Wyoming Narrative Report 2009-2010

1. Describe successful activities, programs and projects supported with State Leadership funds and describe the extent to which these activities, programs and projects were successful in implementing the goals of the State Plan.

Professional Development Activities
All professional development activities are part of the Leadership approved-activities list in the state plan. In a small state with limited funds, all of the leadership activities are targeted. However, the priorities were training, formula funding, and monitoring. The following activities were completed.

State Fall Conference – October 6-7, 2009
The ABE Fall Conference was held in Casper and offered guest speakers including Art Ellison on “Advocacy and Funding” and Scott Greenberg on “Identifying strengths and conquering the fears of change.” Breakout sessions included 1) a focus on Math by Stacie Lynch-Newberg 2) an immigration session by Kate Syfert from USCIS and 3) a goal setting session.

State Director & Staff Training
The State Director, Marcia Hess, attended the New State Director’s Management Workshop which offers important state level information including Understanding AEFLA State Plan, Key State Responsibilities, Uses of State Leadership, Funding and Monitoring Locals, NRS, DAEL Monitoring, National Activities, and General Resources.

NRS and Data Collection
LACES conducted two online trainings which covered on diagnostic processes, error checks and remediation of the errors. The second one was training on the ethnicity changes and what was needed at the beginning of the next grant year for data collection. The second part of that training covered closing out procedures, checking tables for accuracy and setting up the new classes for the next grant year.

The NRS Data Dive for Local Programs workshop was attended by Gail Anderson (Federal Programs Supervisor), Kelly Derryberry (local program director), and Marcia Hess (new state ABE director). Plans have been made to present this training to the all local directors and their data staff in the fall 2010.

ESL Assessment Training on BEST Plus
Two local ESL staff who have been certified BEST Plus trainer were given a continuation contract for training ESL teachers on the BEST Plus assessment instrument. Both refreshers for calibrating the experienced teachers skills and new BEST Plus examiner trainings were conducted. Kelly Willmarth has kept a schedule of
this training on each teacher and notifies the program directors of when their teachers are in need of refresher workshops.

**Under Statewide Significance** – the Leadership Funds were also used to maintain our contract with LACES in order to meet data collection and reporting requirement.

**Extending Professional Development - State funding**
In order to extend professional development opportunities, many of the local programs have used state funding to send teachers to national conferences and then use them to give workshops for their local staff on what was gathered at the conferences. COABE, TESOL, and Mountain Plains Conference were the most frequently sited as those that were attended. It is the intention of the new director to bring a full scope of professional development through in-depth 2-day institutes and pilot projects like TEAL and STAR in the years ahead.

**MPR – Formula funding model**
The Wyoming Community College Commission, MPR Associates, and our local program directors concluded discussions on a performance-based funding model which will be used in the 2010-2011 grant year. It takes into consideration both the influences of high numbers of enrollment in the large programs and the performance outcomes for educational gain, GED attainment and entrance into postsecondary. Due to lack of useable data, employment goals were not included as fundable targets in the funding model. The intent is to add them into the formula in either the 2011-12 year or the following year, once the employment outcomes reflect on the NRS Tables. We should see the numbers rising in the 2010-2011 grant year and reflecting more favorably in the 2011-2012 year. With the 2008-2009 number so small due to inconsistent goal-setting policies,, the Workforce Services Department has been reluctant to match the data since confidentiality could too easily be breached. We are working on this situation.

**Monitoring & Technical Assistance**
The ABE State Director serves as the main source for technical assistance and monitoring to the local programs. Technical assistance may be initiated either by the local staff or from a review of the local program during a monitoring visit.

