



# National Institute for Literacy

## **Report on Activities and Accomplishments**



FY 1993 – FY 2002



# National Institute for Literacy

## **Report on Activities and Accomplishments**

This report was prepared by the staff of the National Institute for Literacy. It briefly summarizes the primary activities and accomplishments of the Institute over a ten year period. The contents of the report have been reviewed by members of the Institute's Advisory Board, whose comments are reflected in this final version.



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## PREFACE



The National Literacy Act (NLA) of 1991 and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 recognized that building a competitive workforce for the Information Age would require a substantial, concerted effort to improve adults' basic skills. The federally funded national literacy and basic skills delivery system would need expansion and improvement. Success would require substantial new efforts to inform program management techniques, policy development, information dissemination, and research.

The NLA and the adult literacy field also recognized that a national effort to improve adults' literacy skills would require a focal point, and so the NLA established the National Institute for Literacy. The AEFLA reauthorized the Institute seven years later. These laws envisioned that the Institute would promote improvement in the nation's literacy service system and encourage a more coordinated government approach. The laws also shaped the Institute's activities by defining literacy to include reading as well as writing, speaking English, computing, and problem solving.

Since its inception, the National Institute for Literacy has worked diligently and consistently to meet its responsibilities, guided by its authorizing legislation, and the needs of the adult literacy field. The Institute's early work included activities authorized by the NLA, such as the development of interagency performance measures, research on adults with learning disabilities, and the establishment of a national toll-free hotline for service providers and volunteers. Later, the Institute carried out duties authorized by AEFLA, including developing a national electronic information dissemination network, providing information on literacy policy to service providers and policymakers, and coordinating a literacy research agenda.

Within the broad guidance of the authorizing legislation, the Institute's defining responsibility has been to provide the information, resources, and support that would lead to stronger and more effective literacy programs. The Institute has chosen its projects and used its resources strategically to accomplish that goal. The fact that the Institute's annual budget did not exceed \$5 million for the first seven years of its existence further underscored the need for the Institute to focus its efforts.

To inform its choices and provide the best service and information possible, the Institute has customarily consulted with federal partners, researchers, and stakeholders and turned to the research when it was available. Similarly, the Institute has, as a matter of philosophy and practice, turned to the field to identify gaps in knowledge and capacity that other organizations have not addressed and worked to close those gaps.

As long as a decade ago, the Institute itself began to make significant contributions to the research base. It made a multi-million dollar, multi-year investment in research on adults with learning disabilities. The findings from this research then formed the basis of materials and training that still set the standard for services to adults with learning disabilities.

More recently, after Congress directed the Institute to assume responsibilities related to reading instruction for children and youth, it produced the pre-eminent reading publication for teachers of students in kindergarten through third grade using the findings from the National Reading Panel. The Institute has also funded and supported the processes through which the scientific research bases in adult reading and preschool reading instruction – two major gaps in our understanding of literacy – are being identified and disseminated. The Institute’s commitment to using scientifically based reading research embodies the newest standard of quality and infuses its work across the lifespan.

The Institute’s work has resulted in the establishment of innovative approaches and new understandings that will enrich the literacy field for years to come. It developed a sophisticated Internet-based dissemination system that provides instant access to information and allows communication among providers. It accelerated the field’s understanding and acceptance of the concept of content standards and their value in improving classroom instruction and accountability. It modeled a research-based instructional approach to serving adults with learning disabilities. It facilitated exchanges of factual information about literacy and literacy policy between Members of Congress and other policymakers and service providers.

As the Institute moves forward, it is positioned to continue contributing to improved literacy services for children, youth, adults, and families. The Institute has furthered the development of knowledge and program implementation, supported research, translated research findings into tools that represent the best information and practices, and supported systems that infuse knowledge into the field. The National Institute for Literacy has become an essential resource and partner in the America’s effort to build a fully literate nation.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Literacy grew to be understood as a public policy issue with implications for society at large during the decade that preceded the Institute's creation. The economy had begun to demand workers with higher skills. Educators and researchers increasingly acknowledged parents' role in encouraging and supporting their children's education. Communities and policymakers encouraged civic participation, a longstanding goal of adult education.

The National Literacy Act of 1991 (NLA) (PL 102-73) established the National Institute for Literacy to ensure that literacy would have a place on the federal policy agenda and to invigorate a national effort to improve adult literacy. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), also known as Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (PL 105-220), reauthorized the Institute in 1998. The AEFLA reinforces the intent expressed in the NLA that the Institute spearhead a national effort on literacy. Report 105-093, issued by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, chaired by Rep. John Boehner, called the Institute "...a critical part of the national effort to improve the nation's system of adult education and literacy."

The NLA and the AEFLA shaped the Institute's activities by providing a broad definition of literacy that includes reading as well as other skills and connects literacy with shared national values such as successful participation in the workforce, family well-being, and contributions to the broader society. The AEFLA defines literacy as "...an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society." This definition, coupled with the duties authorized by the AEFLA, guides the Institute to address broad systemic issues that confront the adult literacy system as it seeks to provide more effective services.

The NLA and AEFLA established a unique governance structure for the Institute that follows directly from a definition of literacy linked to success in the workforce and family life. The NLA and the AEFLA both established an Interagency Group, composed of the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Education, to oversee the Institute's work. The structure encourages programmatic links between government efforts to boost the nation's literacy skills, strengthen the workforce, and improve the well-being of families.

To address the AEFLA's priorities, the Institute consulted its authorizing laws and selected issues that promised significant improvements in the delivery of literacy services. The Institute sought input from the literacy field, its Advisory Boards, federal agencies in the Interagency Group, and other stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The Institute made substantial multi-year commitments in a few areas and dedicated itself to a sustained effort to ensure that the full benefits of the investments were realized.

From FY1998 through FY2002, the Institute received a total of \$30.55 million in appropriated funds authorized by AEFLA for program activities and discretionary activities. Since it began operations in FY1992 through FY2002, the Institute has received \$64.46 million in appropriated funds under the NLA and AEFLA. Including all funds

appropriated to the Institute from FY1992 through FY2002, including funds authorized by the Reading Excellence Act (REA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and Literacy Involves Families Together (LIFT), the Institute has received a total of \$88.46 million.

### ***Accomplishments***

The Institute:

- launched the adult literacy field's first national research to practice effort, establishing the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center to explore the scope and implications of learning disabilities and develop tools suggested by the research to improve literacy services.
- introduced a national adult literacy information resource with *LINCS*, the first site on the Internet to provide a single point of access to up-to-date, high-quality literacy resources.
- pioneered Internet-based communications for adult literacy practitioners by offering electronic discussion lists on family literacy, workforce literacy, teaching English as a Second Language, and other topics.
- spoke out on adult literacy in Capitol Hill testimony and began a sustained effort to keep the adult literacy field informed of national policy issues and developments.
- established the National Literacy Hotline and Clearinghouse to disseminate information about literacy and help prospective students and volunteers find local services.
- disseminated reading research at a national conference sponsored with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development on reading, reading disorders, and reading disabilities.
- addressed a major gap in literacy services by offering professional development on teaching adults with learning disabilities using *Bridges to Practice*, the culmination of four years of research on learning disabilities.
- provided adult literacy practitioners with easy access to key literacy topics through online collections of resources on *LINCS*.
- finalized the Equipped for the Future learning standards and published a guide that enables states as well as individual literacy programs to implement the standards to improve outcomes and accountability.
- broadened access to information about literacy services using America's Literacy Directory, an Internet-based catalog of literacy programs for adults and children developed with Verizon and the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education.
- offered a new avenue for adult literacy practitioners and others to contribute to the field's knowledge base and enrich their own understanding and practice through the Literacy Leader Fellowship program.





## **SECTION I: BACKGROUND ON THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY**

### ***Legislative History***

The National Literacy Act of 1991 (NLA) established the National Institute for Literacy to ensure that literacy would have a place on the federal policy agenda and to invigorate a national effort to improve adult literacy. The Act envisioned the Institute as a “national focal point” for literacy as well as a mechanism to “facilitate a pooling of ideas and expertise across fragmented programs and research efforts” (PL 102-73). While literacy program administration remained the responsibility of the U.S. Department of Education, the NLA directed the Institute to tackle systemic issues related to service effectiveness and improved student outcomes. To that end, the Act directed the Institute to concentrate on “research, technical assistance and research dissemination, policy analysis, and program evaluation in the area of literacy.”

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), also known as Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) (PL 105-220), reauthorized the Institute in 1998. The AEFLA reinforces the intent expressed in the NLA that the Institute spearhead a national effort on literacy. The AEFLA directs the Institute to provide “national leadership on literacy, coordinat[e] literacy services and policy, and serv[e] as a national resource for adult literacy and basic education programs...” It also reaffirms an Institute focus on program improvement, policy and technical assistance, information dissemination, and coordination of research support. Report 105-093, issued by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, chaired by Rep. John Boehner, called the Institute “...a critical part of the national effort to improve the nation’s system of adult education and literacy.”

The NLA and the AEFLA also have shaped the Institute’s activities by providing a broad definition of literacy that includes reading as well as other skills and connects literacy with shared national values such as successful participation in the workforce, family well-being, and contributions to the broader society. Specifically, the NLA defines literacy as “...an individual’s ability to read, write, speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one’s goals, and develop one’s knowledge and potential...” The AEFLA defines literacy as “...an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.” This definition, coupled with the duties authorized by the AEFLA, allows the Institute to undertake projects that address broad issues that confront the adult literacy system as it seeks to provide more effective services.

At the same time that the AEFLA emphasizes a broad leadership role for the Institute, it also creates a new role for the Institute as a source of information on reading. It directs the Institute to “... collect and disseminate information on methods of advancing literacy that show great promise, including phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension...”

The passage of the Reading Excellence Act (REA) (PL 105-277) in 1998 strengthened the Institute's authorization to focus on reading by directing the Institute to work in the area of children's reading. The REA authorized the Institute to "...disseminate information on scientifically based reading research and information on sub-grantee projects...that have proven effective." In authorizing this work, House Report 105-348 cited "...the profound lack of information provided to reading instructors on the fundamental basics in teaching children to read." The report further explained the choice of the Institute as the home of a new national reading research dissemination effort...

Based upon the past and current reading and literacy activities of the NIFL, the Committee believes they are well-positioned to take on the additional responsibilities as directed under this legislation...the NIFL, which is an independent agency that works with and for the Departments of Education; Health and Human Services; and Labor, has been charged with several duties and responsibilities. This is largely based upon the fact that NIFL's mission is completely focused on the issue of literacy, and it has already been working on developing materials reflecting best practices through its National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center. In addition, NIFL has already established a state-of-the-art Internet-based communication and information system (LINCS). LINCS has a presence in all fifty states and has the capacity to be expanded to meet the requirements of the proposed reading initiative. This is in addition to NIFL's support of a national toll-free number and clearinghouse for the distribution of print products.

The passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (PL 107-110) in 2001 further enhances the Institute's role in promoting the acquisition of reading skills. The law authorizes the Institute to extend the dissemination work begun under REA to include information about the acquisition of reading skills by youth and adults. In addition, NCLB tasks the Institute with identifying effective classroom reading programs and reading programs that include the components of reading as defined by scientific research.

Finally, the Literacy Involves Families Together (LIFT) Act (later included in PL 106-554), passed in 2001, emphasizes the Institute's role in supporting research and mandates a focused effort on family literacy. The law authorizes the Institute to "...carry out scientifically-based reading research that determines the most effective ways of improving the literacy skills of adults with reading difficulties and how family literacy services can best provide parents with the knowledge and skills they need to support their children's literacy development." The Institute implements this requirement by providing the appropriation authorized by LIFT to the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to award as research grants.

