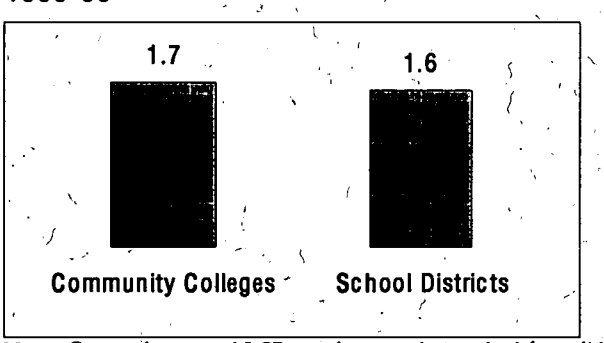
Source: OPPAGA analysis using data from Workforce Education and Outcome Information Service and Division of Community Colleges.

We analyzed literacy completion points for the GED program separately since they are awarded differently than those earned in adult high school and adult basic programs. LCPs for GED students are the only completion performances based on several elements, to include a statewide data match by Social Security number. LCPs earned by GED students are awarded to all institutions who have provided supporting instructional services to the student over the previous two years. LCPs are awarded only after students pass any of the five subtests of the Official GED Test.

Since LCPs are awarded through data matching, institutions may earn GED literacy completion points from a variety of instructional programs, even if the student is not enrolled in a GED program. For example, if a student enrolls in an adult basic education course for the purpose of strengthening math skills before taking the GED test, the institution will receive credit for a GED literacy completion point when the student passes the official test. For purposes of this report, we analyzed only the LCPs generated by students enrolled in GED preparation programs. These students can earn up to six LCPs toward receiving their GED diplomas; one LCP for each of the five subtests and one for the Official GED Test.

Of the students enrolled in community college and school district GED preparation programs in 1999-00, less than one third passed subtests toward their GED. This results in low numbers of students receiving their diploma within the two-year period that performance data was collected for this group. As shown in Exhibit 8, community colleges and school districts produced comparable numbers of LCPs per GED student, with community colleges generating an average of 1.7 LCPs per GED student while school districts generated 1.6.

Exhibit 8
Both Systems Produced Comparable Numbers of Literacy Completion Points Per GED Student in 1999-00



Note: Counts for earned LCPs are for records matched for valid Social Security numbers only. LCPs include test passers and GED recipients.

Source: Analysis completed by Division of Workforce Development.

Community colleges and school districts took several steps to improve performance. Community colleges and school districts reported that they had taken several steps to attain these performance gains. Most notably, the institutions took steps to improve student retention in their programs, including hiring additional personnel to work with students and keep them on track in their programs. Some institutions also provided incentives to keep students motivated, such as holding celebrations and presenting students with LCP certificates as a reward for moving up to the next competency level.

Community colleges' success in increasing LCPs for adult high school students was attributed to the fact that several colleges have created co-enrolled adult high school programs that place students on a fast track toward completion. For instance, one community college has an eight-week session, allowing students to take two, or even three courses at a time. While students at other institutions are allowed to work at their own pace, students at this particular institution are provided a structured program with expectations as to what they need to accomplish to finish their courses. Students progress rapidly through their programs, resulting in the institution generating more LCPs.

It should be noted that part of the reported performance improvement could reflect better data reporting, as well as actual performance gains. Adult education administrators said that their institutions stressed the importance of thoroughly documenting and reporting student progress, and had developed new data systems, provided training to instructors and staff, and improved procedures necessary to report LCPs. However, some school districts are still experiencing problems in reporting completion data. For example, enrollment and performance data generated by the department revealed that several school districts reported program enrollments, yet the performance data revealed that these students generated few or no LCPs. The department continues to work with these institutions to identify and correct data reporting problems.

Overall, local and state administrators report substantial improvement in data collection and reporting for adult education programs, as evidenced by the overall increase in the number of LCPs reported.

Placement rates were lowest for adult basic education and ESOL completers. Community colleges had a higher overall placement rate of 72.7%, compared to the school districts at 57.7%. Placement rates are lower in the school district programs since they serve higher numbers of students who possess lower literacy and job skills. School district enrollments include large numbers of ESOL students who may be new to the workplace (or this country) and require extra time to become acculturated to the workplace. As a result, school district ESOL students generate few placements since they are more difficult to place in jobs and are less likely to continue on to higher education.

