



# Nevada Adult Basic Education

## ABE ADMINISTRATOR'S HANDBOOK SECTION 1: PROGRAM GUIDE FOR ABE IN NEVADA

September 2003

Last update October 26, 2009

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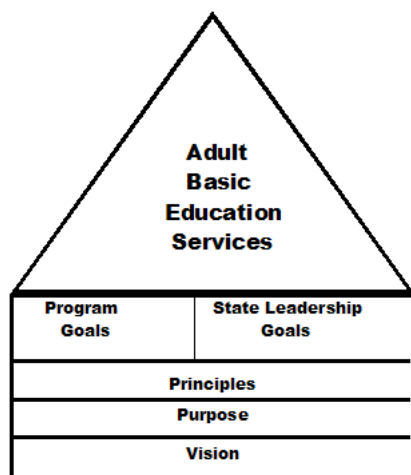
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# INTRODUCTION



The purpose of this section is to provide an overall guide to the operation of the programs funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA-funded programs) in Nevada. This section is an effective introduction for administrators new to adult education in Nevada and seasoned administrators will find it a useful reference tool as well.

Detailed policies and procedures can be found in other sections of this *Administrator's Handbook*:

- [Section 2: Grant Management](#)
- [Section 3: Accountability: Data Collection and Reporting for Literacy/ESL Programs](#)
- [Nevada TOPSpro Data Dictionary](#)
- [Nevada Assessment Policy](#)

## USING THIS HANDBOOK

- Throughout the *Adult Basic Education Administrator's Handbook*, **Nevada policy is presented in bold green text**. Any program deviations from policies outlined in this handbook must be authorized in writing by the [Adult Education Office](#), Nevada Department of Education. Any one-time exceptions to any of the policies outlined in this handbook must be documented in student or institutional records.
- Current contact information may be accessed from [Nevada's Adult Education Home Page](#).
- A glossary of common terms used by ABE/ESL programs is at [Nevada's ABE Glossary](#).
- Programs should periodically review the Web sites included in this document for updated information.

## ABOUT THE BRISTLECONE PINE LOGO

The State Tree of Nevada is the Bristlecone Pine, one of the oldest living things on earth. It is hardy, drought resistant, and determined to grow where other things cannot. It is used as a symbol for Adult Education in Nevada because it reflects tenacity, durability, and dedication to purpose.



*Acknowledgements: Nevada is grateful to West Virginia for posting its ABE Administrator's Technical Assistance Guide on the Web. That Guide served as a model and impetus for Parts II through VI of this Section.*

# PART I: VISION, PRINCIPLES, AND GOALS

Nevada Adult Education will provide lifelong educational opportunities that address the unique needs of individuals and communities by providing adults with opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively as citizens, workers, parents, and family members in a multicultural society. — *Nevada State Plan For Adult Basic Education 7/1/99-9/30/04*

Consulting frequently with key stakeholders, Nevada's ABE administrators and educators developed and continue to work on the framework for adult education in Nevada. Their vision, mission, and principles (updated December 2004) are intrinsic to the delivery of adult basic education throughout the state.

## VISION AND MISSION

Adult Basic Education is an integral component in Nevada's human service system, effectively responding to the needs of adult learners. Our mission is to provide responsive, quality educational opportunities that will enable our students to achieve their work, civic, family, and personal goals.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Excellence** – We are committed to a quality adult education system that promotes continuous improvement and is held accountable for performance results.
- **Service** – We value the dignity of each individual and the inherent ability to succeed. We respect the cultural diversity of our students. We encourage feedback from students and stakeholders in our customer-focused delivery system.
- **Innovation** – We encourage creative ideas and support the integration of research and best practices.
- **Synergy** – We believe that by working together, both internally and externally as part of an integrated system, we can achieve more than as separate entities.
- **Professionalism** – We support knowledgeable and dedicated educators by encouraging integrity, professional growth, and self-improvement.