Together, these three authorizing laws reinforce an Institute focus on disseminating critical information on reading across the lifespan while allowing the Institute to address broader challenges associated with improving the effectiveness of the adult literacy service delivery system. Both the NLA and the AEFLA recognize that the system would benefit from special attention to reading instruction. Yet the laws also recognize that carefully

developed policies, coordinated research, and strong program management contribute to a better service delivery system as well.

### ***Governance Structure, Administration, and Staffing***

Both of the Institute's authorizing laws established a unique governance structure for the Institute that follows directly from a definition of literacy linked to success in the workforce and family life. The NLA and the AEFLA established an Interagency Group, composed of the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Education, to oversee the Institute's work. The laws use the structure to encourage connections between various government programs to boost the nation's literacy skills, strengthen the workforce, and improve the well-being of families.

The interagency governance structure recognizes that sustained, meaningful interagency coordination is most likely to succeed if there is an institutional means of facilitating it. Before the Institute was established, the Southport Policy Institute's 1989 report *Jump Start: The Federal Role in Adult Literacy*, observed...

At least three federal departments [the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education] have major responsibility for basic skills programs. In each of them, that responsibility takes the form of small programs or aspects of programs, each with their own priorities, constituencies, and delivery systems. Lack of coordination and "turf problems" are legendary.

With the establishment of the Institute and its Interagency Group, a formal mechanism was created to strengthen interagency coordination. House Report 105-093 notes the improvement, observing that...

"[t]he interagency nature of the NIFL is a perfect fit for the coordinated, consolidated human resource development system that is the goal of this legislation. The Committee expects the NIFL to continue in this role of working with the Departments of Labor, Education, and Health and Human Services and expects these Federal agencies to work closely with the NIFL to support its mission."

According to the AEFLA, the Secretary of Education enters into an interagency agreement with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services to administer the Institute. The Interagency Group considers the recommendations from the Institute's Advisory Board in planning the goals of the Institute and implementing efforts to achieve the goals. The AEFLA also requires the Interagency Group to "...provide a written explanation to the Board concerning actions the Interagency Group takes that are inconsistent with the Board's recommendations, including the reasons for not following the Board's recommendations with respect to the actions."

The Institute's Advisory Board, as established by the AEFLA, is composed of 10 individuals appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate. Each Board member may serve a term of one, two, or three years but not more than two consecutive terms. According to the law, Board members are to represent a variety of entities associated with adult literacy including: service providers; businesses with an interest in literacy; experts in literacy research; representatives of labor organizations; and others. The Board typically meets quarterly.

The law describes the Board's role as providing independent advice on the operation of the Institute, making recommendations concerning the appointment of the Director and staff of the Institute; and receiving reports from the Interagency Group and the director. The AEFLA also empowers the Advisory Board to "... request a meeting of the Interagency Group to discuss the Board's recommendations."

Finally, the AEFLA defines a process for selecting the Institute's Director that provides a role for the Advisory Board and ensures participation by all of the agencies in the Interagency Group. The Advisory Board recommends a candidate or candidates for the position. The Interagency Group then considers the Board's recommendations and selects the Institute's Director. The Institute's Director is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Institute and its staff.

The AEFLA grants the Institute authority to enter contracts and make grants. Since its inception, the Institute has relied on an extensive network of grants and contracts, managed by staff, to carry out non-inherently governmental functions that fulfill its legislative mandate. Historically, the size of the Institute staff has ranged from 12 to 18; there are currently 15 full-time staff members working at the Institute.

The Institute also has received some administrative services and support from the Department of Education.

### ***Mission and Duties***

The NLA and AEFLA established and structured the Institute to lead a permanent, coordinated federal effort to improve the nation's literacy skills, especially those of adults. Creating a separate entity – the Institute – with its own budget and an exclusive, multi-agency focus on systemic improvements in literacy has helped ensure a consistent focus on the issue over time. The Institute's mandates also have envisioned it as a national leader on adult literacy, a central source of knowledge about research, practice, and policy, and a catalyst for innovation and positive change.

Both of the Institute's authorizing laws conceived of the Institute's work as falling in four general areas: program improvement; policy and technical assistance; information dissemination; and coordination of research support. To carry out these duties, the Institute has concentrated its efforts in a few projects that could bring about significant improvement across the adult education system. For instance, over almost a decade, the Institute has worked to develop content standards, support the use of technology in teaching and learning, and provide

training using a research-based approach to serving adults with learning disabilities, among other innovations. It continues to reach across federal agency lines to promote improvement in services and student outcomes.

### ***Funding History***

From FY1998 when it was reauthorized under AEFLA through FY2002, the Institute received a total of \$30.55 million in appropriated funds authorized by AEFLA for program activities and discretionary activities. Since it began operations in FY1992 through FY2002, the Institute has received \$64.46 million in appropriated funds under the NLA and AEFLA. Including funds authorized by REA, NCLB, and LIFT, the Institute has received a total of \$88.46 million in appropriated funds.

### ***Institute Appropriations Since Inception***

(Dollars in Millions)

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>NLA/AEFLA</b>	<b>REA/NCLB</b>	<b>LIFT</b>	<b>Total Appropriations</b>
FY91	4.88			4.88
FY92	5.00			5.00
FY93	4.91			4.91
FY94	4.85			4.85
FY95	4.86			4.86
FY96	4.86			4.86
FY97	4.49			4.49
FY98	5.49			5.49
FY99	6.00	5.00 (REA)		11.00
FY00	6.00	5.00 (REA)		11.00
FY01	6.50	5.00 (REA)	2.00	13.50
FY02	6.56	5.00 (NCLB)	2.00	13.56
Total	64.46	20.00 (REA & NCLB)	4.00	88.46

In FY1999, the Institute began receiving a second appropriation to implement REA requirements. From FY1999-FY2001, the Institute received \$5 million annually to design and implement a national reading research dissemination system. The Institute's REA appropriation then was replaced in FY2002 by an appropriation authorized by NCLB. This appropriation was the first appropriation of funds under Reading First for reading research dissemination. Activities that the Institute is authorized to carry out under Early Reading First are not covered by a separate appropriation; rather, NCLB stipulates that Early Reading First activities shall be funded from the appropriation for Reading First dissemination activities. Under Early Reading First, NIFL is authorized to disseminate information about projects assisted under the Act that have been proven effective.

In FY2001, the Institute was authorized by the LIFT act (PL 106-554) to receive a third appropriation. The Institute has received a total of \$4 million and has provided these funds to NICHD to support research on adult reading.

The Institute dedicated all funding authorized by REA and all funds currently authorized by NCLB and LIFT to program services and activities. The administrative costs of activities associated with NCLB and LIFT are paid using funds authorized by AEFLA.

The Institute also has received funding from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education to carry out specific activities jointly sponsored by the Institute and these agencies. In FY2001 and FY2002, funding from these sources represented less than 2% of the Institute's total budget.

Finally, AEFLA grants the Institute authority to solicit and accept funds from non-governmental sources. This provision has permitted the Institute to accept foundation and corporate funding as well as contributions from individual citizens. The Lila Wallace Foundation and Verizon have contributed to Institute activities.

## **SECTION II: BACKGROUND ON LITERACY AND THE ADULT LITERACY SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM**

Literacy grew to be understood as a public policy issue with implications for society at large during the decade that preceded the Institute's creation. The economy had begun to demand workers with higher skills. Educators and researchers increasingly acknowledged parents' role in encouraging and supporting their children's education. Communities and policymakers encouraged civic participation, a longstanding goal of adult education.

National policymakers and the private sector repeatedly called the public's attention to a national literacy challenge. The Administration of President George H. W. Bush stressed the need to improve adults' literacy skills as an economic necessity. In 1989, the Secretary of Education, Lauro Cavazos, testified before a Senate subcommittee that a 1986 assessment of the literacy skills of 21-25 year-olds found that "only a small percentage can adequately perform the more complex and challenging tasks that are critical to our Nation's continued economic growth." President Bush and the nation's governors emphasized the issue further by adopting 10 education goals, including one that envisioned "[b]y the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship."

Describing strong literacy skills as essential to national goals like economic competitiveness and civic duty illustrated a fundamental shift in the way adult literacy was understood. Until then, adults' literacy skills – or the lack thereof – had been defined as an individual concern with individual consequences that merited a minimum federal investment.

At the same time, literacy experts and lawmakers came to believe that literacy meant reading as well as other skills. Adults who could qualify for skilled jobs, support their children's education, and participate in community governance were able to read but also use mathematics, solve problems, and communicate orally and in writing beyond rudimentary levels. The *Jump Start* report noted that although many people thought of literacy "... solely as the ability to read and write at the most elementary level, most of the leaders in this field recognize that mathematics, problem-solving, and communications abilities are also essential basic skills."

Three years after the appearance of *Jump Start*, a national panel of experts working on the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), directed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), also moved away from what they called "traditional definitions of literacy." The experts' definition instead emphasized "a broad range of skills that adults use in accomplishing the many different types of literacy tasks associated with work, home, and community contexts," according to *Adult Literacy in America: A First Look at the Results of the National Adult Literacy Survey*. The definition then informed the development of the tasks used as measures of adult literacy in the survey. The same definition also provides the basis for the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL), which again will provide a national snapshot of adults' literacy skills.

As noted earlier, federal law pertaining to the Institute and the Department of Education also reflect a consistent view that literacy encompasses a group of skills including, but not limited to, reading. The NLA defined literacy as "... an individual's ability to read, write, speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential" (PL102-73, Section 3). The AEFLA similarly defines literacy as "... an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society."

Policymakers also have recognized that the adult education and literacy delivery system remains "unlike the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary education systems in many important respects," as noted in House Report 105-093. The report observes...

This is a unique system characterized by a diverse group of providers, diverse students, and limited resources... Many students are young adults who dropped out of high school and returned to adult education. Many are already working but seek to improve their skills so they can be more competitive in the Information Age economy. Almost half are immigrants studying English.

The adult education system is also unlike the K-12 system in terms of its students' purposes and goals. House Report 105-093 notes that many participants in the adult education system "... are looking to become citizens, to help their children succeed in school, and to fulfill a variety of other personal, economic, and social goals. Most of these goals have serious implications for our national well-being"

Significant changes have taken place in adult education and literacy since the Institute's creation in 1991. For instance, there is now widespread consensus that states' use of content standards is essential to drive improved service delivery and student outcomes, but a decade ago there was little agreement on what should be taught or measured in adult education. As recently as 1995, the General Accounting Office (GAO) published a report called *Adult Education: Measuring Program Results has been Challenging* that confirmed an absence of goals in the adult education system and described the problems associated with evaluating adult education program results when programs lacked clearly defined objectives. Similarly, the need to provide appropriate services for adults with learning disabilities is recognized now, but less than a decade ago, there was scarcely enough reliable information available to begin a conversation about effective instruction.

Despite changes for the better, the adult education and literacy field continues to face formidable challenges. Results from the 1992 NALS, the most recent national survey of adults' literacy skills, cited in March 2003 testimony by Assistant Secretary of Education Dr. Carol D'Amico, found that 90 million adults' literacy skills were in the lowest two levels. Dr. D'Amico said that the 90 million "...are not equipped with the skills they need to work effectively in the high-skill high-wage jobs that increasingly characterize our economy".

At the program level, adult literacy service providers grapple with a variety of issues. There is relatively little research-based knowledge about what works in basic skills instruction for adults, and what knowledge there is has not been widely put into practice. Programs report erratic attendance and long waiting lists for English language classes. Adult education programs continue to be staffed mostly by part-time teachers – many trained as K-12 teachers – and volunteers. Staff turnover is very high. In many states, there are few opportunities for professional development, so teachers on their own must build on whatever knowledge they bring to their work. Many programs have few of their own resources, so teachers are left to develop their own curricula and find their own materials.

### **SECTION III. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Institute's activities, as mentioned above, can be categorized according to priorities established in AEFLA: promoting improvements in adult literacy services; disseminating scientifically based research on reading for children, youth, and adults, and other information on literacy; advising on literacy policy development; and supporting research.