As shown in Exhibit 9, placement rates for adult basic education and ESOL programs were the lowest for both systems, with 52.5% school district and 71.4% community college completers placed. It is important to note that the placement rates shown in Exhibit 9 are derived from only those students who had generated literacy completion points. Therefore, the placement percentage is based on only a portion of the total number of students served.

School district placement rates were significantly lower than those of community colleges in the adult basic/ESOL category, which included workplace readiness skills, vocational ESOL, and citizenship.

Exhibit 9
Adult Basic Education and English for Speakers of Other Languages Programs Generated the Lowest Percentage of Placements in for Both Systems in 2000-01

Percentage of 1999-00 Enrollees Who Generated Completions in 1999-00 and Placements in 2000-01				
	Adult Secondary Education[1]	Adult Basic Education and ESOL[2]	Vocational Preparatory Instruction	Total
Community Colleges				
Percentage of Enrollees Who Earned Completions (LCPs)[3]	22.0%	32.9%	16.0%	27.4%
Percentage of Completers Who Were Placed[4]	73.3%	71.4%	86.4%	72.7%
School Districts				
Percentage of Enrollees Who Earned Completions (LCPs)	13.4%	27.8%	38.3%	23.8%
Percentage of Completers Who Were Placed	71.4%	52.5%	85.3%	57.7%

[1]Category includes Adult High School and GED.

[2]Category includes Vocational ESOL, Citizenship, Workforce Readiness Skills, and Adult Learning Services.

[3] Completion rates and the data used in these calculations are program level data, in which students are counted in each program in which they are enrolled.

[4] Placement rates and the data used in these calculations are student level data, in which the student is counted one time.

Source: Analysis completed by Division of Workforce Development.

The highest placement rates were for the Vocational Preparatory Instruction (VPI) programs, with community colleges having 86.4% placements and school districts 85.3%. VPI programs are linked to a vocational certificate program and are designed to prepare students with the reading, writing, mathematics, and employability skills necessary for success in the occupation. As such, students may be more focused on completion and probably possess higher education and skill levels than the Adult Basic Education students.

The adult high school and GED placement rates are higher in both systems, since many GED students obtain their diplomas to meet employer requirements after they are already placed in jobs. Further, GED students may obtain their diplomas for purposes of continuing their education programs.

Community colleges recorded a slightly higher performance in the adult high school and GED placement category. One explanation is that community college students frequently re-enroll in vocational certificate and other programs after completing their adult high school programs. Further, some community college adult high school programs have dual enrollment capability, allowing students to mainstream into their college credit courses.

Department guidelines for assessing and documenting student progress are not being consistently applied among institutions

To ensure that performance funds are fairly allocated to adult general education programs, schools must assess and document student completion of competency levels in a consistent manner. However, community college and school district administrators reported confusion in following department guidelines for assessing and documenting student completion. As a result, schools may be awarding literacy completion points using different standards of student completion.

Community colleges and school districts are required to test students upon enrollment using one of several state-approved assessment instruments to determine at which level they should begin their programs. Department guidelines permit each school district or community college to decide which method or combination of methods to use to measure and document student competencies as the students progress through their programs. These methods include

- **retesting of the student** using a state-approved assessment instrument;

- completion of **checklists** based on the curriculum frameworks, which show intended student outcomes, backed up by supporting documentation; or [9]
- **student portfolios** containing samples of student work demonstrating mastery of the subject.

While the department has a uniform method for institutions to use for testing students upon enrollment, the procedures to gauge whether students earn completion points are not as clearly defined. Use of an assessment instrument is an objective method of measuring student progress, whereas demonstration of progress using checklists and portfolios is more subjective. Institutional administrators are experiencing difficulty determining from the department guidelines what documentation is sufficient to demonstrate at what point students earn completion points when using checklists and portfolios. For example, department guidelines indicate that portfolios "may contain works in progress, writing samples, open-ended or extended response exercises, or extended tasks." Administrators reported difficulty in determining what should be considered an acceptable example of student work to document skill competency. [10]

Further, institutional administrators reported that not all institutions are complying with documentation requirements. For example, the department requires that checklists are signed and dated by the instructor and that supporting documentation of improvement is provided. However, institution administrators reported that some institutions sign and date the checklists, while others only include copies of student work, with no date of completion. Administrators also said that some institutions provide examples of student work to correspond with the checklists, while others do not. Consistency in reporting student progress is needed to ensure that institutions are earning performance funding in an equitable manner, based upon the same criteria.