## PURPOSE OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN NEVADA

The purpose of Adult Basic Education in Nevada is to increase the reading, writing, speaking, comprehension, mathematics, and problem-solving skills of adult learners so they can achieve their life, work, and educational goals. —*ABE Directors, August 2003*

The purpose is funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) and carried out through the following programs:

- Adult basic education (ABE) and literacy for adults below the eighth grade proficiency level;
- GED® (General Educational Development) Test preparation;
- English as a second language (ESL) for adults who lack facility in English;
- English Literacy/Civics; and
- State Leadership activities.

Details about these programs at  
[Nevada's Adult Education Home Page.](#)

## INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM GOALS

1. To ensure that adult learners meet their learning goals and achieve core measures through adult education programs that are effective and of high quality.
2. To encourage providers to integrate technology into instruction and to use technology effectively in reporting program outcomes.
3. To ensure cooperative/collaborative efforts between providers and community resource agencies.
4. To promote workplace literacy.
5. To promote family literacy.

— *Extrapolated from Nevada State Plan for Adult Basic Education 7/1/99-9/30/04*

## NEVADA FIVE YEAR STATE PLAN FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

The [Nevada Five Year State Plan for Adult Basic Education](#) (July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2004) continues under the existing authorization. The Plan implements the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), which is Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The Plan provides the framework for the State to make funding decisions for programs that:

- deliver services to meet education needs,
- serve those adults who are most in need and who have been least likely to participate, as well as those who desire to continue their education through completion of secondary school, and
- meet the needs of adults in rural and urban areas.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The [Nevada Five Year State Plan for Adult Basic Education](#) proposes an accountability system of student outcomes based on collected data and contains performance measures negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education. Recent and current performance targets can be found at [History of Nevada's Outcome/Level Negotiation](#).

Data on performance is collected and reported in compliance with the requirements of the [National Reporting System](#). Nevada's policies and procedures regarding data collection and reporting are detailed in [Section 3: Accountability](#) of this *Administrator's Handbook*.

## PART II: OVERVIEW OF ABE IN NEVADA

### THE ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT (AEFLA)

Congress enacted the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in August 1998. This law consolidates over fifty employment, training, and literacy programs into three block grants to states. Title I addresses programs for disadvantaged youth and for adult employment and training. Title II addresses adult education and family literacy and is commonly known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA); it replaces the Adult Education Act of 1991 and continues the federal investment in adult education and literacy until 2003, when it is due for reauthorization.

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) is the federal government's primary mechanism for helping states and localities address the problem of adult illiteracy. In general, programs funded through AEFLA target adults who:

- lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable them to function effectively on the job, in the family and in society; or
- do not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent level of education; or
- are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

The purpose of AEFLA is to encourage the establishment of education programs for adults ages 16 and over to:

1. Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency.
2. Assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.
3. Assist adults in the completion of a secondary school education.

**Nevada policy: Students must be at least 16 years of age and not enrolled or required to be enrolled in a secondary school to be served through AEFLA funds in Nevada. All persons under the age of 18 must provide documentation showing they have been excused from compulsory school attendance before they can be enrolled. Programs must provide the [Adult Education Office](#) with copies of documentation for each enrolled student under the age of 18.**

Individuals with an F-1 Visa (student visa) status are ineligible for services and shall “not be accorded a course of study in a publicly funded adult education program.” [Source: U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act (Sec. 1101a(15)(F)(1))]

In Nevada, AEFLA funds support the following programs:

- Adult Basic Education (ABE) and literacy for adults below the eighth grade proficiency level;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) for adults who lack facility in English;
- Adult Secondary Education (ASE) for adults to obtain an adult high school diploma or to pass the General Educational Development (GED) Tests;
- English Literacy/Civics for adults who lack facility in English and whose instruction emphasizes rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation, and US history and government;

#### DEFINITION OF LITERACY

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.

—*Workforce Investment Act (WIA) 1998*

- Adult Literacy with a family literacy component; and
- State Leadership activities, which primarily support all AEFLA-funded programs in Nevada.