To address the law's priorities, the Institute selected issues that promised significant improvements in the delivery of literacy services. The Institute sought input from the literacy field, its Advisory Boards, federal agencies in the Interagency Group, and other stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The Institute made substantial multi-year commitments in a few areas and dedicated itself to a sustained effort to ensure that the full benefits of the investments were realized.



## **A. Promoting Improvement in Adult Literacy Services**

### ***Improving Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities***

In FY 1992, the Institute initiated an effort to improve literacy services for adults with learning disabilities (LD). For five years, the Institute supported research – the first of its kind – conducted by the University of Kansas Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities. The initiative, later named Bridges to Practice, produced a five-volume reference guide and other materials based on the research results. These materials were designed for use in training adult educators and human service providers to screen, teach, and provide other services that improve education and employment outcomes for learning disabled adults. Since the development of these materials, more than 40,000 teachers, tutors, welfare caseworkers, rehabilitation staff, and employment counselors in 48 states have been trained with the Bridges to Practice materials.

The Bridges to Practice reference guide addresses a need for which few other such resources exist. In 2000, the U.S. General Accounting Office recommended that states use the Bridges to Practice materials to ensure state agency personnel working with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) clients were properly trained. In addition, some higher education institutions use Bridges to Practice materials in their graduate and undergraduate courses.

Several national organizations, including the 40,000-member Learning Disabilities Association (LDA), have partnered with the Institute to train their membership with Bridges to Practice materials. For example, the Institute and LDA jointly sponsored a daylong professional development activity at the 2002 LDA national conference. The Institute and the LDA also jointly trained a corps of college students in Bridges to Practice. This student corps will work to raise awareness of learning disabilities among college students and to improve services to young adults. The Correctional Education Association also has partnered with the Institute to make Bridges training more accessible to its members by offering the training at three of its regional conferences.

In addition, three states are seeking to improve educational services to inmates by using Bridges materials. New York and Nevada have adopted Bridges to Practice to train educators working in the state's correctional facilities. The state of Wisconsin is just beginning a similar effort.

To meet the growing demand for Bridges to Practice training, the Institute has established a master trainer certification program and made its development a priority. In FY2002, more than 600 people participated in the Institute's certification program; seven of these individuals achieved the rank of "master trainer." In the previous fiscal year, 304 individuals participated in the certification program.

Other program priorities for the past two years include: organizing train-the-trainer sessions at the state level; disseminating information at conferences and institutes; and acting as a resource for organizations seeking to improve services to adults with LD.

During the course of the Institute's involvement in learning disabilities, it has invested \$5.4 million. From FY2001 through FY2002, the Institute invested \$276,901 in the Bridges program. During this period, the Institute dedicated one-full time staff position to the Bridges program. To extend the project's services to the states, the Institute has recruited and relies on a network of volunteers who coordinate Bridges training for state-level personnel. Currently, the Institute's network includes volunteer coordinators in 24 states.

### ***Additional Learning Disabilities Accomplishments***

- Florida has incorporated the Bridges to Practice approach and materials in its adult education system. The state funds training for teachers and trainers, sponsors an annual conference, and provides consultations to educators across the state. In addition, Florida has adapted Bridges to Practice in an online training course that provides the basic information on screening and serving adults with learning disabilities and publishes a quarterly newsletter.
- Bridges to Practice master trainers trained teams of adult educators from the state of Texas. These teams then trained 900 local service providers to use Bridges in providing education and other services to adults with learning disabilities.
- The Institute sponsored a four-day Bridges academy on addressing learning disabilities in the welfare population to teams from seven states – Wisconsin, Florida, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas. Each team, which included at least one member from a Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program, pledged to train a minimum of 90 local service providers as a condition of receiving the training.
- The Institute, in partnership with the American Federation for the Blind (AFB), has offered training sessions in Atlanta, San Antonio, San Francisco, and Boston to support efforts by the AFB to improve literacy services to people with low vision.
- Bridges trainers participated in the 2002 Maine Adult Education Summer Institute for more than 200 adult educators and human services providers on learning disabilities, disseminating information on screening, diagnosis, teaching strategies, learning disabilities laws.
- Institute staff made presentations on Bridges at seven conferences during 2003, including the National Association of Adults with Special Learning Needs, the National Association for Developmental Education, the New York College Learning Skills Association, the International Dyslexia Association, and the AFB Literacy Conference.

### ***Strengthening Accountability through Standards-Based Reform***

The Institute has promoted the use of content standards in adult education since FY1993. Under the auspices of this initiative, known as Equipped for the Future (EFF), the Institute has carried out two major projects – the creation of content standards and the development of a performance assessment framework – designed to achieve systemic improvement through standards-based reform. There is widespread recognition today that standards-based reform is needed to improve adult education, but 10 years ago when the Institute began this work there was no such consensus. Few understood the relevance of the standards-based reform movement in elementary and secondary education to the adult education field nor the application of lessons learned from that effort.

The EFF content standards provide a framework for more focused instruction and stronger student outcomes in 16 academic skill areas, including the basic skills of reading, mathematics, and language arts. The standards define what an adult learner should know and be able to do. In addition, the EFF initiative has produced a performance assessment framework that provides the basis for measuring student progress toward achieving those standards. From 1998–2003, 11 states – California, New Hampshire, Maine, Ohio, Oregon, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington – partnered with the Institute and invested \$1.3 million in development of the EFF Standards and Assessment Framework.

From FY 2001 through FY 2002, the EFF project has focused on providing training and technical assistance to states and other entities seeking to improve their adult education systems through standards-based reform. The Institute provides funds for a national center headquartered at the University of Tennessee. Since the EFF standards were made available in 2000, the center has trained more than 5,500 teachers and administrators from 41 states to use the EFF standards to improve instruction and assessment. Ninety-three percent of those trained report that they learned something specific that will help them improve instruction, and 97 percent rate the standards as useful or very useful in their work.

In FY 2002, the center sponsored its first national institute on standards-based reform in adult education. Twenty states sent teams to the Institute, which featured sessions for practitioners on teaching and assessing with standards; for administrators on assessment for accountability; and for state leaders on strategic planning for implementing standards. In the same year, the Center also conducted workshops or other training events with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Department of Labor, and 22 states.

To help meet the demand for training and technical assistance, the EFF national center has developed a certification process for EFF trainers that establishes the knowledge and skills that EFF facilitators need. To date, 10 people have been certified as national trainers and five have been certified as state trainers. Currently, 43 people are participating in the certification process.

Another major project carried out under the auspices of the EFF initiative has been associated with workforce development, including the development of a work readiness credential based on the EFF standards and business consensus of what work readiness means. The credential would enable the public workforce investment system to better serve both employers and individual job seekers by providing a tool to measure and certify work readiness according to a single, nationally validated standard. Four states – Florida, New Jersey, New York and Washington – have partnered with the Institute to develop the credential and invested more than \$2 million.

In addition, in partnership with the National Retail Federation Foundation (NRFF), EFF has developed a six-week combined education and training program and an 11-week version for adults with limited English proficiency (LEP) to prepare individuals to meet national customer-service standards. The training is in use in NRFF Skills Centers across the country. When the course for LEP adults was piloted in Texas, more than 60 percent of all students were hired at the end of the course, almost double the Texas Education Agency's target of 35 percent.

Since the Institute began promoting standards-based reform, it has spent \$8.8 million. From FY 2001 through FY2002, the Institute invested \$2.7 million in the EFF project. In FY 2001, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education provided supplemental funding in the amount of \$166,400 that helped fund a National Research Council report on performance assessment.

The Institute dedicates one full-time position to the EFF initiative.

### ***Additional Standards-Based Reform Accomplishments***

- In 2005, the Center conducted pre-conferences and additional training sessions at national conferences sponsored by the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE); the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE); the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL); the National Even Start Association, and ProLiteracy Worldwide.
- The Center currently works with 25 states that are implementing EFF in their adult literacy, correctional education, family literacy, library literacy, and workforce development systems.
- Of these 25 states, four states – Delaware, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Virginia – and the Bureau of Indian Affairs have partnered with the Institute to develop a standards-based training program to help family literacy programs integrate evidence-based reading practices.

## **B. Disseminating Information**

### ***Electronic Information Dissemination Network***

The Literacy Information and Communications System (*LINCS*) ([www.nifl.gov/lincs](http://www.nifl.gov/lincs)) is designed to meet users' teaching and learning needs by providing a single point of access on the Internet to literacy-related resources, knowledge, and expertise. The *LINCS* network includes more than 10,000 catalogued literacy resources, special collections of materials on topics such as workplace literacy, English as a Second Language, and family literacy, and 12 public online discussion lists. Each week, *LINCS* staff adds current news stories on literacy to the site and updates lists of funding opportunities and a calendar of conferences, training sessions, and other major professional development opportunities. In addition, *LINCS* provides access to literacy-focused web pages from 52 state adult basic education and literacy agencies, plus national and international organizations. On average, more than 3 million users access these and other materials on the *LINCS* each month.

*LINCS* staff and grantees also provide training and technical assistance to adult literacy providers and stakeholders to help improve services through the use of technology. In 2002, *LINCS* staff and grantees provided more than 19,000 responses to requests for technical assistance. In addition, the Institute sponsored nearly 400 technical assistance sessions for adult literacy practitioners and program administrators. Approximately 6,600 individuals were served through these sessions.

The *LINCS* network includes partnerships with national organizations, 45 state education agencies, and hundreds of local service providers. *LINCS* also funds four Regional Technology Centers (RTCs) in California, Ohio, Tennessee, and Idaho. First established in FY1994, the RTCs form a key component of the *LINCS* infrastructure, providing technology training, technical assistance, and opportunities for technological capacity building for adult education practitioners and systems. *LINCS* also funds 12 entities that collect and review materials for the special collections. In the past, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education has provided funds to the Institute to maintain *LINCS* special collections on Workforce Education, Assessment, and Program Improvement.

The Institute has invested \$12.3 million in *LINCS* over the life of the project. From FY 2001 through FY2002, the Institute invested \$3.7 million in the *LINCS*. During this period, OVAE also contributed \$285,000 to support the *LINCS*. The Institute dedicates two full-time positions to the *LINCS* project.

### ***Accessing Information about Literacy and Literacy Services***

In response to direction in the National Literacy Act, the Institute established and maintains a national toll-free telephone hotline (800-228-8815). Hotline operators assist callers in obtaining free publications produced by the Institute and make referrals to local literacy programs. In 2003, the Hotline received more than 29,000 calls; in 2002, hotline operators handled more than 27,000 calls. Hotline operators are available during business hours Monday through Friday.

Prospective students and volunteers who prefer to use the Internet to find information about local programs, including type of provider, instruction offered, and class schedules, can visit America's Literacy Directory (ALD) ([www.literacydirectory.org](http://www.literacydirectory.org)). The ALD is the result of the Institute's collaboration with the U.S. Department of Labor and Verizon with support from the U.S. Department of Education. Currently, the ALD database includes 5,260 programs. LINC'S program staff are responsible for managing the ALD.

The Institute has spent \$1.8 million for hotline and clearinghouse services since FY1994. The Institute contracts for additional services as needed.

### ***Additional Information Dissemination Accomplishments***

- Six states are piloting the use of the ALD to improve their data collection methods and increase communication with literacy service providers in their states.
- During FY2001, the hotline received an average of 1,780 calls per month.
- During FY2001, more than 70 Institute products were available free of charge from the hotline.
- The Institute allowed the state of Pennsylvania to use the hotline for several months in FY2001 to support a statewide literacy student recruitment campaign. Almost 2,000 callers contacted the hotline for program referrals.
- From September through July of FY2002, the ALD recorded 1,900,000 successful hits, averaging 10,379 hits per day
- From January through June 2002, the ALD received 40,761 visits.