A self assessment was given to each program in July, 2009 and returned in preparation for the Federal review of the State which happened in September, 2009. This served as the main monitoring of the programs for this year. From this review a Corrective action plan was to have been completed and returned to OVAE which did not happen before the state director left this position in April, 2010. When the new state director took the position in May, 2010, she was given a grace period to gather information and submit for approval a corrective action plan which was completed after the beginning of the 2010-2011 grant year. Details of this will be in next year’s narrative report.
Technical assistance for the LACES data collection system is available to all programs and the state office through LiteracyPro Systems, which provided online training twice this year. Topics covered were: beginning data entry and any new updates to the system, queries and reports in February; and diagnostic checks, common errors, end-of-year corrections and creating new classes, and the change in data collection for ethnicity in June. The LACES support staff are available by e-mail Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are pleased with the quality of training we receive. The proficiency of our data-entry staff is getting better but more training is needed for the local team to be able to use data for better program improvement goals. Our goal is continual improvement in data quality and management. Transcripts of the spring training were distributed after the session and a new Tech Talk section was added to our website to house these transcripts for future reference.

2. Describe any significant findings from the Eligible Agency’s evaluation of the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on the core indicators of performance.

Wyoming Adult Education Performance Measures 2009-2010

Core Indicator #1: Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition and other literacy skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Beginning Literacy ABE</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Beginning Basic Education ABE</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Low Intermediate ABE</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. High Intermediate ABE</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Beginning Literacy ESL</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Low Beginning ESL</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. High Beginning ESL</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Low Intermediate ESL</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. High Intermediate ESL</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Advanced ESL</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Low Adult Secondary Education</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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Core Indicator #2: Placement in, retention in or completion of post-secondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Year (9) Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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3
12. Placement in Postsecondary Ed/Training 80% 79%
13. Placement in unsubsidized employment 70% 64.5%
14. Retention in unsubsidized employment 62% 42.9%

<p>| Core Indicator #3: Receipt of a secondary-school diploma or its recognized equivalent |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Year (9) Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. GED Completion</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>77.1%</td>
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**Significant Findings**

Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education did not meet the state negotiated performance levels in ABE and ASE. In November the state took a more assertive stand on the post testing rules and monitored more closely the 60 hour instructional rule before post testing students for educational gain. With seven of the nine projects working on open entry/open exit or by appointment for instruction, it was difficult to reframe the programs to offer enough hours, instructor and tutor coverage, and help students understand the changes that were effecting the operation of local program services. Most students did not get 60 hours of instruction so could not be post tested for level gains. This has been very distressing to the teachers, and greater support and training is needed to help the programs design more effective and efficient programs that will allow students to be retained and post tested.

English as a Second Language experienced difficulty in completing the post-testing assessments this year. There were no performance measures reached since very few met the 60 hour threshold for testing. Only one level (ESL Low Intermediate) had enough average hours to post test but students left before post testing could take place.

Another area where the state did not meet performance were obtain and retain employment goals. The process of surveying for follow-up has been a difficult concept for local staff to grasp and for some reason they chose not to set these goals in many programs. This non-compliance was brought to their attention by the previous state director but with little action taken. The numbers that show up on the NRS tables are delayed until students leave thus delaying when they populate the tables. The intervention of a new goal setting policy which will be written and implemented in 2010-2011 year is planned.

With changes to the assessment policy being tightened to reflect the 60-hour instructional period, we have been discussing with our MIS programmers the need to implement a system change rejecting any assessments prior to 60 hours of instruction, with exceptions for ASE low, ASE high and Advanced ESL at 30 hours. This should be addressed in the fall of 2010.

All our directors will be participating in the Leadership Excellence Academy (LEA) next year to help them enhance their management of various aspects of their programs. It is hoped that through more thorough training in data analysis, such as the Data Dives, and
the three aspects of research, surveys, and strategies offered by the LEA that local staff will be better able to guide and direct to growth to their programs toward managed classes with better results than this year.

Influences on the Overall Program
The 2009-2010 contract year has had four factors influencing program activities.

Federal review in September 2009 – The previous director spent a great deal of time gathering the required documentation needed for the review during the summer prior to the review team coming to the state. This director had been in her position for about 15 months at the time of the review. Misdirection and confusion by the director resulted in less than effective leadership before, during and after the review. This director left the state office within 6 months of the review.