The Nevada Department of Education distributes federal funds provided to the State by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Act and the [Nevada 5-Year State Plan for Adult Basic Education](#). The Plan covers the time period from July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2004 with annual extensions approved by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

## DELIVERY OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN NEVADA

### Programs of Instruction

Instruction is delivered through “Programs of Instruction” that receive AEFLA funds via a competitive grant process. Because of disparate demographics and economic climates within the state, the resultant variety of student needs, and the dissimilar nature of the institutions and organizations through which ABE is delivered, Programs of Instruction are encouraged to deliver services in the way that most effectively meets the needs in their communities.

**However, there are some issues governed by Nevada Policy that are applicable to all programs; these issues are designated as Nevada Policy throughout this document.**

Instruction is delivered through classes, small group instruction, and tutoring. In general:

- Instruction is delivered at community colleges, schools, community-based organizations, businesses, community buildings, prisons, jails and honor camps, faith-based organizations, or anywhere students can be accommodated.
- Instruction is year-round, from July 1 through June 30 (fiscal year).
- Instruction takes place during the daytime and during the evening. Programs may also offer instruction on weekends to enable certain working adults to participate and to effectively utilize available resources.
- There is no cost to students for instruction or materials.

#### INSTRUCTORS AND TUTORS

At one typical point in 2007-2008, there were 347 teachers and paraprofessionals active in the AEFLA funded programs. Almost all worked part-time and approximately 20% served as unpaid volunteers.

### Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals

Some AEFLA-funded programs (typically those run through the community colleges) serve individuals in jails, prisons, conservation camps, and community corrections programs.

Per federal guidelines, not more than 10 percent of available funds for program instruction shall be available to carry out services for corrections and other institutionalized individuals. These funds are available through regular application guidelines and typically are components of existing ABE/ESL programs.

### Workforce and Workplace Literacy

There are various terms used to refer to work-related education. Nevada uses the terms defined in *Basic Skills in the Workplace*, Northwest Regional Literacy Resource Center, March 1997.

- **Workforce Literacy:** Literacy instruction that is not necessarily tied to a particular workplace. Workforce literacy also includes opportunities for displaced workers to upgrade their skills to prepare for retraining or new employment.
  - **Workplace Literacy:** Literacy instruction that ties literacy requirements to a particular workplace and its workers.
  - **Workplace Education:** Umbrella term used to describe the field of education opportunities (not training) that promote the development of work-related basic skills/literacy skills. Curriculum is workplace-specific. Instruction is mostly offered at the worksite.
- For more on these and related terms, see the [Nevada ABE Glossary](#).

Again, because of the varying economic environments in different portions of the state and the variety of organizations through which ABE services are delivered, the AEFLA-funded programs approach workforce/workplace literacy in the ways that are most appropriate and effective for their populations. Some programs collaborate with Institutes of Business and Industry or organizations that deliver customized training. Other programs contract directly with clients to provide on-site workplace training. **All** programs are encouraged to incorporate workforce literacy into their ABE curricula.

### Family Literacy

Family literacy services are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours and of sufficient duration to make sustainable changes in a family. Family literacy integrates interactive literacy activities between parents and their children; training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and an age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. Funding may be used to support or provide programs, services, or activities related to family literacy services. Programs providing family literacy services should attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are funded through sources other than AEFLA.

### STATE LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Using not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to carry out State Leadership activities, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) allocates funds for the following adult education and literacy activities:

1. The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction, including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension;
2. The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities;
3. The provision of technical assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities;
4. The support of Nevada state or regional networks of literacy centers;
5. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities;
6. Incentives for program coordination, integration and performance awards;
7. Developing and disseminating curricula;
8. Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title;

9. Coordination with existing support services — such as transportation, child care, and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in and successful completion of adult education and literacy activities — to adults enrolled in such activities;
10. Integrating literacy instruction and occupational skill training; promoting linkages with employers; and
11. Linkages with postsecondary educational institutions.