### ***Publications***

The Institute develops and produces easily accessible, quality print products to maximize the investment it has made in its primary projects; provide timely information about policy and practice to the adult literacy field; and help strengthen the connection between research and practice. Its current inventory of 22 AEFLA-funded publications provides information about Bridges to Practice, LINC'S, Equipped for the Future, and issues such as professional development in adult education, English language instruction, and correctional education. (Using REA and NCLB funds, the Institute has reprinted the National Reading Panel report and produced new

publications for children, parents, and teachers based on the Panel's findings.) The Institute's publications are disseminated at conferences, through targeted mailings, and in response to requests from individuals and organizations. They are also available electronically on the Institute's website.

The Institute is working to improve the quality of its publications. Over the past 18 months, the Institute has pruned its inventory by two-thirds from more than 70 publications to 22; publications based on outdated or weak research were eliminated from the inventory. New AEFLA-funded publications will focus on translating research findings into tools that improve practice, basic skills instruction, and other topics that promote improved literacy outcomes.

From FY 2001 through FY 2002, the Institute printed and disseminated more than 242,000 publications. During this same period, the Institute expended \$ 272,744 producing publications; it expended an additional \$59,000 to cover the costs of mailing materials to individuals and organizations requesting copies of Institute publications.

### ***Additional Publications***

- The Institute distributed publications in 15 targeted mailings sent during FY2001-2002.
- The Institute made publications available at 19 national conferences from 2001-2005.
- The Institute commissioned and printed *Bridges to Practice*, a five-volume guide to recognizing adults with learning disabilities and providing appropriate services.
- From 1995-1998, the Institute developed and printed a series of eight publications on topics concerning learning disabilities, including:
  - *Workplace Literacy: Employment Issues for the Adult Learner with Learning Disabilities*
  - *Social Skills Issues: Social Skills and Adults with Learning Disabilities*
  - *Adults with Learning Disabilities: Definitions and Issues*
  - *Transitions: Issues for the Adult Learner with Learning Disabilities*
  - *Feedback: Enhancing the Performance of Adult Learners with Learning Disabilities*
  - *Self-Advocacy: Empowerment for Adult Learners with Learning Disabilities*
  - *Phonological Awareness: An Overview*
  - *Screening for Adults with Learning Disabilities: The Role of the Practitioner in the Process*

- The Institute commissioned and printed publications written by Institute-sponsored Literacy Leader Fellows on topics such as workplace literacy, literacy and welfare reform, the use of technology in the adult education classroom, health and literacy, and other timely topics.
- The Institute produced *Literacy Works*, a 1995 guide to improving state literacy system accountability based on an earlier Institute project.

### **C. Advising on Policy Development**

The AEFLA authorizes the Institute to “provide policy and technical assistance to Federal, State, and local entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy” as one means of providing leadership for the “improvement and expansion of the system for delivery of literacy services.” The Institute has sought to fulfill this mandate by providing factual information to policymakers at all levels of government and to literacy providers and practitioners.

The Institute offers informational briefings and one-on-one meetings for Members of Congress and their staffs to describe how laws and policy decisions are implemented in the field. In 2001, the Institute partnered with the leadership of the House of Representatives’ Reading Caucus to provide a briefing on scientifically-based reading research and the Institute’s role in disseminating that research. In 2002, the Institute, in partnership with the Correctional Education Association, provided a briefing for Congressional staff on educational services for the incarcerated population. And in the same year, the National Coalition for Literacy and the Institute organized a bipartisan Literacy Fair with support from Representatives John Boehner and George Miller and Senators Jim Jeffords and Edward Kennedy. The event was designed to provide Congressional staff with information about adult literacy. The Institute also periodically provides information packets to every Member of Congress about literacy, literacy rates in states and Congressional districts, and Institute services and activities.

In addition, the Institute has provided policy and factual background information regarding literacy to states and localities in response to their requests for assistance. Institute staff served on the state of Illinois Human Resource Investment Council Literacy Policy Group, which was charged with advising the governor on how to improve literacy in the state. Institute staff also provided expertise to Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams as he was developing an adult literacy initiative.

The Institute has sought to highlight the relationships between literacy and workforce policies. In 1999, 2000, and 2001, the Institute cosponsored the Center on Education and Work’s annual Workplace Learning Conference. The Institute also participated in a Technical Advisory Group convened by the Administration for Children and Families to discuss workplace learning and addressing the needs of the learning disabled.



The Institute provides information about policy to practitioners through presentations at conferences and meetings, written reports, and web-based information. The Institute has produced national policy updates and state policy reports targeted to adult education and literacy practitioners. The Institute's policy updates focus on federal legislation, providing factual information about newly-enacted and pending literacy legislation, including appropriations information. Typically, the Institute produces five to eight national policy updates annually.

The Institute also has produced state policy reports, which focus on the process of implementing federal laws and their outcomes. Since 1999, the Institute has produced seven of these reports on a broad range of topics from distance education to English literacy and civics education for adult learners.

From FY 2000 through FY 2002, the Institute invested \$191,499 in its policy activities.

### ***Additional Policy Accomplishments***

- The Institute produced the following state policy reports:
  - *Strengthening Family Literacy, March 1999*
  - *How States are Improving Literacy Services for Adults with Disabilities, July 1999*
  - *How States are Implementing Distance Education for Adult Learners, February 2000*
  - *The Professionalization of Adult Education: Can State Certification of Adult Educators Contribute to a More Professional Workforce? August 2000*
  - *English Literacy and Civics Education for Adult Learners, August 2001*
  - *Professional Development for Adult Education Instructors, December 2001.*
  - *State Correctional Education Programs, March 2002.*
- Institute staff drafted a white paper and made presentations to the Southern Illinois University Public Policy Institute's national literacy forum in 1999.
- The Institute Director served as a U.S. Delegate to a 1998 international conference *How Adults Learn* cosponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- The Institute provided testimony on Capitol Hill at a 1995 hearing on adult literacy.
- Institute staff wrote *What Kind of Adult Literacy Policy Do We Need if We Are Serious About Enabling Every Adult To Become A High Skills/High Wage Worker in the Global Economy?* for discussion at a 1994 policy forum jointly sponsored by the Institute, the National Education Goals Panel, and the National Governors Association.
- The Institute collaborated with the state adult education directors' organization to add sample state policies and models to three *LINCS* special collections

## **D. Supporting Research**

The Institute's role in supporting research has ranged from providing funding for studies to commissioning secondary analysis and special studies. For example, the Institute commissioned a study that used data from the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) and 1990 United States Census data to estimate the literacy skills levels of adults in every state, county, city, and Congressional district in the nation. Over the past two years, the Institute has contributed \$550,000 to the Department of Education's Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALLS). The Institute's total financial contribution to the ALLS will be \$750,000 over a three-year period ending in FY2004. The ALLS will measure the literacy and numeracy skills of a representative sample of adults aged 16 to 65 in the U.S. and as many as 15 other countries, allowing international comparisons of literacy and numeracy skills.

The Literacy Involves Families Together Act (LIFT) authorizes the Institute to carry out scientifically-based reading research on effective ways of helping adults with reading difficulties improve their literacy skills and the ways in which families literacy programs can help parents support their children's literacy development. Appropriations under LIFT provide \$2 million annually for this research effort. Currently, the Institute, in partnership with NICHD and OVAE is funding six multi-year research grants that will yield new information on literacy development in adults and the critical factors that influence literacy instruction for adults. These grantees are conducting their research in more than 80 sites in 16 different states: Alaska, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington. (See the appendices for research project descriptions.)

The Institute, using its REA and NCLB appropriations, has also sponsored national research panels that examined literacy development in young children, English acquisition in young children and youth, and prepared a synthesis of the research on adult reading instruction. The Institute has also used those appropriations to produce teacher- and parent-friendly publications that translate the findings of the National Reading Panel into practical advice.

### ***Additional Research Accomplishments***

- In the first year of the Institute's existence, it awarded \$3.15 million for 36 basic and applied research projects in eleven areas.
- The Institute published *A National Plan for Research and Development in Adult Education*, a collaborative effort managed by the Institute to develop the first federal research agenda for adult literacy.

## **APPENDICES**

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### **Accomplishments in Brief**

**National Institute for Literacy Early Accomplishments**

**The Adult Literacy Research Network**

**Advisory Board Recommendations**

**Project Background Information**

**National Literacy Act of 1991**

**Workforce Investment Act of 1998**

**The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**

**PL 106-554, Title XVI—Improving Literacy Through Family Literacy Projects**



# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN BRIEF



### **1992**

NIFL expands the adult literacy field's knowledge base, awarding \$2.5 million for applied research in areas such as assessment of literacy skills, instructional approaches for adults learning English and those with learning disabilities, and the use of technology.

### **1993**

NIFL engages the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services – its Interagency Management Group – in multi-year initiatives to strengthen state literacy system accountability by developing common goals and measures across state agencies.

NIFL launches the adult literacy field's first national research to practice effort, establishing the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center to explore the scope and implications of learning disabilities and develop tools suggested by the research to improve literacy services.

### **1994**

NIFL introduces a national adult literacy information resource with *LINCS*, the first site on the Internet to provide a single point of access to up-to-date, high quality literacy resources.

NIFL invites adult learners nationwide to suggest what the adult literacy system should achieve, and the results later help shape *Equipped for the Future*, a national effort to use learning standards to strengthen outcomes and accountability in adult literacy services.

NIFL offers a new avenue for adult literacy practitioners to contribute to the field's knowledge base and enrich their own understanding and practice through the Literacy Leader Fellowship program.

NIFL and a national consortium direct nearly \$1 million in AmeriCorps resources to programs in four cities that emphasize literacy as a community need.

### **1995**

NIFL and federal agency partners pioneer Internet-based communications for adult literacy practitioners by offering electronic discussion lists on family literacy, workforce literacy, teaching English as a Second Language, and other topics.

NIFL speaks out on adult literacy in Capitol Hill testimony and begins a sustained effort to keep the adult literacy field informed of national policy issues and developments.

NIFL establishes the National Literacy Hotline and Clearinghouse to disseminate information about literacy and help prospective students and volunteers find local services.

## **1996**

NIFL inaugurates “Literacy: It’s A Whole New World,” a public awareness campaign to focus business, policymakers, and the public on adult literacy needs.

NIFL builds a national consensus on the need for learning standards based on the knowledge and skills adults need to be effective family members, workers, and citizens through its Equipped for the Future project.

## **1997**

NIFL first disseminates reading research at a national conference cosponsored with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development on reading, reading disorders, and reading disabilities.

NIFL and the state of Maryland develop, pilot, and disseminate the first statewide model for educational services for adults with learning disabilities.

NIFL addresses a major gap in literacy services by offering professional development on teaching adults with learning disabilities using *Bridges to Practice*, the culmination of four years of research on learning disabilities.

## **1998**

NIFL initiates a national discussion about literacy with the publication of *The State of Literacy in America*, a report detailing the numbers of adults with low literacy skills in every city, county, Congressional district, and state.

NIFL and the US Department of Education provide adult literacy practitioners with easy access to key literacy topics through online collections of resources on *LINCS*.

NIFL alerts television viewers and newspaper readers to adult literacy through \$3.8 million in cumulative donated advertising space in its public awareness campaign.

## **1999**

NIFL broadens its focus across the lifespan, launching a \$5 million effort to distribute reading research about adults, youth, and children.

NIFL and the National Retail Federation prepare welfare recipients for retail work using a curriculum based on Equipped for the Future learning standards.

NIFL coaches Verizon to become a leader in the adult literacy field through a national philanthropic effort.

NIFL publishes a quarterly report that provides objective information on literacy policy implementation and challenges confronting service providers.

## **2000**

NIFL leads the literacy field to define a national action agenda for the next decade at the National Literacy Summit in Washington, DC and subsequent meetings around the country.

NIFL finalizes the Equipped for the Future learning standards and publishes a guide that enables states as well as individual literacy programs to implement the standards to improve outcomes and accountability.