School district adult education programs lack a clearly defined and enforced statewide residency requirement

Florida law requires that non-resident students enrolled in school district and community college workforce development programs pay the full cost of instruction. [11] The adult education program is one type of workforce development program and is governed by the same residency requirements.

However, Florida law does not define residency requirements for students attending school district workforce development programs. Further, State Board of Education rules do not require school districts to establish residency requirements for workforce development students. Instead, the department encourages school boards to develop residency policies at the local level since proof of residency is required for purposes of charging fees.

While Florida law does not define residency requirements for school district programs, it does define residency requirements for community college students. Florida law requires that a student must reside in the state for one year prior to enrolling to be considered a Florida resident for tuition purposes. In addition, the Division of Community Colleges has guidelines for residency determinations that colleges must follow.

According to program administrators, both community colleges and school district programs attract high numbers of non-resident students. Adult literacy and ESOL programs are frequently a first step for foreign-speaking

[9] The department's Division of Workforce Development produced the Adult Education Program Courses Standards to assist providers in assessing and documenting student progress. This guide contains each program course standard containing the curriculum framework and the accompanying student performance standards. Curriculum frameworks include major concepts, program content, laboratory activities, and intended outcomes for each of the courses within a program.

[10] This issue was also addressed in a 2001 Auditor General report that recommended more uniform guidance in the reporting of student completion data.

[11] Section 239.117, *F.S.*, provides guidelines for charging workforce development postsecondary student fees and requires that non-resident students be charged the full cost of instruction.

non-residents before enrolling in job-training programs.

Clear and enforced residency requirements are needed to ensure that non-resident students pay the full cost of instruction as required in Florida law. School districts are encouraged by the department to develop residency guidelines at the local level. Some districts have established specific guidelines for documenting residency, while others have minimal requirements. For example, several districts we contacted reported that students are required to show proof of residency by producing items such as a utility bill, certificate of domicile, or referral letter from a governmental agency signifying that the student is a Florida resident. Other districts reported that they accept the word of the student that he or she is a Florida resident, requiring no documentation or proof. In one instance, a district administrator reported that students merely sign a registration form and have no formalized procedure to establish residency.[12]

Consistent residency requirements are also needed between community college and school district programs. Inconsistent eligibility requirements between the community colleges and school districts create an uneven playing field in terms of producing literacy completion points. School districts' residency requirements are less restrictive, making it possible for school districts to serve more students without requiring them to pay the full cost of instruction. This may allow school districts to generate more LCPs for ESOL programs which are weighted higher and receive higher performance funding.

The department established a subcommittee of the Practitioner Task Force to address issues related to ESOL students. The subcommittee identified three groups that should be treated as residents for purposes of enrolling in adult education courses:

- non-residents who are eligible for permanent resident visas under the Immigration Nationality Act of 1990,
- non-residents who have been accepted as refugee status; and
- non-residents in the U.S. on work visas, since they pay taxes while they are in this country.

According to the subcommittee's chairman, one Florida school district and two community colleges with large immigrant populations are currently adopting this policy.[13]

Summary and Recommendations

We found that institutions in both community colleges and school districts improved their performance in terms of the number of literacy completion points earned by students between 1998-99 and 1999-00. However, we also found that placement rates were lower in the school district ESOL and adult basic education programs. Low placement rates reflect a need in the areas of student counseling and referral.

We recommend that the department identify and track school districts and community colleges that experience little or no improvement in placement rates. The department should require these institutions to develop and implement local plans for improving counseling and placement services. These plans may include, for example, strengthening efforts to follow up on completers and contact students who drop out of their programs. Ties with other local educational institutions, local workforce boards, and local businesses also should be intensified to assist completers in finding employment or furthering their educations. We further recommend that the department continue to work closely with school districts that are still

[12] In addition to a complaint from a Miami resident, we noted a November 29, 2000, WPLG television news report, *The Investigators: Beating the System*, indicating that foreign tourists in Miami were enrolling in free adult education English classes.