### State Leadership Team

The Leadership Team is comprised of individuals throughout the state who receive funding based on a competitive grant process similar to that for Programs of Instruction. The purpose of Nevada's State Leadership Team is to support, guide, and advise the [Adult Education Office](#) and the providers of adult basic education and literacy services so that they may be better equipped to assist adults in the pursuit of their educational goals. The Leadership Team:

1. Promotes and supports the implementation of standardized assessment, data collection and reporting in ABE/ESL programs.
2. Encourages consistent, statewide application of Nevada standards-based teaching and program administration.
3. Provides effective professional development responsive to the needs of Nevada's ABE/ESL providers.
4. Builds high expectations for and fosters innovative, research- and evidence-based practices for implementation by local ABE/ESL delivery systems.
5. Facilitates the integration of employability skills, workplace literacy, and postsecondary readiness into local ABE/ESL delivery systems.
6. Provides mechanisms for raising awareness and sharing resources related to adult education and literacy throughout the state and region.
7. Promotes supportive and collaborative learning initiatives in Nevada.

### SERVICE TO STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

“Special needs” is a broad term that incorporates the need for some type of accommodation. For example, students with special needs may have a physical disability (e.g., sight or hearing), a learning disability (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, processing or memory problems), or a developmental disability (e.g., mental retardation, autism, Down Syndrome, or cerebral palsy).

See [Guidance for Serving Learners with Special Needs in Nevada](#) for definitions and policies regarding service to students with special needs and disabilities.

Current program contacts are listed at:

- [ABE and ESL Programs of Instruction](#)
- [English Literacy and Civics Programs of Instruction](#)
- [State Leadership Project Coordinators](#)

# PART III: ADMINISTERING THE ABE PROGRAM

## COLLABORATION

AEFLA-funded programs are expected to proactively collaborate with community resources and develop strong linkages between partners who serve their student population. These may include one-stop centers, job training programs, other educational institutions, state and social service agencies, private businesses, etc.

Each program is encouraged to establish an Advisory Council, as this can be an effective way to garner community input and assistance. The Council should meet on a regular basis, be demographically diverse, and include representation from business and industry, social service agencies, educational institutions, community-based organizations, other literacy programs, etc.

## FUNDING

Through the Basic State Grant Program, states receive federal funds annually according to a statutorily defined formula. Nevada must match at least twenty-five percent of these federal funds with state and local contributions, which may be in cash or in-kind; the state must then maintain the level of effort.

The Nevada Department of Education distributes federal funds provided to the State by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Act and the [Nevada State Plan for Adult Basic Education](#). The Basic State Grant is distributed to individual programs as subgrants; funds are allocated as follows:

- State Administration of the Program (5.0%)
- State Leadership Projects (12.5%)
- The remaining 82.5% supports programs of instruction. Services to institutionalized persons and prisoners may use up to 10% of this 82.5% portion.

State funds supplement federal funding and are allocated by the Nevada Department of Education according to how they can most effectively be utilized.

### Eligibility

The following are eligible to apply for funds:

- Local educational agencies
- Community-based organizations of demonstrated effectiveness
- Volunteer literacy organizations of demonstrated effectiveness
- Institutions of higher education
- Public or private nonprofit organizations
- Libraries
- Public housing authorities
- Nonprofit institutions not described above that have the ability to provide literacy services to adults
- Consortia of the entities above

## HIRING, SUPERVISING, AND EVALUATING STAFF

Due to the variety of funded programs, dissimilar institutional requirements, and disparate availability of practitioners in different areas of the state, there are no statewide requirements for hiring or evaluating instructors and tutors. Instead, programs are guided by their institutional guidelines and program effectiveness.

However, as part of ongoing statewide program improvement efforts, program directors and the leadership team have developed several effective practices:

- ✓ Programs are strongly encouraged to develop clear position descriptions for instructional and administrative staff.
- ✓ Programs should ensure that instructional and administrative staffs are aware of the PURPOSE OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN NEVADA and their GUIDING PRINCIPLES.
- ✓ Programs are expected to encourage practitioners to apply for Nevada's outcome-based [ABE Certificate of Performance](#) as soon as it is feasible for them to do so. Programs are strongly encouraged to incorporate a financial incentive for holders of the Certificate of Performance.
- ✓ Programs should encourage all ABE practitioners who are new to adult education in Nevada to complete the state's online pre-service training (see [Pre-service Training for Teachers and Tutors New to Adult Education in Nevada](#) for information) and turn in the coursework to the program administrator **prior** to beginning instruction.
- ✓ Programs should encourage all ABE practitioners and staff to participate in quality staff development opportunities, be they local, regional, or national.
- ✓ Programs are strongly encouraged to provide stipends for practitioners' staff development.
- ✓ Programs are strongly encouraged to implement a process for regular evaluation. The *Adult Basic Education Professional Performance Profile*, developed by the ABE programs at Northern Nevada Literacy Council and Western Nevada Community College (August 2001), is a competency-based framework that can be used as a basis for evaluating an instructor or tutor via self-evaluation, by a peer, or by the program administrator. The twenty-three competencies represent factors important to quality AEFLA-funded ABE instruction.

See [PART V: CREDENTIALING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT](#) for information on staff development for practitioners and administrators.

Download Nevada's *Adult Basic Education Professional Performance Profile* from:  
(PDF document): [www.literacynet.org/nevada/sdocs/ppp\\_nnlc.pdf](http://www.literacynet.org/nevada/sdocs/ppp_nnlc.pdf)  
(WORD document): [www.literacynet.org/nevada/sdocs/ppp\\_nnlc.doc](http://www.literacynet.org/nevada/sdocs/ppp_nnlc.doc)

## STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

### Recruitment/Access

Although the rate of population growth has decreased somewhat from that experienced from 1990-2000, Nevada is still the fastest growing state in the country. However, population growth is uneven across the state:

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's *State and County QuickFacts*, from 2000-2008 the population of Nevada increased 30.1%.

- Clark and Nye counties (in the south) each increased 35.6%.
- Other major service areas (Carson, Washoe, and Elko counties) increased (4.6%, 20.9%, and 3.9 %).
- The population of Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander, Mineral, Pershing, and White Pine — all frontier counties — decreased in varying amounts from -1.4% to -30.4%. However, rural counties Lyon and Storey Counties grew 53.7% and 27.7%, respectively.

With some areas overcrowded and facilities overburdened, and other areas under populated with scarce resources, access is an issue. Some programs may need to focus on marketing to recruit students; others may need to concentrate on determining how they can provide access to an abundance of students.

The [U.S. Census Bureau](#) is an excellent starting point for information and statistics that can help pinpoint the needs for classes and location/concentration of students or potential students. Pamphlets, brochures, posters, newspaper ads, PSAs (Public Service Announcements), collaboration with other agencies, and word-of-mouth are effective marketing devices, as are other program directors for [Nevada AEFLA-funded Adult Education Programs](#). Additional sources of funding and collaboration with businesses and other agencies can also be effective ways to provide services in overpopulated areas.

### Retention

Research has shown that 50-70% of adults entering literacy programs drop out before they reach their goals. This is costly to:

- the adult education program (an ineffective use of funds),
- potential students (who cannot access classes that start out fully enrolled), and especially
- the dropped out student, who again “failed” to receive the education he or she desired.

#### Intensity and Duration

AEFLA emphasizes that programs must provide services of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains or skill acquisition. However, as with many aspects of adult education, research on how intense and for how long is sparse and the studies that have been done are inconclusive and in some cases contradictory. Some Nevada programs report good results with classes ranging from 6-12 hours/week for 5-10 weeks.

“Retention” means different things to different people — just ask a few colleagues how they measure it! Recent research indicates the term “persistence” — adults staying in programs for as long as they can, engaging in self-directed study or distance education when they must stop attending program services, and returning to program services as soon as the demands of their lives allow — more accurately describes adult students’ study process.

Nevada AEFLA-funded programs do the following:

- ✓ For federal accountability purposes, even though the National Reporting System does not directly include persistence as a performance indicator, it does require that programs report on educational gain for all students who have received 12 contact hours. Success is measured by the proportion of students (with at least 12 contact hours) who have advanced an educational functioning level. To determine whether students have advanced a level, they must be post-tested. **If a student is not retained, he cannot be post-tested — this inability to test automatically decreases the percentage of students who made an educational gain.** Therefore, retention is a major factor in meeting performance standards.
- ✓ Effective student orientation, intake and goal-setting processes can help maximize retention and persistence. See [PART IV: INTAKE, ASSESSMENT, AND INSTRUCTION](#) for additional information.