NIFL broadens access to information about literacy services using America's Literacy Directory, an Internet-based catalog of literacy programs for adults and children developed with Verizon and the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education.

NIFL reaches across government boundaries to create the Partnership for Reading, the first multi-agency effort focused on disseminating scientifically based reading research to improve reading instruction.

## **2001**

NIFL wins national recognition from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the General Accounting Office for its approach to learning disabilities training using *Bridges to Practice*.

NIFL creates an infrastructure for adult learners by advising on the creation of a national organization, supporting a national conference, and developing a web presence.

NIFL models how to make scientifically based reading research accessible to educators and parents with its *Put Reading First* publications based on the findings of the National Reading Panel.

## **2002**

NIFL and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development highlight adolescent literacy and fund research into effective instructional practices in adult and family literacy programs.

NIFL advises the American Federation of the Blind on a national series of workshops addressing the literacy needs of adults with low vision.

NIFL and the U.S. Department of Education gather essential information about adult beginning readers through a national research study.

NIFL promotes improved accountability by collaborating with the National Research Council and assessment experts to strengthen adult education assessments.







## **State Capacity Building Initiative**

In 1992, the National Institute for Literacy and the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services – the Institute’s Interagency Management Group – determined that program outcomes would improve if states developed stronger service delivery infrastructures. To build state capacity, the Institute and the agencies agreed to launch two multi-year initiatives in the areas of professional development and accountability. Both initiatives required states to put in place interagency state leadership teams to shape and manage these efforts.

The Institute provided a total of \$6.1 million for capacity building from FY1992-FY1995.

## **Interagency Staff Development**

The Institute, its Interagency Management Group, and states recognized that professional development, a vital element of service quality, was not always provided systematically nor in ways that bridged the gap between adult education, job training, and welfare systems. So the Institute awarded grants to nine states – Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, and the Northwest Regional Consortium, including Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Idaho – to design and implement statewide systems for the continuous delivery of staff development services. States were expected to offer a program of professional development to full- and part-time state government staff responsible for adult literacy and basic skills programs funded by the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor. The states’ activities included conducting needs assessments, setting goals, establishing performance measures and developing new training materials and mechanisms. The Institute also provided technical assistance in the form of academies to support the state efforts.

The Institute’s professional development effort fostered interagency collaboration that helped lay the groundwork for the collaborative approach to service delivery later required by the Workforce Investment Act. The effort also created momentum in the states and Northwest Regional Consortium to continue supporting a professional development system after the Institute’s financial support ended.

## **Performance Measurement, Reporting, and Improvement System (PMRIS)**

The second component of the Institute’s capacity-building initiative focused on helping states improve program accountability. The Institute awarded grants to five states – Alabama, Hawaii, Kentucky, New York, and Tennessee – to develop and implement an interagency performance measurement, reporting, and improvement system (PMRIS). The systems were based on an interagency consensus on the contribution of literacy to state policy goals and measures that consistently captured those contributions, no matter which agency administered literacy and basic skills programs. With a common system for measurement and reporting, state agencies could also use a common approach to program evaluation and continuous improvement of literacy-related services.

The states established policy groups to oversee the development of the PMRIS systems and learned about result-oriented performance measurement at an Institute-sponsored academy. Each state team then developed a consensus on vision, benchmarks, and policy and program outcomes that made explicit the contribution of literacy. From this information, they produced a detailed five-year strategic plan for designing and implementing the PMRIS.

The systems developed through the PMRIS initiative in Kentucky and Tennessee helped create the foundation for their current interagency management systems.

### **Literacy Leaders Fellowship**

The NLA and WIA authorized the Institute to "...award fellowships, with such stipends and allowances that the director considers necessary, to outstanding individuals pursuing careers in adult education or literacy...Fellowships shall be used...to engage in research, education, training, technical assistance or other activities to advance the field of adult education or literacy..." From FY1994 through FY2001, the Institute awarded fellowships to 27 individuals. These awards were made through a competitive process that involved review by the Institute's Advisory Board and Interagency Group. The Fellows represented a cross section of the adult literacy field: learners, researchers, practitioners, and administrators.

Most of Fellows wrote research reports on various current issues; one Fellow conducted an interactive teleconference and another developed a curriculum. Topics of Fellowship projects included: skills standards for workplace literacy; state policies on workplace basic education; using the Internet in adult literacy classrooms; addressing health needs while building literacy skills; student involvement in service delivery; lessons from company-funded workplace literacy programs; and the impact of learning English on immigrant women's self-image. The Institute published and distributed these reports through its national clearinghouse.

The Institute invested \$786,752 in the Literacy Leaders Fellowship program.

### **Greater Public Awareness of Literacy**

Once literacy experts and policymakers had come to understand literacy as a public policy issue with national implications, it became important to help the nation understand this new view as well. At the urging of the Institute's Advisory Board and the Interagency Group, the Institute ran a four-part initiative from FY1996 through FY1999 to raise awareness about the need to improve adults' literacy skills. The campaign, called "Literacy: It's a Whole New World," included audio and video public service announcements, print materials, fact sheets, and events involving Secretary of Education Richard Riley, 1997 Miss America Tara Holland, singer Faith Hill, then-GTE Chief Executive Officer Chuck Lee, and others. Each phase targeted a different audience – the public, policymakers, business, and college students – and relied on volunteer teams in each state to distribute the materials.

By 1998, the Institute's public awareness campaign materials had run in Business Week and George magazines, and the value of donated TV, radio, and print space approached \$3.8 million.

The Institute provided \$407,556 for the public awareness campaign.

### **Enhanced Program Capacity Using National Service**

In 1994 and 1995, the Institute was awarded an AmeriCorps grant on behalf of urban literacy initiatives in Houston, New Orleans, Seattle, and Pittsburgh that allowed 77 AmeriCorps volunteers to assist literacy programs in those cities. AmeriCorps was a national service initiative administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The additional staffing allowed literacy programs to serve more learners with trained volunteers and provide the volunteers with a stipend for their own training and education or to repay student loans.

The Institute applied to the AmeriCorps program to raise the visibility of adult literacy within the federal government and to strengthen community-based literacy service providers. No other government agencies sought to use AmeriCorps volunteers in adult literacy programs.

The Institute was authorized by the NLA to engage in such an activity under the law's directive to the Institute to "...provide program assistance, training, and technical assistance for literacy programs throughout the United States in order to improve the effectiveness of such programs and to increase the number of such programs..."

As a result of the first year of the volunteers' work, 201 adults received GEDs; 3887 new learners enrolled in programs served by AmeriCorps volunteers, including 987 adults who received public assistance and 246 homeless adults; 1590 children of adult learners participated in family literacy programs; and 364 inmates and parolees received instruction in basic skills or tutor training

The Institute was awarded \$1.7 million from the Corporation for National and Community Service for its AmeriCorps project.



## THE ADULT LITERACY RESEARCH NETWORK



### ***A Project of the National Institute for Literacy, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education***

The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), and U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) have embarked on an aggressive research program to develop new knowledge on the development of literacy in adults and the critical factors that influence adult literacy instruction. These projects should contribute significantly to filling major gaps in adult literacy research and practice.

In September 2002, NICHD, NIFL, and OVAE awarded six research grants, totaling \$18.5 million over a five-year period (2002-2006), to develop and test assessment and instructional approaches and strategies for adult literacy instruction. These grants are designed to build on and draw from what is already known about reading and effective instruction for children as well as the work of the Adult Literacy Reading Research Working Group. The Adult Literacy Reading Research Working Group was established in 2000 by NIFL and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and recently produced *Research Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction*, a landmark research report that analyzes the existing adult basic education reading instruction research base.

The six research studies employ experimental designs, and at least four of these use combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. They will design, develop, implement and analyze the effectiveness of interventions for low-literate adults, including the role of decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension instruction as well as explicitness of instruction. In the first year, research teams will screen nearly 73,000 adults with low literacy skills to identify the more than 3,800 adults to participate in these studies. It is estimated that more than 60 percent of participants will be minorities; most studies will have from 30 to 60 percent African-American and from 20 to 50 percent Hispanic or Latino participants (many of whom are not native speakers of English).

Investigators will be conducting this research in more than 80 sites in 16 different states: Alaska, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maine, Maryland, North Carolina, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Washington.

Grants were awarded to:

**Daphne Greenberg** (*principal investigator*), **Georgia State University**

**Research on Reading Instruction for Low-Literate Adults:** This study focuses on adult learners whose word reading grade equivalence levels range from 3.0 to 5.9. The study will: (1) evaluate the degrees of explicitness necessary to effectively and efficiently teach reading to adult poor readers; (2) analyze data to determine which instructional approach, or combination of instructional approaches, is effective for the different subtypes of adult poor learners and (3) provide a systematic evaluation of the different components of the neural circuitry of adult poor readers compared to adult expert readers and evaluate how useful fMRI, a functional brain imaging technique, is in studying the impact of instruction on adult learners.

**Susan Levy** (*principal investigator*), **University of Illinois**

**Testing Impact of Health Literacy in Adult Literacy and Integrated Family Approach**

**Programs:** This research project will test the relative merit of the Integrated Family Approach (IFA) Literacy Even Start programs with adults versus the traditional Adult Literacy (AL) programs, addressing key issues in the literature using a randomized study design in 53 sites in Illinois. This project will test whether adult literacy is more effectively improved by: (1) the IFA as compared to AL programs; (2) inclusion of a health literacy component; (3) IFA with a health literacy curriculum as compared to AL programs with and without the health literacy curriculum; and (4) in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs, the IFA as compared to AL when both use the same health literacy curriculum.

**Daryl Mellard** (*principal investigator*), **University of Kansas – Lawrence**

**Improving Literacy Instruction for Adults:** This study proposes to extend the knowledge garnered with younger populations to address adult learning needs. It will: (1) determine what component skills for reading are incorporated within common assessments of literacy; (2) select appropriate interventions based on their initial findings with younger learners, and rigorously test these interventions with adults under well-controlled conditions; and (3) translate all research findings into practice in more typical settings.

**John Sabatini** (*principal investigator*), **Educational Testing Services**

**Relative Effectiveness of Reading Programs for Adults:** In this project, four supplemental instructional programs that directly target decoding and fluency will be compared with regard to their effectiveness in improving word-level reading abilities of adult learners. The findings will examine what kinds of literacy instruction are most effective for raising the reading abilities of low-intermediate adult readers, how to identify these adults' instructional needs accurately and efficiently by using an appropriate battery of assessments, and how literacy instruction might be tailored to the specific needs of individual adults in the target population.

**Frank Wood** (*principal investigator*), **Wake Forest University of the Health Sciences**

**Young Adult Literacy Problems: Prevalence and Treatment:** This project has two major phases: (1) to determine the prevalence of poor reading skills in the young adult population, and (2) to compare treatment regimes for efficacy. The latter is accomplished through a design that will permit the isolation of effective types of instruction in four areas known to be crucial to reading ability in children, and suspected to be so in adults: phonological decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension.

**Richard Venezky** (*principal investigator*), **University of Delaware**

**Building a Knowledge Base for Teaching Adult Decoding:** This project will study adult literacy decoding instruction, drawing both on successful methods developed for K-12 reading instruction and on successful adult literacy programs that emphasize component skills. Within decoding instruction, the project will focus on three specific issues: (1) how rule-based (deductive/ abstract) and exemplar-based (inductive/analogical) instructional methods affect adult learners' decoding skills (2) how successive and concurrent presentations of alternative (variant) pronunciations of the same graphemic pattern affect adult learners' decoding skills; and (3) how speeded practice affects adult learners' decoding skills. The research strategies adopted include design studies followed by field studies.