[13] Orange County, Seminole Community College, and Florida Community College at Jacksonville.

experiencing problems in reporting accurate completion data.

We also found that local administrators are loosely interpreting the state guidelines for assessing and documenting student progress. This leads to inconsistencies between institutions in documenting and reporting student completions for funding purposes. To resolve these problems, we recommend that the department provide additional direction and guidance to local administrators who choose to use checklists and student portfolios. Additional assistance would help local administrators determine appropriate examples of student work to use toward documenting student completion of a competency. Further, there would be improved consistency among institutions in how performance funding is earned since there would be more uniformity in awarding LCPs. Improved consistency would also assist students who transfer from one institution to another, since requirements and performance expectations would be consistent.

Presently, Florida law does not define residency requirements for students attending adult education programs provided by school districts while community college adult education students are required to reside in the state for one year prior to enrolling.

We recommend that the legislature identify residency requirements specific to the workforce development education programs offered in both community colleges and school districts. This would provide uniform residency requirements for workforce development programs provided by both systems, and within school district systems.

In identifying residency requirements for workforce development programs, the Legislature has two options. It could establish

- a residency policy that closely aligns with the statutory residency requirements for community college and state universities or
- a residency policy that combines the requirements already in statute with the inclusion of three non-resident groups identified by the subcommittee of the Practitioners' Task Force.

This policy also would provide for more equitable distribution of performance funds since students are admitted to both systems using the same residency criteria.

This statutory requirement would not preclude non-residents and students from taking classes. However, non-residents who do not meet the education criteria will have to pay the full fee amount prescribed by the department, as discussed earlier. Once this policy has been implemented, the department should provide guidance and assistance to the school boards and community colleges in complying with the statute. This would include assistance in establishing methods to collect and report the documentation required to establish residency.

Agency Response

The Commissioner of Education and the Secretary of the Department of Education provided a written response to our preliminary and tentative findings and recommendations. (See Appendix B, page 14, for their response.)

Appendix A

Community Colleges and School Districts in Each Workforce Development Region

Region 1 - Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties
Pensacola Junior College

Region 2 - Okaloosa and Walton Counties
Okaloosa-Walton Community College

Region 3 - Calhoun, Holmes*, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington Counties
Chipola Junior College

Region 4 - Bay, Franklin, and Gulf Counties
Gulf Coast Community College

Region 5 - Gadsden, Leon, and Wakulla Counties
Tallahassee Community College

Region 6 - Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison*, Suwannee, and Taylor Counties
North Florida Junior College

Region 7 - Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist*, and Union Counties
Lake City Community College

Region 8 - Baker, Clay, Duval*, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties
Florida Community College at Jacksonville
St. Johns River Community College

Region 9 - Alachua and Bradford Counties
Santa Fe Community College

Region 10 - Citrus, Levy*, and Marion Counties
Central Florida Community College

Region 11 - Flagler and Volusia* Counties
Daytona Beach Community College

Region 12 - Orange, Osceola, Seminole*, Lake, and Sumter Counties
Lake-Sumter Community College*
Seminole Community College
Valencia Community College*

Region 13 - Brevard County
Brevard Community College*

Region 14 - Pinellas County
St. Petersburg College*

Region 15 - Hillsborough County
Hillsborough Community College

Region 16 - Hernando and Pasco Counties
Pasco-Hernando Community College

Region 17 - Polk County
Polk Community College*

Region 18 - Manatee and Sarasota Counties
Manatee Community College

Region 19 - DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands* Counties
South Florida Community College

Region 20 - Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee*, and St. Lucie* Counties
Indian River Community College