For additional information on student persistence, see research posted at [www.ncsall.net](http://www.ncsall.net).

## Recognition Ceremonies

The Nevada Department of Education encourages the recognition of practitioners, administrative staff, and students for their accomplishments. The state's [Adult Basic Educator's Certificate of Performance](#) provides a recognition system for instructors and tutors. Practitioners and students are also recognized through awards from the [Nevada Adult Educators organization](#) and the [Mountain Plains Adult Education Association](#) and through individual program award ceremonies such as GED graduation ceremonies, student award days, etc. Creativity is strongly encouraged!

# PART IV: INTAKE, ASSESSMENT, AND INSTRUCTION

## STUDENT INTAKE

Most Nevada programs utilize a **managed entry** process, with scheduled beginning and ending dates for instruction. Sessions may be scheduled according to program needs (e.g., six to ten weeks, a college semester, etc.) and are usually established around specific curricula for ABE, ESL, or GED preparation. Occasionally particular topics such as preparation for a specific GED area or an ESL pronunciation class may be offered. Depending upon program needs (e.g., a new class offering or minimum participation requirements), class schedules may need to be well advertised.

However, due to factors peculiar to their service area, some programs may use an **open entry** system, whereby students may arrive virtually any time and receive information about the program, register, begin the assessment process, and begin instruction. Since there are no set beginnings and endings of study terms, students typically study until they accomplish their learning goals, or they may exit if other responsibilities interfere with study and then resume again when they are able. The classroom generally operates as a "one-room school house" in that all students are welcome regardless of skill level. The instructor must provide both group work and individual instruction in order to meet the needs of all the students.

A combination of models can also be used to ensure needs of the service area are adequately met, for example, in programs that operate in a combination of settings such as rural and urban. **However, Nevada strongly encourages programs to use a managed intake system that provides the intake assessor or instructor with ample, uninterrupted time to conduct a thorough orientation and evaluation of learner needs wherever this is feasible.** Programs offering managed entry classes with a strong emphasis on regular and consistent student attendance typically experience a higher student retention rate and greater learning gains. Also, it is difficult for open entry programs to comply with the AEFLA emphasis on intensity and duration.

Each program must have in place an intake process that includes the following elements:

- Orientation: Provide information about the program to the student and, if needed, refer the student to alternate support services within the program or through other agencies in the community.
- Oral interview.
- Assessment: Determine student's educational functioning level and appropriate class/delivery method.
- Registration: Collect demographic information, student goals, and test results on the current CASAS/TOPspro Entry/Update Forms.
- Effective student goal setting.
- Class/instructional assignment.

[Section 3: Accountability](#) of the *ABE Administrator's Handbook* contains details on these processes.

## ASSESSMENT

**Nevada Policy:** To measure educational gain, AEFLA-funded programs are required to assess learners in accordance with the [Nevada Assessment Policy](#) document. The assessment policy identifies which tests to use for both ABE/ASE and ESL students, when pre- and post-tests are to be administered, and how scores are to be tied to the NRS educational functioning levels for initial placement and for reporting student advancement across levels.

See [Section 3: Accountability](#) and the [Nevada Assessment Policy](#) for detailed assessment information.

## INSTRUCTION

### Curriculum, Content Standards

In recognition of the variety of programs throughout the state, Nevada does not prescribe a set curriculum but rather encourages individual programs to do what works best for their service area and population. Programs should, however, have curricula that are research-based and address different skill levels of students, are consistent with [Nevada Adult Education Content Standards](#)), and which address the CASAS competencies.

Other programs can be an excellent source of information about curricula, and they have a history of willingly sharing. Current contact information is at [Nevada Adult Education Programs](#).

Leadership monies have funded the development of some curricula to fill needs expressed by Nevada's AEFLA-funded programs. These are posted on [Nevada's Literacy Web Site](#) (click on "Teacher/Tutor" under "Literacy Resources" for a list).