Additional Resources:

Adult Reading Research Working Group Internet site

[http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adult\\_reading/intro/rrwg.html](http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adult_reading/intro/rrwg.html)

Summary Document on NICHD/NIFL/OVAE expert panel on adult and family literacy research needs

[http://www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/AFL\\_workshop.htm](http://www.nichd.nih.gov/crmc/cdb/AFL_workshop.htm)





**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY  
ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS  
MARCH 2003–DECEMBER 2003**



The Presidentially-appointed Advisory Board has met three times since its members were confirmed: March 2003, June 2003, and September 2003, and once in December 2003 for an informal planning meeting. The Advisory Board approved the following recommendations at its meetings.

**(1) Prepare a transition document along the lines of the Office of Vocational and Adult Education’s (OVAE) policy and program integration paper, including current activities and deliverables and taking into account the criteria produced in the Institute’s strategic planning process.**

**(2) Begin an evaluation process of *LINCS* that includes the cost of the contract, cost of the overall metric, new criteria of quality to be developed in collaboration with OVAE, review of the products of the Regional Technology Centers and policies governing product development, alignment of customer base with the content and alignment of content with the mission and goals of NIFL, as defined by accountability, what works, flexibility, and empowerment.**

**(3) Develop a methodology for selecting high-performing literacy programs.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute work with OVAE to develop a methodology for identifying high-performing adult education programs. The Advisory Board further recommended that the Institute develop a methodology suitable for use in identifying high-performing literacy programs serving different age groups, i.e. programs serving children, youth, and adult.

**(4) Create a new special collection, called *LINCS PLUS* that is research-based and meets high-quality standards.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute collaborate with OVAE to develop a new special collection that will become the prototype for the Institute’s information dissemination efforts. The collection must be derived from scientifically based research, or the most rigorous research available if scientifically based research is not available.

**(5) Identify effective Reading First Programs.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute immediately begin work to identify high-performing Reading First programs.

**(6) Synthesize the research on adolescent reading and release a document modeled after the *Put Reading First* guide for teachers.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute fund a review of the literature on adolescent reading and develop a teacher-friendly guide to the findings of that review. The Board further recommended that the Institute review the work of Dr. Bonnie Armbruster who has conducted an analysis of literature on adolescent reading (grades 4-8) using the What Works Clearinghouse criteria.

**(7) Develop a dissemination plan for the National Early Literacy’s Panel report.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute develop a dissemination report that identifies target populations and appropriate strategies that ensure widespread distribution of the Panel’s report to these audiences. In particular, the Advisory Board recognized the need for formulating strategies for getting information to Head Start program directors and staff of other early childhood programs. In addition, the Advisory Board recommended that the Institute develop a dissemination plan for its early childhood work.

**(8) Develop a dissemination plan for the report of the National Literacy Panel report.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute support the dissemination of the National Literacy Panel’s report on English acquisition in young children and youth for whom English is not their first language.

**(9) Create a public awareness plan for the Institute that raises the visibility of the Institute and its initiatives.**

The Advisory Board recommended that the Institute develop a strategy for increasing public awareness of the Institute and its initiatives.

**(10) Conduct a full review of the Institute’s management, administrative, and program functions and take appropriate steps to ensure efficient and effective operations. Further, the Interim Director should procure any services necessary to ensure the review is carried out expeditiously.**

**(11) Provide options and recommendations concerning the implementation of a new model of the Institute’s work.**

The Advisory Board voted to have the Institute staff review a comprehensive model of the Institute’s purpose, structure, and activities proposed by Advisory Board member Doug Carnine based on the following purpose statement: Supporting the use of knowledge to improve literacy results across the lifespan. The key elements of the model include (a) defining criteria for knowledge about effective programs, practices, and policies; (b) determining whether this work is being done already and if so, by whom; and (c) gathering the knowledge that meets the criteria; and (d) delivering the knowledge. A critical element of this survey would include developing a role for public-private partnerships in gathering and disseminating the knowledge.

**(12) Define a process of initiating and managing Institute projects.**

The Advisory Board voted to have the Institute staff articulate a clear process for deciding how to begin new projects and how to manage them once they have been started. The process is expected to define roles for partners in the public and private sectors and milestones that would ensure continuous progress and improvement.

**(13) Identify high-performing literacy programs.**

The Board recommended that the Institute use the methodology it develops for identifying high-performing programs to select and report on programs that are high performing.



## PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION



### **Background on Improving Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities**

The Institute began work to improve services to adults with learning disabilities in response to the National Literacy Act's (NLA) directive to "(B) conduct basic and applied research and demonstrations on literacy, including (v) the special literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency..." The project was continued under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act's (AEFLA) authorization to "(D) collect and disseminate information on methods of advancing literacy that show great promise..."

The Institute's effort, which ultimately became known as Bridges to Practice, has addressed what the adult literacy field believes to be an under-appreciated challenge in adult education – serving adult students with learning disabilities. Although little data has been available to document the number of adult students with learning disabilities, the growing awareness that learning disabilities are a lifelong condition – not something that children grow out of – has spurred greater interest in the question of providing meaningful services for adults with learning disabilities. Data from a 1999 study conducted by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) of adults enrolled in adult literacy programs found that more than half of those sampled reported that they attended special education classes when they were in school as children. Other information suggests that many of the hardest-to-serve recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits have learning disabilities that act as a barrier to work and self-sufficiency.

At the time the Institute began its work on learning disabilities, no other government agency was examining how to improve basic skills services for adults with learning disabilities. However, both the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) have provided financial support to the Institute's Bridges work.

### **Background on Standards Based Reform**

The Equipped for the Future (EFF) content standards initiative has its roots in an Institute effort begun in FY1993 under the National Literacy Act's directive to "...assist appropriate Federal agencies in setting specific objectives and strategies for meeting the goals of this title and in measuring the progress of such agencies in meeting such goals..." The goal of the title was to "enhance the national effort to eliminate the problem of illiteracy by the year 2000..."

In order to measure progress toward ending illiteracy, the Institute partnered with the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) to develop a common understanding of the goals of the adult education system. Without knowing the goals, it would be impossible to know what to measure. The Institute collaborated with the NEGP, which itself was promoting eight national education goals adopted by President Bush and the governors, including a goal that "[e]very adult American will be literate and have the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global

economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.” The organizations gathered information by commissioning papers from experts on how to meet the needs of special populations of adults, including immigrants, welfare recipients, parents, and workers with low literacy skills. Adult learners also provided their perspective on what it meant to be literate.

The Institute then launched a standards setting and system reform initiative. The need for this work was confirmed by a 1995 General Accounting Office (GAO) report called *Adult Education: Measuring Program Results has been Challenging*, which cited a lack of goals in the adult education system and described the problems associated with evaluating adult education program results when programs lacked clearly defined objectives. The Institute’s decision to pursue standards-based reform, which led to the establishment of the Equipped for the Future project in FY1995, created a national consensus on what adults need to be able to do in their roles as parents, citizens, and workers, as well as what they need to know to carry out these roles. This information served as the basis for the development of applied learning standards, and states were invited to partner with the Institute to pilot and refine the standards.

The 16 EFF content standards were published in FY2000, and a national training center was established to support implementation of the standards. The Institute also began work in FY2000 to develop an assessment framework so states and programs using the EFF content standards would be able to demonstrate results for both accountability and program improvement purposes. As part of developing the framework, the Institute collected data from EFF programs to use in creating a research-based performance continuum for each of the standards. This information was shared with the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) in order to strengthen the existing reporting levels in the National Reporting System for AEFLA.

The Institute and OVAE also supported a Committee on Quality Measures for Alternative Assessments of Adult Education organized under the auspices of the National Academy of Sciences Board on Testing and Assessment. The Committee reviewed the state of the art in adult literacy assessment and provided guidance on the design, development, and administration of performance assessments that could lead to valid and comparable results in the National Reporting System.

In FY2002, at the request of some of the Institute’s partners in the workforce development system, the Institute began a project to use the content standards as a basis for a national work readiness credential. The credential would serve as a national, portable tool to identify, measure, and certify the skills critical to employment success and signal job applicants’ skills mastery. Such a credential would benefit employers and job seekers and also help bring together the adult basic education and workforce development systems. In particular, the credential would allow workforce investment boards to define clearly the results they expect from education and training vendors. It would also allow One Stops to accurately assess the readiness of job seekers for employment.

## **Background on Disseminating Information**

Shortly after the Institute was established, it surveyed more than 200 representatives of education, social service, job training, media, research, and academic organizations to identify their literacy-related information needs. Using the survey's results, the Institute began developing a *LINCS* prototype. The Institute soon recognized the value of an Internet-based communication system as both a dissemination mechanism and a critical piece of infrastructure for a decentralized and meagerly financed field. Through *LINCS*, the Institute and its federal partners could easily provide information, resources, and expertise on critical topics to all segments of the adult literacy field. At the same time, the Institute would help meet providers' real needs for instructional and program materials through a national online library.

The *LINCS* network now includes more than 10,000 catalogued literacy resources, special collections of materials on topics such as workplace literacy, English as a Second Language, and family literacy, and 12 public online discussion lists. Through *LINCS*, the Institute has created a national technology infrastructure, including quality standards for collecting and organizing resources on the Internet. This infrastructure integrates state, local, and national resources online, allowing states and providers to build on the common *LINCS* framework without having to develop their own web pages, resource collections, and technology support systems. Over time, *LINCS* has enhanced the ability of all 50 states to use information technologies in the context of literacy instruction and leveraged several million dollars for regional, state, and local literacy agencies.

The *LINCS* project was first authorized by the NLA as part of the Institute's duty to "...collect and disseminate information to Federal, state, and local entities with respect to literacy methods that show great promise ...". Under AEFLA, the project is authorized by the direction to the Institute "...to establish a national electronic database of information that disseminates information to the broadest possible audience within the literacy and basic skills field..."

## **Background on Accessing Information**

When the Institute began its national toll-free hotline service in 1995, years before the Internet's information capabilities had been fully realized, there was no national effort to improve access to literacy programs or encourage enrollment by making information about services easily available. Some states, communities, and individual programs made periodic efforts to highlight the services they offered, but these efforts typically lasted for a finite time. When specific recruitment efforts weren't underway, prospective students and volunteers were often left to seek out programs as best they could.

In 2001, the Institute expanded its program referral function by making the database of literacy programs used by the telephone hotline operators available on the Internet. On International Literacy Day in September 2001, the Institute launched America's Literacy Directory ([www.literacydirectory.org](http://www.literacydirectory.org)). It also broadened the types of programs listed to include programs for children and adolescents. The US Department of Labor, the US

Department of Education, and the telecommunications company Verizon joined the Institute as partners in creating the ALD. More than 300 websites include links to the ALD, including Verizon's Superpages website.

Under the NLA, the Institute was specifically authorized to "...provide a toll-free long-distance telephone line for literacy providers and volunteers." The AEFLA authorizes the Institute to "...establish a national electronic database of information that disseminates information to the broadest possible audience within the literacy and basic skills field, and that includes public and private literacy and basic skills programs..."

### **Background on Policy**

The NLA focused the Institute's policy activities on supporting the executive branch of government at all levels, authorizing the Institute to "...assist Federal, State, and local agencies in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy with respect to literacy by providing technical and policy assistance to government entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy and the development of model systems for implementing and coordinating Federal literacy programs that can be replicated at the State and local level..."

The AEFLA expanded the Institute's position as a policy resource for the executive branch and explicitly added Congress to the list of government entities the Institute is authorized to serve. The AEFLA directs the Institute to "...advise Congress and Federal departments and agencies regarding the development of policy with respect to literacy and basic skills..." The law also allows the Institute to "...provide policy and technical assistance to Federal, State, and local entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy."

The Institute's policy activities have played a unique role in supporting the national effort to improve adult literacy services and outcomes. As literacy has become a higher national priority, it has become increasingly important to ensure that service providers and stakeholders have access to information about the policies that govern their services in order for providers to plan and respond most effectively. Many state adult education offices do not have the resources to monitor federal legislative activity. Few professional organizations exist to serve as conduits of information, so it had been difficult for many providers and stakeholders to find a dependable source of policy information. By the same token, the Institute's service to Congress as a source of descriptive, factual information on literacy and the implementation of literacy policy complements and enhances the information provided by the national accountability system for adult education called the National Reporting System.

