

# OVERVIEW OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) IN MINNESOTA – FY 2010

Dr. Barry Shaffer, MN State Director of Adult Education (651) 582-8442  
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The **MISSION** of Adult Basic Education in Minnesota is to provide adults with educational opportunities to acquire and improve their literacy skills necessary to become self-sufficient and to participate effectively as productive workers, family members, and citizens.



## ABE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE:

- ▶ **GED - General Educational Development Diploma.** National high school equivalency program that includes a set of 5 tests: Math, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, and Science. A free GED preparation **online** distance education program (called **GED-i**) is also available for eligible students.
- ▶ **Adult Diploma** - Programs for eligible adults leading to a high school diploma from a local MN school district.
- ▶ **ESL - English as a Second Language.** For learners whose native language is not English.
- ▶ **Basic Skills Enhancement** - For learners who need goal-specific elementary or secondary level basic skills such as work-related math, functional literacy (e.g.- banking skills), reading or writing assistance. Generally considered "brush-up" and not leading to a diploma or GED.
- ▶ **Family Literacy** - Program for adults and their pre-school children. Features instruction for adults in literacy, instruction in parenting, and educational/developmental services for kids.
- ▶ **Citizenship / Civics Education** - Programs which prepare Minnesota non-citizens for US citizenship. Includes US citizenship application preparation and English language instruction. Civics Education includes content related to general civics knowledge and full participation in US society, culture and employment.

## ABE Initiatives and Priority Program Areas:

- ▶ **Transition to Employment and Workforce Education:** Pre-employment programs to provide basic skills necessary for work are provided at the local ABE site or MN WorkForce Centers. Also, ABE services may be provided at a local employer's site and is designed to improve the basic skills (in the context of work) of the worker. (This initiative is in collaboration with the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development)
- ▶ **Transition to Post-Secondary Education and Training:** Career pathway programming (e.g.- Minnesota FastTRAC initiative), basic skills instruction, counseling, and college prep skills to better prepare students for post-secondary success in credit bearing or credentialed programs and occupational programs at post-secondary institutions. (Strong collaboration with MnSCU, DEED, nonprofit training providers.)
- ▶ **Distance Learning:** Minnesotans statewide can now access free GED preparation classes online through the GED-I program. Other online basic skill learning opportunities are offered by many local ABE programs.

### CORE CONTENT

- Reading • Writing
- Speaking • Listening
- Mathematics
- ESL / ELL / ESOL
- GED / H.S.Diploma

### Conditional or Supplementary Content:

- Citizenship / Civics*
- Knowing How to Learn*
- Basic Technology Skills*
- Transition to Higher Ed.*
- Creative Thinking and Problem Solving*
- Personal, Group and Societal Effectiveness*
- Employment Readiness / Workforce Ed.*
- Study Skills*

**ELIGIBILITY:** Must be 16 and over, not enrolled in secondary school, and functioning below the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level in any of the basic academic areas including reading, math, writing and speaking English.

**ENROLLMENT: FY 2010** (May 1, 2009 through April 30, 2010)

### Total ABE Adult Enrollment 78,480

ESL	31,781	(42%)
Basic Skills (general)	28,145	(37%)
GED + Diploma	11,681	(15%)
Workforce Prep	3,333	( 6%)
Family Literacy	212	
Citizenship	1,150	

*(duplicate counts in last 2 categories above)*

### Selected Participant Characteristics:

Unemployed	9,418	(12%)
On Public Assistance	11,764	(15%)
Incarcerated	4,943	( 6%)
Rural Participants	11,993	(15%)
Urban Participants	37,123	(47%)
Parents	47,863	(61%)

*(duplicate counts among all categories above)*

**OUTCOMES - FY 2010:**

Adult Basic Education addresses a variety of learner goals. ABE helps learners to:

- Attain employment and/or better their current employment;
- Achieve high school equivalency (GED or Adult H.S. Diploma);
- Attain skills and certificates necessary to enter post-secondary education and training;
- Exit public welfare and become self-sufficient;
- Learn to speak and write the English language;
- Master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school;
- Become U.S. citizens and participate in democratic society; and
- Gain self-esteem, personal confidence and sense of personal and civic responsibility.

FY 2010 Selected Outcome Results:

- The Minnesota ABE system has exceeded its federally set performance targets (academic level completion, employment, GED attainment, and transition to post-secondary) every year since 2002.
- One out of every ten diplomas issued in MN during 2009 was a GED or Adult H.S. Diploma.
- ABE enrollment has increased by 42% over the past ten years (51,785 to 73,387 enrollees).
- The average annual per student cost for ABE is \$668. In comparison to both K-12 and post-secondary per pupil expenditures, ABE is a highly cost-effective

GED's earned	5,951	Gained or bettered employment *	12,678
H.S. Diplomas	1,243	Entered post-sec. Ed. *	9,659
Earned US Citizenship *	987	Able to assist children in school *	16,087
Left public assistance *	579		

\* Under-reported due to follow-up issues such as mobility and data privacy

**PROGRAM DELIVERY:**

**51 ABE Consortia** - Adult Basic Education is delivered statewide at over 500 sites located in public schools, workforce centers, community/technical colleges, prisons/jails, libraries, learning centers, tribal centers, and non-profit organizations. Programs have voluntarily formed local ABE consortia (51 admin units) to maximize efficiency and to share resources.