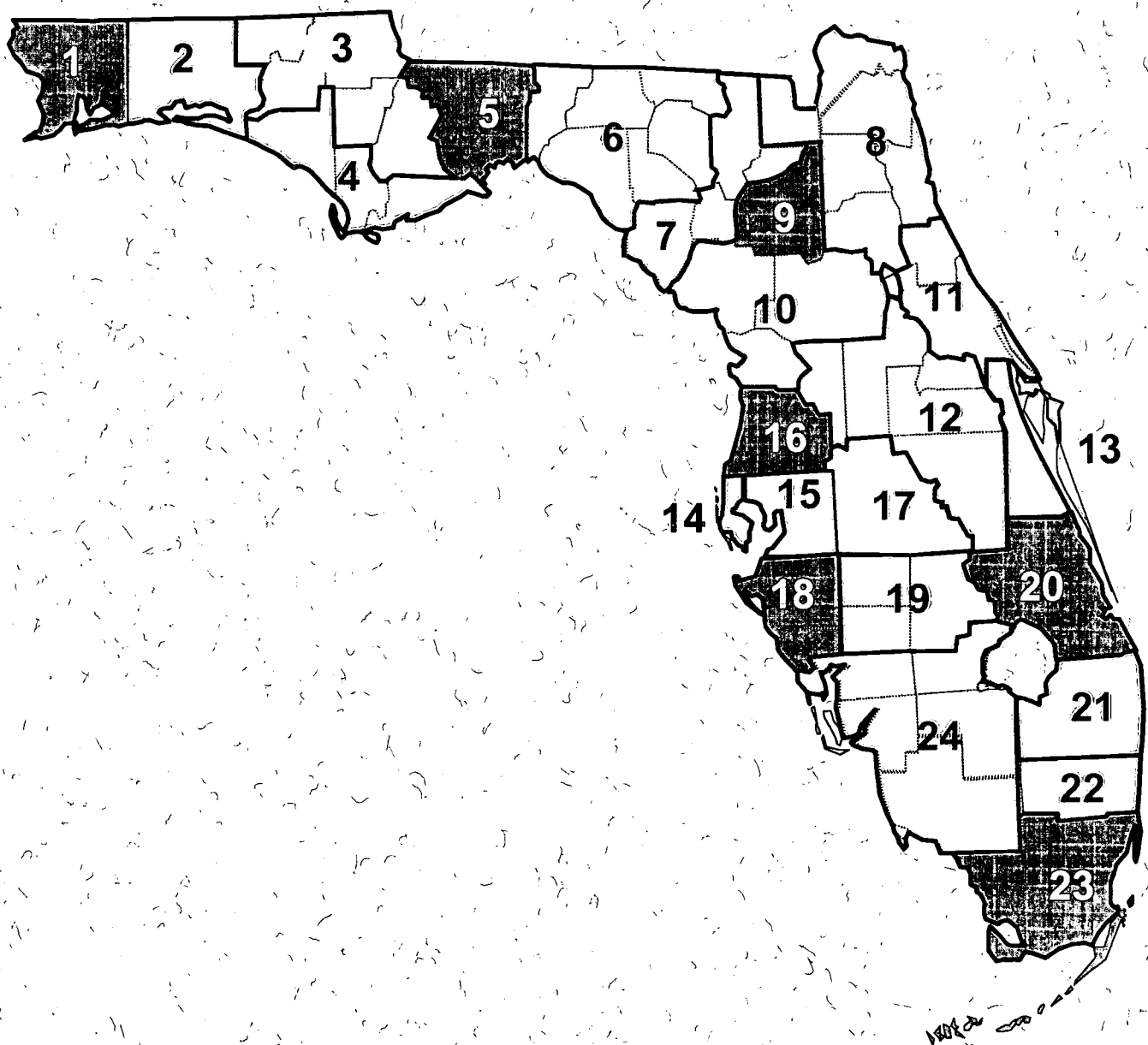
Region 21 - Palm Beach County
Palm Beach Community College*

Region 22 - Broward County
Broward Community College

Region 23 - Dade and Monroe Counties
Florida Keys Community College*
Miami-Dade Community College

Region 24 - Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties
Edison Community College*

*Does not provide adult general education programs with Workforce Development performance funds.


1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24

FLORIDA BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 3, 2002

Mr. John W. Turcotte, Director
Office of Program Policy Analysis
and Government Accountability
111 West Madison Street, Room 312
Claude Pepper Building
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475

Dear Mr. Turcotte:

The Department of Education is appreciative of the hard work and thoroughness of the Justification Review of the Workforce Development Program, referencing Adult General Education. Attached is the Department's official response to this justification review.

If you require additional information please feel free to contact Loretta Costin, Director, Division of Workforce Development.