### **Background on Research**

The Institute provides research support in accordance with AEFLA language authorizing it to "...coordinate the support of reliable and replicable research and development on literacy and basic skills in families and adults across Federal agencies, especially with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in the Department of



Education, and to carry out basic and applied research and development on topics that are not being investigated by other organizations or agencies, such as the special literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities...”

Earlier, the Institute helped guide the development of the first federal research agenda for adult literacy. The Institute had discovered that foundations and public agencies were reluctant to invest in literacy research because it was unclear that an individual effort would contribute to a larger purpose. Under its NLA authorization to “conduct basic and applied research and demonstrations on literacy,” the Institute first determined the kinds of knowledge required to improve access to literacy programs and increase their effectiveness. The effort, begun in collaboration with the National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL) at the University of Pennsylvania, sought input from policymakers and practitioners to establish a framework for the research agenda. Later, the Institute and the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) at Harvard University, and the Department of Education’s Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL) directed a literature review and meetings of a National Steering Group and focus groups with practitioners. This work culminated in the publication of *A National Plan for Research and Development in Adult Education*.

In addition, funding research on learning disabilities formed a major element of the Institute’s Bridges to Practice project. The Institute provided \$2.5 million for a five-year research effort at the University of Kansas’ Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities to establish a research base on identification and instruction of adults with learning disabilities. The research then formed the basis of tool kit and training materials for practitioners.



# PUBLIC LAW 102-73, THE NATIONAL LITERACY ACT OF 1991



Public Law 102-73

102nd Congress – 1st Session

[H.R. 751]

102 P.L. 73; 105 Stat. 333  
1991 Enacted H.R. 751; 102 Enacted H.R. 751

DATE: JUL. 25, 1991 – PUBLIC LAW 102-73

SYNOPSIS: An Act

To enhance the literacy and basic skills of adults, to ensure that all adults in the United States acquire the basic skills necessary to function effectively and achieve the greatest possible opportunity in their work and in their lives, and to strengthen and coordinate adult literacy programs.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “National Literacy Act of 1991”.

## SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that –

- (1) nearly 50,000,000 adults in the United States have serious problems with literacy;
- (2) literacy problems are intergenerational and closely associated with poverty and pose a major threat to the economic well-being of the United States;
- (3) present public and private literacy programs reach only a small portion of the population in need and often result in only minimal learning gains;
- (4) the prevention of illiteracy is essential to stem further growth in national illiteracy rates;
- (5) literacy programs generally lack adequate funding, adequate coordination with other literacy programs, and an adequate investment in teacher training and technology;
- (6) access to better information about the best practices in the literacy field and more research in order to provide better diagnostic and instructional tools are essential for the improvement of literacy and employability in the United States;
- (7) as many as 50,000,000 workers may have to be trained or retrained before the year 2000;

- (8) the supply of unskilled workers is increasing while the demand for unskilled labor is decreasing;
- (9) programs under the Adult Education Act, which are the largest Federal source of direct literacy services in the United States, serve only 10 percent of eligible participants; and
- (10) all public and private literacy programs serve only about 19 percent of those who need help.

### SEC. 3. DEFINITION.

For purposes of this Act the term “literacy” means an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one’s goals, and develop one’s knowledge and potential.

## TITLE I – LITERACY: STRATEGIC PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND COORDINATION

### SEC. 101. LITERACY RELATED PROGRAMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Section 202 of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3412) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(h) The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education, in addition to performing such functions as the Secretary may prescribe, shall have responsibility for coordination of all literacy related programs and policy initiatives in the Department. The Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education shall assist in coordinating the related activities and programs of other Federal departments and agencies.”.

### SEC. 102. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY.

(a) Purpose. It is the purpose of the amendment made by this section to enhance the national effort to eliminate the problem of illiteracy by the year 2000 by improving research, development and information dissemination through a national research center.

(b) Findings. The Congress finds that –

- (1) much too little is known about how to improve access to, and enhance the effectiveness of, adult literacy programs, assessment tools, and evaluation efforts;
- (2) there is neither a reliable nor a central source of information about the knowledge base in the area of literacy;
- (3) a national institute for literacy would –
  - (A) provide a national focal point for research, technical assistance and research dissemination, policy analysis, and program evaluation in the area of literacy; and

(B) facilitate a pooling of ideas and expertise across fragmented programs and research efforts.

(c) Amendment to the Adult Education Act. Section 384 of the Adult Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1213c) is amended –

(1) in the second sentence of subsection (a), by inserting after “shall include” the following: “the operation of the Institute established by subsection (c) and”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) Establishment. (1) There is established the National Institute for Literacy (in this section referred to as the ‘Institute’). The Institute shall be administered under the terms of an interagency agreement entered into by the Secretary with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the ‘Interagency Group’). The head of any other agency designated by the President may be involved in the operation of the Institute as fits the involvement of such agency in accomplishing the purposes of the Institute. The Secretary may include in the Institute any research and development center supported under section 405(d)(4)(A)(ii) of the General Education Provisions Act and any other center, institute, or clearinghouse established within the Department of Education whose purpose is determined by the Secretary to be related to the purpose of the Institute.

“(2) The Institute shall have offices separate from the offices of any agency or department involved in the operation of the Institute.

“(3) The Interagency Group shall consider the Board’s recommendations in planning the goals of the Institute and in the implementation of any programs to achieve such goals. The daily operations of the Institute shall be carried out by the Director. If the Board’s recommendations are not followed, the Interagency Group shall provide a written explanation to the Board concerning actions the Interagency Group has taken that includes the Interagency Group’s reasons for not following the Board’s recommendations with respect to such actions. The Board may also request a meeting with the Interagency Group to discuss the Board’s recommendations.

“(d) Duties. (1) The Institute is authorized, in order to improve and expand the system for delivery of literacy services, to –

“(A) assist appropriate Federal agencies in setting specific objectives and strategies for meeting the goals of this title and in measuring the progress of such agencies in meeting such goals;

“(B) conduct basic and applied research and demonstrations on literacy, including –

“(i) how adults learn to read and write and acquire other skills;

“(ii) how the literacy skills of parents affect the ability of children to learn literacy skills;

“(iii) the assessment of literacy skills and the development of instructional techniques;

“(iv) the best methods for assisting adults and families to acquire literacy skills, including the use of technology;

“(v) the special literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency;

“(vi) how to effectively reach and teach the most educationally disadvantaged individuals;

“(vii) the use of technology and other studies which will increase the literacy knowledge base, use but not duplicate the work of other research services, and build on the efforts of such other research services; and

“(viii) how to attract, train, and retrain professional and volunteer teachers of literacy;

“(C) assist Federal, State, and local agencies in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policy with respect to literacy by –

“(i) establishing a national data base with respect to –

“(I) literacy and basic skills programs, including programs in Federal departments, State agencies, and local agencies, and programs that are privately supported through nonprofit entities and for profit entities;

“(II) assessment tools and outcome measures;

“(III) the amount and quality of basic education provided in the workplace by businesses and industries; and

“(IV) progress made toward the national literacy goals; and

“(ii) providing technical and policy assistance to government entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy and the development of model systems for implementing and coordinating Federal literacy programs that can be replicated at the State and local level;

“(D) provide program assistance, training, and technical assistance for literacy programs throughout the United States in order to improve the effectiveness of such programs and to increase the number of such programs, which assistance and training shall –

“(i) be based on the best available research and knowledge; and

“(ii) be coordinated with activities conducted by –

“(I) regional educational laboratories supported under section 405(d)(4)(A)(i) of the General Education Provisions Act;

“(II) curriculum centers assisted under section 251(a)(8) of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act; and

“(III) other educational and training entities that provide relevant technical assistance;

“(E) collect and disseminate information to Federal, State, and local entities with respect to literacy methods that show great promise (including effective methods of assessment, effective literacy programs, and other information obtained through research or practice relating to adult and family learning that would increase the capacity and quality of literacy programs in the United States), using a variety of methods to ensure that the best information is received by State and local providers of literacy services;

“(F) review and make recommendations regarding –

“(i) ways to achieve uniformity among reporting requirements;

“(ii) the development of performance measures; and

“(iii) the development of standards for program effectiveness of literacy-related Federal programs; and  
“(G) provide a toll-free long-distance telephone line for literacy providers and volunteers.

“(2) The Institute may enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, or make grants to, individuals, public or private nonprofit institutions, agencies, organizations, or consortia of such institutions, agencies, or organizations to carry out the activities of the Institute. Such grants, contracts, or agreements shall be subject to the laws and regulations that generally apply to grants, contracts, or agreements entered into by Federal agencies.

“(e) Literacy Leadership. (1) The Institute is, in consultation with the Board, authorized to award fellowships, with such stipends and allowances that the Director considers necessary, to outstanding individuals pursuing careers in adult education or literacy in the areas of instruction, management, research, or innovation.

“(2) Fellowships awarded under this subsection shall be used, under the auspices of the Institute, to engage in research, education, training, technical assistance, or other activities to advance the field of adult education or literacy, including the training of volunteer literacy providers at the national, State, or local level.

“(3) Individuals receiving fellowships pursuant to this subsection shall be known as ‘Literacy Leader Fellows’.

“(f) National Institute Board. (1)(A) There is established the National Institute Board (in this section referred to as the ‘Board’). The Board shall consist of 10 individuals appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate from individuals who –

“(i) are not otherwise officers or employees of the Federal Government;

“(ii) are representative of entities or groups described in subparagraph (B); and

“(iii) are chosen from recommendations made to the President by individuals who represent such entities or groups.

“(B) Entities or groups described in this subparagraph are –

“(i) literacy organizations and providers of literacy services, including –

“(I) providers of literacy services receiving assistance under this Act; and

“(II) nonprofit providers of literacy services;

“(ii) businesses that have demonstrated interest in literacy programs;

“(iii) literacy students;

“(iv) experts in the area of literacy research;

“(v) State and local governments; and

“(vi) organized labor.

“(2) The Board shall –

“(A) make recommendations concerning the appointment of the Director and staff of the Institute;

“(B) provide independent advice on the operation of the Institute; and

“(C) receive reports from the Interagency Group and the Director.

“(5) The Interagency Group may carry out the duties of the Board until the expiration of the 180-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of the National Literacy Act of 1991.

“(4) Except as otherwise provided, the Board established by this subsection shall be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

“(5)(A) Each member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. Any such member may be appointed for not more than 2 consecutive terms.

“(B) Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member’s predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term. A member may serve after the expiration of that members’ term until a successor has taken office. A vacancy in the Board shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made. A vacancy in the Board shall not affect the powers of the Board.

“(6) A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold hearings. Any recommendation may be passed only by a majority of its members present.

“(7) The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board shall be elected by the members. The term of office of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be 2 years.

“(8) The Board shall meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of its members.

“(g) Gifts, Bequests, and Devises. The Institute and the Board may accept (but not solicit), use, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or devises of services or property, both real and personal, for the purpose of aiding or facilitating the work of the Institute or the Board, respectively. Gifts, bequests, or devises of money and proceeds from sales of other property received as gifts, bequests, or devises shall be deposited in the Treasury and shall be available for disbursement upon order of the Institute or the Board, respectively.

“(h) Mails. The Board and the Institute may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

“(i) Staff. The Interagency Group, after considering recommendations made by the Board, shall appoint and fix the pay of a Director.

“(j) Applicability of Certain Civil Service Laws. The Director and staff of the Institute may be appointed without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and may be paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, except that an individual so



appointed may not receive pay in excess of the annual rate of basic pay payable for GS-18 of the General Schedule.