### Multi-level Instruction

Many times, the students in an ABE class have varying secondary goals and function at different educational levels. A student working on basic reading may be in the same class with a student nearly ready to take GED preparation classes. Or a student who is illiterate in his first language may be in the same pronunciation class as one who has completed two years of college in her native country. These "mixed" classes may have impact on program management and will require expertise in planning and instruction, as well as scheduling, in order to fully meet the needs of all students in the class.

### Class Scheduling

For additional (and pragmatic!) information about multilevel instruction, see *ERIC* Digest ED383242 at [Teaching Multilevel Adult ESL Classes](#)

Classes are scheduled by the program according to the needs of the students and resources of the program.

## TECHNOLOGY

One of the considerations for program funding is "whether the (program's) activities effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate, including the use of computers."

### Use for Program Administration

Much of the administrative work within individual programs and communication with the state is done electronically. Program administrators are expected to have sufficient technological expertise to accomplish work such as the following:

- Collect student and program data
- Submit reports
- Access documents such as this *Administrator's Handbook*
- Communicate about and discuss issues via e-mail.
- Attend scheduled online meetings and teleconferences.

### Use for Instruction

Although there is currently no statewide Technology Plan, AEFLA-funded programs are expected to fully incorporate technology in ABE instruction and in professional development to the extent that it is feasible for their service areas. Technology can be incorporated in many ways (in addition to using computers), e.g., incorporate scientific calculators, VCRs (and manuals for reading), fax and answering machines, etc.

## DISTANCE LEARNING

Delivery of services to ABE students via distance learning methods is not widely incorporated into AEFLA-funded programs at this time. The state encourages the development of this modality to the extent it is appropriate and effective.

# PART V: CREDENTIALING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## ABE CERTIFICATE OF PERFORMANCE

In spring 2002, Nevada implemented the nation's only outcome-based certification system for Adult Basic Education practitioners. Unlike traditional teacher certification systems that recognize an educator's readiness to teach, this program recognizes proven competence and performance in the ABE/ESL classroom or tutoring environment. Criteria for certification are focused on demonstrated proficiency in achieving outcomes in support of the Nevada State Plan and/or funded program grant objectives and include student retention and educational gain.

The Certificate is voluntary, however all programs are expected to ensure instructional staff is aware of the program and to encourage them to apply. Programs are encouraged to provide financial incentives to practitioners who maintain a current Certificate.

Purpose of Nevada's  
[Adult Basic Educator's Certificate of Performance](#)

- To recognize and honor the competence and performance of ABE/ESL instructors and tutors by providing them "proof" of proficiency.
- To ensure instructor/tutor awareness of program, state, and federal goals.
- To provide stakeholders evidence of Nevada's commitment to quality adult education.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development for all ABE personnel is critical to the success of ABE in Nevada. Each program is responsible for ensuring all staff members are appropriately and continuously trained to do their jobs.

This responsibility includes:

- determining need,
- making training opportunities known and available,
- scheduling, and
- budgeting for items such as travel and registration fees for regional and national conferences and for workshops not provided through leadership funds (see information on the *ABE Professional Development Catalog* below).

[ABE Professional Development for Nevada](#)

summarizes current state-sponsored professional development and support services

In addition, programs are strongly encouraged to provide stipends for practitioners' staff development.

### Practitioners

- ✓ All ABE instructors and tutors who are new to adult education in Nevada should complete the state's pre-service training and turn in the coursework to the program administrator **prior** to beginning instruction. The Pre-service Training Module is distributed via CD. Contact [Claudia Bianca-DeBay](#) for more information.
- ✓ Programs should encourage all practitioners to develop and enhance their instructional skills by participating in meaningful in-services and professional development. (For an adult educator to renew the [ABE Certificate of Performance](#), he or she must participate in thirty

hours of such professional development every three years. Professional development activities that “count” toward ABE Certificate of Performance renewal are detailed in the [Application for Certificate Renewal](#).) As a service to the programs, leadership monies are used to fund regular, high quality, effective professional development targeted to program needs.