Funding Formula Model – The state office staff, local program directors, and staff from MPR associates concluded a 2 year process of developing a funding formula model that everyone agreed was fair and equitable. It allows both large and small programs to share in success. Elements that were considered were dropout rate in the service area, number of served students, number of goal completions in educational functioning levels, postsecondary enrollment, and GED attainment. There was not enough information to use the employment goal attainment but it is planned that this will be added once sufficient data is available.

Professional Development - The loss of the Professional Development contractor has thrown the burden of training onto the shoulders of the state director. In a small state with limited administrative and leadership grant funds, it is difficult to meet the needs of training both teachers and local directors. The state director did hold WIN Video meetings monthly in an attempt to address the fields questions. This will be looked at in more depth next year and a plan for professional development will be created and implemented.

GED Testing Study – requirements for taking the GED Official Practice Test was a change for both ABE staff and the students. In an attempt to better align student success of higher skill sets and to be better ready for employment and postsecondary educational opportunities, minimum scores of 450 and an average score of 500 was implemented. A study will be written up of the results of these changes by the GED Administrator by February 2011 for the Wyoming Community College Commission.

3. Describe how the Eligible Agency has supported the integration of activities sponsored under Title II with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities. Include a description of how the eligible agency is being represented on the Local Workforce Investment Boards, adult
education’s involvement on the State Workforce Investment Board, the provision of core and other services through the One-Stop system and an estimate of the Title II funds being used to support activities and services through the One-Stop delivery system.

Wyoming does not have local Workforce Investment Boards but functions under a single service delivery area. In our communities, which are all under 60,000 in population, programs from all state agencies work very closely with their local partners, including non-profit service agencies, libraries, family literacy programs, jails, and local education agencies to meet the specific needs of their communities, counties, and unique populations. Hospitality industry, oil fields, coal and uranium mining, ranching, and service industries have different constellations in various parts of our state.

Board Of Cooperative Education Services and Board Of Cooperative Higher Education Services which are independent taxing districts, provide collaboration and augmentation to adult education services. They provide additional funding in some areas to our ABE programs or separately fund non-federally funded adult education. Each board has as a part of its mission to broaden or deepen the educational services for its community.

Integration of Activities
Career Development - There was greater integration of the WIA Title I and II programs with funding given to ABE local programs for implementing the Wyoming Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) in our state. Another effort included a focus on not duplicating the efforts of Title I and II for assessing participants with TABE. By working through the process and procedures, a foundation was laid for future projects. Adult Education partnered to offer integrated remediation needed for participants planning to complete their CRC as defined by O’NET and the Wyoming Workforce Services contracts. ABE providers are the identified providers for WorkKeys and WIN/KeyTrain under a separate but partnering grant.

Representation on Wyoming Workforce Development Council
Dr. Jim Rose, Executive Director of the Wyoming Community College Commission, is appointed to the WyWCD. In this capacity he represents the Adult Basic Education Program to the council. During the April 25, 2010 meeting the Department of Workforce Services announced ARRA funding was making it available to ABE programs “as they encountered people that are looking for work but need some work readiness criteria to help them get a job.” More than half of the ABE local programs did apply and receive funding.

4. Describe successful activities and services supported with EL Civics funds, including the number of programs receiving EL Civics grants and an estimate of the number of adult learners served.

Five EL Civics grants were funded on a multi-year cycle. During the federal review, it was cited that a new RFP had to be written and submitted to OVAE for approval. The
CAP was not approved until after the first quarter of the new grant year but a new competition for those funds will be run for the next year.

In looking at the individual projects we see that each city has a different ethnic make-up and varied needs. The western, northeastern and central parts of the state have students in the hospitality industry and natural gas, oil and coal extraction. In the southeastern part of the state we have agriculture which draws our ESL populations.

Western Wyoming Community College integrated EL Civics into four ESL levels of instruction. The 165 students had instruction in state and U.S. history and civics, especially as they apply to the citizenship test. Seven people passed their citizenship tests.

The other programs had multilevel classrooms and the civics education was integrated through cultural, historical, and assimilation units in the language acquisition classes. More clearly defined EL Civics training is planned for next year. The new state director is planning professional development both online and at the ESL Spring Institute. This will help to meet targets in the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) and bring our programs into better compliance.