“(k) Experts and Consultants. The Board and the Institute may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

“(l) Report. The Institute shall submit a report to the Congress in each of the first 2 years in which it receives assistance under this section, and shall submit a report biennially thereafter. Each report submitted under this subsection shall include –

“(1) a comprehensive and detailed description of the Institute’s operations, activities, financial condition, and accomplishments in the field of literacy for such fiscal year;

“(2) a description of how plans for the operation of the Institute for the succeeding fiscal year will facilitate achievement of the goals of the Institute and the goals of the literacy programs within the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services; and

“(3) any additional minority, or dissenting views submitted by members of the Board.

“(m) Nonduplication. The Institute shall not duplicate any functions carried out by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (a) or (b). This subsection shall not be construed to prohibit the Secretary from delegating such functions to the Institute.

“(n) Authorization of Appropriations. (1) There are authorized to be appropriated for purposes of operating the Institute established by subsection

(c) \$ 15,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995.

“(2) Any amounts appropriated to the Secretary, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, or any other department that participates in the Institute for purposes that the Institute is authorized to perform under this section may be provided to the Institute for such purposes.”.



# WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT OF 1998 (P.L. 105-220)



## TITLE II, SUBTITLE A, SEC. 242. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY

### SEC. 242. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY.

- (a) PURPOSE- The purpose of this section is to establish a National Institute for Literacy that-
- (1) provides national leadership regarding literacy;
  - (2) coordinates literacy services and policy; and
  - (3) serves as a national resource for adult education and literacy programs by-
    - (A) providing the best and most current information available, including the work of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in the area of phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, to all recipients of Federal assistance that focuses on reading, including programs under titles I and VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq. and 7401 et seq.), the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), and this Act; and
    - (B) supporting the creation of new ways to offer services of proven effectiveness.
- (b) ESTABLISHMENT-
- (1) IN GENERAL- There is established the National Institute for Literacy (in this section referred to as the 'Institute'). The Institute shall be administered under the terms of an interagency agreement entered into by the Secretary of Education with the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Health and Human Services (in this section referred to as the 'Interagency Group'). The Interagency Group may include in the Institute any research and development center, institute, or clearinghouse established within the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, or the Department of Health and Human Services the purpose of which is determined by the Interagency Group to be related to the purpose of the Institute.
  - (2) OFFICES- The Institute shall have offices separate from the offices of the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services.
  - (3) RECOMMENDATIONS- The Interagency Group shall consider the recommendations of the National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board (in this section referred to as the 'Board') established under subsection (e) in planning the goals of the Institute and in the implementation of any programs to achieve the goals. If the Board's recommendations are not followed, the Interagency Group shall provide a written explanation to the Board concerning actions the Interagency Group takes that are inconsistent with the Board's recommendations, including the reasons for not following the Board's recommendations with respect to the actions. The Board may also request a meeting of the Interagency Group to discuss the Board's recommendations.
  - (4) DAILY OPERATIONS- The daily operations of the Institute shall be administered by the Director of the Institute.
- (c) DUTIES-

(1) IN GENERAL- In order to provide leadership for the improvement and expansion of the system for delivery of literacy services, the Institute is authorized-

(A) to establish a national electronic data base of information that disseminates information to the broadest possible audience within the literacy and basic skills field, and that includes-

(i) effective practices in the provision of literacy and basic skills instruction, including instruction in phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and the integration of literacy and basic skills instruction with occupational skills training;

(ii) public and private literacy and basic skills programs, and Federal, State, and local policies, affecting the provision of literacy services at the national, State, and local levels;

(iii) opportunities for technical assistance, meetings, conferences, and other opportunities that lead to the improvement of literacy and basic skills services; and

(iv) a communication network for literacy programs, providers, social service agencies, and students;

(B) to coordinate support for the provision of literacy and basic skills services across Federal agencies and at the State and local levels;

(C) to coordinate the support of reliable and replicable research and development on literacy and basic skills in families and adults across Federal agencies, especially with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in the Department of Education, and to carry out basic and applied research and development on topics that are not being investigated by other organizations or agencies, such as the special literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities;

(D) to collect and disseminate information on methods of advancing literacy that show great promise, including phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension based on the work of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development;

(E) to provide policy and technical assistance to Federal, State, and local entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy;

(F) to fund a network of State or regional adult literacy resource centers to assist State and local public and private nonprofit efforts to improve literacy by-

(i) encouraging the coordination of literacy services;

(ii) enhancing the capacity of State and local organizations to provide literacy services; and

(iii) serving as a link between the Institute and providers of adult education and

literacy activities for the purpose of sharing information, data, research, expertise, and literacy resources;

(G) to coordinate and share information with national organizations and associations that are interested in literacy and workforce investment activities;

(H) to advise Congress and Federal departments and agencies regarding the development of policy with respect to literacy and basic skills; and

(I) to undertake other activities that lead to the improvement of the Nation's literacy delivery system and that complement other such efforts being undertaken by public and private agencies and organizations.

(2) GRANTS, CONTRACTS, AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS- The Institute may award grants to, or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements with, individuals, public or private institutions, agencies, organizations, or consortia of such institutions, agencies, or organizations to carry out the activities of the Institute.

(d) LITERACY LEADERSHIP-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Institute, in consultation with the Board, may award fellowships, with such stipends and allowances that the Director considers necessary, to outstanding individuals pursuing careers in adult education or literacy in the areas of instruction, management, research, or innovation.

(2) FELLOWSHIPS- Fellowships awarded under this subsection shall be used, under the auspices of the Institute, to engage in research, education, training, technical assistance, or other activities to advance the field of adult education or literacy, including the training of volunteer literacy providers at the national, State, or local level.

(3) INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS- The Institute, in consultation with the Board, may award paid and unpaid internships to individuals seeking to assist the Institute in carrying out its mission. Notwithstanding section 1342 of title 31, United States Code, the Institute may accept and use voluntary and uncompensated services as the Institute determines necessary.

(e) NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY ADVISORY BOARD-

(1) ESTABLISHMENT-

(A) IN GENERAL- There shall be a National Institute for Literacy Advisory Board (in this section referred to as the 'Board'), which shall consist of 10 individuals appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(B) COMPOSITION- The Board shall be comprised of individuals who are not otherwise officers or employees of the Federal Government and who are representative of entities such as-

(i) literacy organizations and providers of literacy services, including nonprofit providers, providers of English literacy programs and services, social service organizations, and eligible providers receiving assistance under this subtitle;

- (ii) businesses that have demonstrated interest in literacy programs;
- (iii) literacy students, including literacy students with disabilities;
- (iv) experts in the area of literacy research;
- (v) State and local governments;
- (vi) State Directors of adult education; and
- (vii) representatives of employees, including representatives of labor organizations.

(2) DUTIES- The Board shall-

- (A) make recommendations concerning the appointment of the Director and staff of the Institute;
- (B) provide independent advice on the operation of the Institute; and
- (C) receive reports from the Interagency Group and the Director.

(3) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT- Except as otherwise provided, the Board established by this subsection shall be subject to the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.).

(4) APPOINTMENTS-

(A) IN GENERAL- Each member of the Board shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, except that the initial terms for members may be 1, 2, or 3 years in order to establish a rotation in which one-third of the members are selected each year. Any such member may be appointed for not more than 2 consecutive terms.

(B) VACANCIES- Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed shall be appointed only for the remainder of that term. A member may serve after the expiration of that member's term until a successor has taken office.

(5) QUORUM- A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum but a lesser number may hold hearings. Any recommendation of the Board may be passed only by a majority of the Board's members present.

(6) ELECTION OF OFFICERS- The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board shall be elected by the members of the Board. The term of office of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be 2 years.

(7) MEETINGS- The Board shall meet at the call of the Chairperson or a majority of the members of the Board.

(f) GIFTS, BEQUESTS, AND DEVISES-

(1) IN GENERAL- The Institute may accept, administer, and use gifts or donations of services, money, or property, whether real or personal, tangible or intangible.

(2) RULES- The Board shall establish written rules setting forth the criteria to be used by the Institute in determining whether the acceptance of contributions of services, money, or property

whether real or personal, tangible or intangible, would reflect unfavorably upon the ability of the Institute or any employee to carry out the responsibilities of the Institute or employee, or official duties, in a fair and objective manner, or would compromise the integrity or the appearance of the integrity of the Institute's programs or any official involved in those programs.

(g) **MAILS-** The Board and the Institute may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as other departments and agencies of the United States.

(h) **STAFF-** The Interagency Group, after considering recommendations made by the Board, shall appoint and fix the pay of a Director.

(i) **APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE LAWS-** The Director and staff of the Institute may be appointed without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and may be paid without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, except that an individual so appointed may not receive pay in excess of the annual rate of basic pay payable for level IV of the Executive Schedule.

(j) **EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS-** The Institute may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code.

(k) **REPORT-** The Institute shall submit a report biennially to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the Senate. Each report submitted under this subsection shall include—

(1) a comprehensive and detailed description of the Institute's operations, activities, financial condition, and accomplishments in the field of literacy for the period covered by the report;

(2) a description of how plans for the operation of the Institute for the succeeding 2 fiscal years will facilitate achievement of the goals of the Institute and the goals of the literacy programs within the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services; and

(3) any additional minority, or dissenting views submitted by members of the Board.

(l) **FUNDING-** Any amounts appropriated to the Secretary, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, or any other department that participates in the Institute for purposes that the Institute is authorized to perform under this section may be provided to the Institute for such purposes.





# THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001



**PL 107-110**

## **SEC. 1207. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.**

(a) IN GENERAL- From funds reserved under section 1202(b)(1)(D), the National Institute for Literacy, in collaboration with the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Director of the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development shall –

- (1) disseminate information on scientifically based reading research pertaining to children, youth, and adults;
- (2) identify and disseminate information about schools, local educational agencies, and State educational agencies that have effectively developed and implemented classroom reading programs that meet the requirements of this subpart, including those State educational agencies, local educational agencies, and schools that have been identified as effective through the evaluation and peer review provisions of this subpart; and
- (3) support the continued identification and dissemination of information on reading programs that contain the essential components of reading instruction as supported by scientifically based reading research, that can lead to improved reading outcomes for children, youth, and adults.

(b) DISSEMINATION AND COORDINATION- At a minimum, the National Institute for Literacy shall disseminate the information described in subsection (a) to –

- (1) recipients of Federal financial assistance under this title, title III, the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; and
- (2) each Bureau funded school (as defined in section 1141 of the Education Amendments of 1978).

(c) USE OF EXISTING NETWORKS- In carrying out this section, the National Institute for Literacy shall, to the extent practicable, use existing information and dissemination networks developed and maintained through other public and private entities including through the Department and the National Center for Family Literacy.

(d) NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LITERACY- For purposes of funds reserved under section 1202(b)(1)(D) to carry out this section, the National Institute for Literacy shall administer such funds in accordance with section 242(b) of Public Law 105-220 (relating to the establishment and administration of the National Institute for Literacy).



# PL 106-554, TITLE XVI-IMPROVING LITERACY THROUGH FAMILY LITERACY PROJECTS



## **Section 1601 Short Title**

## **Section 1602 Authorization of Appropriations**

## **Section 1603 Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies**

## **Section 1604 Even Start Family Literacy Programs**

Part B - William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Programs

“(b) Scientifically Based Research on Family Literacy.-

“(1) In general.-From amounts reserved under section 1202(b)(2), the National Institute for Literacy, in consultation with the Secretary, shall carry out research that-

“(A) is scientifically based reading research (as defined in section 2252); and

“(B) determines-

“(i) the most effective ways of improving the literacy skills of adults with reading difficulties; and

“(ii) how family literacy services can best provide parents with the knowledge and skills they need to support their children’s literacy development.

“(2) Use of expert entity.-The National Institute for Literacy, in consultation with the Secretary, shall carry out the research under paragraph (1) through an entity, including a Federal agency, that has expertise in carrying out longitudinal studies of the development of literacy skills in children and has developed effective interventions to help children with reading difficulties.”