### Staff

Programs are expected to provide professional development for administrative staff based on individual and program needs. In addition, any staff member (practitioner or administrative staff) who is involved in assessment, data collection, or data reporting must be thoroughly and continuously trained on these processes. (See [Section 3: Accountability](#) for details.) The current *ABE Professional Development Catalog* contains a list of current trainings and Certified Trainers.

### Administrators

Leadership monies also provide for administrative trainings and meetings. The format and scheduling vary according to current needs, but typically involve two to three-day “live” sessions three or four times each year. In addition, audio- and web-based conferences are held periodically. These activities are scheduled as much in advance as possible.

**Nevada Policy: AEFLA-funded program directors and appropriate staff are required to attend and fully participate.**

## PART VI: ABE ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL RESOURCES

### NEVADA ADULT EDUCATORS

The mission of the Nevada Adult Educators (NAE) organization is to promote and support lifelong learning in Nevada. NAE:

- Fosters collaboration, communication, networking, and the sharing of ideas and resources among members, providers, and stakeholders.
- Promotes and provides professional development opportunities for adult educators.
- Expands public awareness of the importance of literacy, adult education, and lifelong learning.
- Advocates for policies and legislation supporting adult, continuing, and community education.



Visit [www.nvadulted.org/](http://www.nvadulted.org/) for more information.

### MOUNTAIN PLAINS ADULT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Nevada Adult Educators is an affiliate of MPAEA, an organization of eight western states with issues similar to those in Nevada. MPAEA's mission is to support and promote lifelong learning in the Mountain Plains region. To that end, each year the Association hosts a conference and grants scholarships for professional development, graduate study, and innovative projects to its members on a competitive basis. For more information, visit [www.mpaea.org/](http://www.mpaea.org/).

### STATE LITERACY RESOURCE CENTER

The SLRC is a Special Collection overseen by the [Nevada Literacy Office](#) and housed at the State Library. The SLRC uses AEFLA funds to provide current research, curricula, and resources through the World Wide Web, at public libraries, and via inter-library loan.

### NEVADA CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

The purpose of this monthly newsletter is to connect adult educators in Nevada to resources — including each other! Available online at [www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/newsletters.html](http://www.literacynet.org/nvadulted/newsletters.html). To be added to the mailing list, send name, program name, and address to [Sharyn Yanoshak](#).

### NEVADA'S LITERACY WEB SITES

Maintained by Western Pacific LINC (Literacy Information and Communications System) and part of the National LINC Program, [www.literacynet.org/nevada](http://www.literacynet.org/nevada) is updated regularly, as is the Nevada Adult Education home page, which can found at [www.literacynet.org/nvadulted](http://www.literacynet.org/nvadulted).

## LISTSERVS FOR NEVADANS

These closed listservs feature discussions around curriculum resources, teaching methods, and information on local and regional training events. To subscribe to any of the following listservs, contact [Sharyn Yanoshak](#).

- NVADULTED: For instructors, tutors, program directors, coordinators, and others who provide one-on-one, small group, or class instruction in adult basic education and/or GED preparation for adult native speakers of English who are functioning at a level below high school completion.
- NVESOL: For instructors, tutors, program directors, coordinators, and others who provide one-on-one, small group, or class instruction in ESL or EL/Civics to adults. Although ABE and GED instructors are not excluded, this list is primarily for those who teach English to Speakers of Other Languages.

The lists are hosted by Literacyworks, which coordinates the Western/Pacific LINCS Regional Technology Center of the National Institute for Literacy. Literacyworks is the nonprofit arm of the LINCS Project; the group partners with national, state, and local library and education programs.

## OTHER ADULT EDUCATORS

Adult educators typically share their knowledge and ideas freely. For example, without exception, every one of the many people who were asked for help in developing this handbook — whether it be for input, review, knowledge, or the use of material — said yes. The field of adult education seems to attract people who are genuinely motivated to help others. Your colleagues in Nevada and throughout the world are a wonderful resource. Don't hesitate to call on them!