Sincerely,

/s/	/s/
Jim Horne	Charlie Crist
Secretary	Commissioner

Attachment: Response to Justification Review of Workforce Development Program

MM/dsh

325 W. GAINES STREET
SUITE 1614
TALLASSEE, FL 32399
www.flboe.org
(850) 201-7400

Department of Education Response to OPPAGA Program Review of the Adult Education Program

The Department of Education appreciates the opportunity to comment on the OPPAGA Justification Review and the Department concurs with the statement that the program provides a public benefit and should continue. This program prepares over one million students for employment by providing career and technical education training or literacy instruction.

The Department also concurs with the recommendations regarding the modifications to the Program Performance Measures.

The Department of Education appreciates the willingness of the OPPAGA staff to work with DOE staff in compiling the information contained in this report. The report recognizes on page 1 that ". . .nearly two million Floridians over the age of 18 did not have a high school diploma and more than 1.7 million Florida adults had reading levels below the eighth-grade level." The report also recognizes on page 5 that "Community colleges and school districts increased the average number of literacy completion points despite declining enrollments." School districts and community colleges providing adult education have contributed to increasing the literacy of about one-half million adult Floridians and have embraced accountability and performance.

Section 239.301, Florida Statutes, identifies the priorities for students to be served in adult education. The priorities are based on the adults who have the lowest literacy levels and are, therefore, the most difficult to serve. One of the reasons for lower performance by the school districts with regard to placements is the make up of the student population. School districts serve a larger number of students in the lower literacy levels which are the most difficult to serve. It often takes many years for these students to increase literacy levels or earn a high school diploma, but they can succeed if provided solid instruction and clear information regarding their performance. The development of literacy completion points (LCPs) provides both students and educators increments of academic attainment so that movement between literacy levels can be documented.

Reporting: The Department will continue to work with the state Practitioners' Task Force committees to clarify the guidelines for assessing student progress, to refine the Technical Assistance Papers, and to continue to provide technical assistance to ensure consistency. The department could argue, however; that there is less subjectivity in the awarding of LCPs than in grading any other academic areas.

Residency: With regard to the residency policy, the Department acknowledges the need for a statewide policy, however; based on matches provided for the Department of Banking and Finance the current policy of local decision-making has not negatively impacted the funding formula.

The Florida Legislature

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability

Visit the *Florida Monitor*, OPPAGA's online service. See http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us. This site monitors the performance and accountability of Florida government by making OPPAGA's four primary products available online.

- OPPAGA publications and contracted reviews, such as policy analyses and performance reviews, assess the efficiency and effectiveness of state policies and programs and recommend improvements for Florida government.
- Performance-based program budgeting (PB²) reports and information offer a variety of tools. Program evaluation and justification reviews assess state programs operating under performance-based program budgeting. Also offered are performance measures information and our assessments of measures.
- Florida Government Accountability Report (FGAR) is an Internet encyclopedia of Florida state government. FGAR offers concise information about state programs, policy issues, and performance. Check out the ratings of the accountability systems of 13 state programs.
- Best Financial Management Practices Reviews of Florida school districts. In accordance with the *Sharpening the Pencil Act*, OPPAGA and the Auditor General jointly conduct reviews to determine if a school district is using best financial management practices to help school districts meet the challenge of educating their students in a cost-efficient manner.

Subscribe to OPPAGA's electronic newsletter, Florida Monitor Weekly, a free source for brief e-mail announcements of research reports, conferences, and other resources of interest for Florida's policy research and program evaluation community.

OPPAGA provides objective, independent, professional analyses of state policies and services to assist the Florida Legislature in decision making, to ensure government accountability, and to recommend the best use of public resources. This project was conducted in accordance with applicable evaluation standards. Copies of this report in print or alternate accessible format may be obtained by telephone (850/488-0021 or 800/531-2477), by FAX (850/487-3804), in person, or by mail (OPPAGA Report Production, Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1475).

Florida Monitor: http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/

Project supervised by Jane Fletcher (850/487-9255)

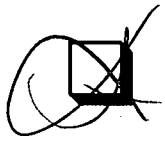
Project conducted by Deborah Wagar (850/487-9258)

John W. Turcotte, OPPAGA Director

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis



This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

☐ This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").