**1,200 Teachers** - Public school ABE programs are required to use K-12 licensed teachers or teachers with a college degree in ESL. About 300 teachers hold the permissive ABE teaching license in addition to the K-12 license. Most non-school district ABE providers use licensed teachers if they are available. About ¾ of all ABE teachers are part-time. In addition to licensed, paid teachers, over 3,600 trained volunteer literacy tutors assist in ABE programs annually.

**Staff Development** - Statewide and regional staff development for ABE educators is typically provided by Minnesota Department of Education Adult Basic Education staff using federal ABE funds and state ABE supplemental services funds. By law, two percent of the state ABE appropriation may support supplemental services including professional development. Using these funds, the State ABE office has funded programs including the **Adult Teaching and Learning Advancement System** (ATLAS at Hamline University), the **Minnesota Literacy Council** (MLC), the **Learning Disabilities Association** (LDA), the **Minnesota Workforce Council Association** (MWCA), **Communication Services for the Deaf** (CSD), a Physical Disabilities ABE Project called PANDA, and other content-focused staff development and data management programs. Volunteer tutor training is provided via contract through MLC while the State Literacy Technology Center (at MLC) provides technology training and related ABE technology services.

**Adult Basic Education Law** – ABE operates under both state and federal law. The state law (which provides 88% of ABE funding) is M.S. 124D.51-52. No operating or administrative monies are provided to the MN Department of Education (MDE) under the state ABE appropriation. Federal funds are provided under Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. Title II is called the “Adult Education and Family Literacy Act”. Administrative policies are established by the Adult Basic Education Office of MDE. The nine staff members of MDE-ABE provide administrative oversight and technical assistance to over 500 programs and 1,200 ABE educators statewide. Over 78,000 students enroll annually.

**ABE FUNDING:**

Due to the growing need for ABE services, state funding for Adult Basic Education has been revised frequently since 1998. Currently, state funds are provided to approved programs (51 consortia) using a mandated aid formula integrating school district population, LEP counts, census no-diploma data, and prior year learner contact hours. Competitive grant funds (one-time appropriations) and ongoing Federal ABE funds are also allocated. Two percent of the annual state appropriation is authorized to support a system of "supplemental services" including staff development, technology, distance learning, and special needs services.

	<u>FY2008</u>	<u>FY 2009</u>	<u>FY 2010</u>	<u>FY 2011</u> (7/1/10 – 6/30/11)
State ABE Aid	\$ 41,059,748	\$42,291,786	\$ 43,125,585	\$44,864,723
Federal ABE Aid	\$ 5,990,606	\$ 5,887,863	\$ 5,299,077	\$ 4,918,864
Grant Programs	\$ 1,825,000	\$ 836,841	\$ 866,787	\$ 982,196
<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>\$ 48,875,354</b>	<b>\$49,016,490</b>	<b>\$ 49,291,449</b>	<b>\$50,765,783</b>
Enrollment	74,656	73,387	78,480	
Student Contact Hours	5,054,208	5,371,902	5,827,860	
Avg. Cost per Student per yr.	\$655	\$668	\$647	

**CRITICAL LITERACY NEEDS/FACTS IN MINNESOTA:**

- According to the American Community Survey of the US Census, 10% (388,074) of Minnesotans over 18 years old lack high school equivalency. Also, about 6,000 high school students aged 16 and 17 drop out each year without attaining a diploma and as experience proves, some high school graduates may still lack basic skill competency. The percent of MN adults without high school equivalency varies by ethnic group: Hispanic – 40%, Native American – 37%, Black – 21%, Asian – 14%, White – 13%. *US Census-ACS 2008*
- MN's immigrant and refugee population has expanded to record levels, especially Asian, Hispanic and African population groups; 7% (339,236) of all Minnesotans are foreign born; and an estimated 250,000 residents are in need of ESL services. One in ten Minnesotans over 5 speak a language other than English in the home and over 35,000 permanent Minnesota residents lack US citizenship. *2003 DHS and 2008 US Census-ACS*
- Of Minnesota's 3.3 million working age adults, 60% have not completed college and are ABE potential clients. Of these adults:
  - 251,210 have not completed high school
  - 892,744 have completed high school but have not entered college (most require remedial math or reading)
  - 832,371 have some college but no degree or credential (48% need remedial math or reading)
  - 61,327 speak 'little or no' English
  - 346,968 earn less than a living wage (twice the federal. poverty level)*Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) 2009*
- 48% of all 2008 MN high school graduates enrolling in MN colleges took one or more remedial college courses. This rate of remedial need has increased every year since 1999. Students needing remediation pay tuition and access financial aid and are often unaware that free ABE services exist to provide remedial academic instruction necessary to enter credit bearing programs. *2008 Getting Prepared report-MnSCU*
- Northwestern University's Center for Labor Market Studies shows joblessness rate during 2008 of 54 percent nationwide for young high school dropouts was 22 percentage points higher than that of high school graduates and 33 percentage points higher than that of young adults who had completed 1-3 years of postsecondary study. The study shows that the average cost to taxpayers, including incarceration costs, over the working life of each high school dropout is \$292,000. *Northwestern University 2009*
- 42% of the MFIP (public welfare) caseload do not have a high school degree or the equivalent. Many participants who have completed a high school education have reading and math abilities far below the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level. It is difficult for this group to find and retain jobs due to low literacy levels. *2007 DHS*
- Public schools report that the numbers of parents are growing, not declining, whose lack of basic skills are barriers to the success of their children. *MDE*
- Major MN employers report large costs to train and retrain employees whose lack of basic skills or ability to speak English are liabilities to productivity. The average dropout earns about \$7,000 less annually than the average high school or GED graduate. *MN Bus. Partnership and 2000 Census*

