

## Chapter 1 - Eligible Agency Certifications and Assurances

**Section 221(1) requires the State to develop, submit, and implement the State plan, and Section 224(b) (5) (6) and (8) require assurances specific to the State plan content.**

### Adult Education and Family Literacy Act

Enacted August 7, 1998 as Title II of the Workforce Development Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220)

**The Nebraska Department of Education of the State of Nebraska hereby submits its five-year State plan to be effective until June 30, 2004. The eligible agency also assures that this plan, which serves as an agreement between State and Federal Governments under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, will be administered in accordance with applicable Federal laws and regulations, including the following certifications and assurances:**

#### 1.0 Eligible Agency Certifications and Assurances

**1.1 Certifications** (Education Department General Administrative Regulations - EDGAR - 76.104, Certifications and Assurances)

*Education Department General Administrative Regulations (34 CFR Part 76.104)*

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan.
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program.
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan.
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law.
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
6. The State officer who submits the plan, specified by title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan.
7. The agency that submits the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan.
8. The plan is the basis for the State operation and administration of the program.

#### 1.2 Assurances

**(Section 224 (b) (5), (6), and (8) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act)  
Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-220), Section 224 (b) (5), (6), and (8).**

1. The eligible agency will award not less than one grant to an eligible provider who offers flexible schedules and necessary support services (such as child care and transportation) to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, or individuals with other special needs, to participate in adult education and literacy activities, which eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with support services that are not provided under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities provided under this subtitle for support services.
2. Funds received under this subtitle will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities under this subtitle.

3. The eligible agency will expend the funds under this subtitle only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements in Section 241.

*Section 241. Administrative Provisions.*

(a) Supplement Not Supplant.

Funds available for adult education and literacy activities under this subtitle shall supplement and not supplant other State or local public funds expended for adult education and literacy activities.

(b) Maintenance of Effort.

1. In general.

(A) Determination.

An eligible agency may receive funds under this subtitle for any fiscal year if the Secretary finds that the fiscal effort per student or the aggregate expenditures of such eligible agency for adult education and literacy activities, in the second preceding fiscal year, were not less than 90 percent of the fiscal effort per student or the aggregate expenditures of such eligible agency for adult education and literacy activities, in the third preceding fiscal year.

(B) Proportionate Reduction.

Subject of paragraphs (2), (3), and (4), for any fiscal year with respect to which the Secretary determines under subparagraph (A) that the fiscal effort or the aggregate expenditures of an eligible agency for the preceding program year were less than such effort or expenditures for the second preceding program year, the Secretary:

(i) shall determine the percentage decreases in such effort or in such expenditures; and

(ii) shall decrease the payment made under this subtitle for such program year to the agency for adult education and literacy activities by the lesser of such percentages.

2. Computation.

In computing the fiscal effort and aggregate expenditures under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall exclude capital expenditures and special one-time project costs.

3. Decrease in Federal Support.

If the amount made available for adult education and literacy activities under this subtitle for a fiscal year is less than the amount made available for adult education and literacy activities under this subtitle for the preceding fiscal year, then the fiscal effort per student and the aggregate expenditures of an eligible agency required in order to avoid a reduction under paragraph (1) (B) shall be decreased by the same percentage as the percentage decrease in the amount so made available.

4. Waiver.

The Secretary may waive the requirements of this subsection for the one fiscal year only, if the Secretary determines that a waiver would be equitable due to exceptional or uncontrollable circumstances, such as a natural disaster or an unforeseen and precipitous decline in the financial resources of the State or outlying area of the eligible agency. If the Secretary grants a waiver under the preceding sentence for the a fiscal year, the level of effort required under paragraph (1) shall not be reduced in the subsequent fiscal year because of the waiver.

## **Chapter 2 - Needs Assessment**

***Section 224 (b) (1) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act requires an objective assessment of the needs of individuals in the State for adult education and literacy activities, including individuals most in need or hardest to serve.***

This chapter provides information and data from a number of sources that suggest the numbers of adults who need these educational services. A substantial number of Nebraskans need adult education and literacy services, but determining an exact number is difficult.

### **A Glimpse of Nebraska: the Midpoint of America**

Nebraska sits roughly in the center of the United States. Its southern border is less than 20 miles north of the "official geographic center". In many ways, this physical position is reflective of Nebraska's economic, social, and philosophic characteristics. "Nebraska - the Good Life" has been a state slogan for many years.

Nebraska is a state of diversity. Traveling from one corner of the state to the other, which takes a day, one can experience forests, prairies, bottom lands, hills and bluffs. In many places in western Nebraska, one can envision the prairie pioneers as they moved westward along the Oregon Trail. While two-thirds of the state's population live in the eastern one-third of

the state, there is a blend of urban and rural settings that is inviting to all. In some counties of the sandhills of northern Nebraska, there are more cattle per square mile than humans, while hundreds or maybe thousands of persons may inhabit one square mile in those counties which contain Omaha or Lincoln in southeast Nebraska.

Currently, Nebraska is experiencing a strong economy and high quality of living. Nebraska remains one of the safest and healthiest states in the country. During the 1990's Nebraska has experienced an increase in population which is a reversal of the 1974-1990 net out-migration. In 1997, the state's population was estimated to be 1,656,870.

Over the past one hundred and fifty years, people of many cultures have made Nebraska their home, as witnessed by the numerous ethnic celebrations held each year. The work ethic and pride in community abound in Nebraska. Education and family are valued highly. One can be sure that whether a person is a farmer or banker, housewife or CEO, those who call Nebraska home are very proud of it!

## **2.0 Needs Assessment (Section 224 (b) (1))**

In preparation of the local ABE program proposal, an applicant is required to address the needs of the adult population in the respective service area. This helps to ensure that the applicant provides educational services to the most in need and/or hardest to serve.

### **2.1 Individuals Most in Need**

The following assessments of those individuals who are most in need and/or hardest to serve are an indication of the continued need for adult education and literacy services.

#### **2.1.1 Census Data**

By examining the 1990 census, Judy Thorne and Julie Fleenor prepared the report **Profiles of the Adult Education Target Population** in 1993. Of the data pertaining to Nebraska, it indicates that there are 1,017,615 adults in the state. Of this number, 196,429 adults are included in the state's adult education target population. This number represents those persons who are sixteen years of age and older, not in school, and do not have a high school diploma. This figure is 19.3% of the adult population. A subgroup of this population is the adults who have only completed 0 through 8 years of schooling; this number totals 80,435.

#### **2.1.2 NALS/Synthetic NALS**

The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) was conducted in several states in the early 1990's. It describes the types and levels of literacy skills of adults, ages 16 and above, in the United States. Results were reported by using three scales: prose, document and quantitative. Each scale was divided into five levels, one being low literacy skills and five being high literacy skills. (See Appendix A)

Nebraska did not participate in the NALS. In 1994, Stephen Rader, used the NALS and the 1990 census data to estimate the adult literacy proficiencies for those states who did not participate in the NALS study. From the **Synthetic Estimates of NALS Literacy Proficiencies From 1990 Census Microdata**, the following functioning levels of Nebraska's adult population were reported:

9% in Level 1: 91,585 persons  
23% in Level 2: 234,052 persons  
68% in Levels 3-5: 691,978 persons

**2.1.3 High School Dropouts.** Dropouts from the public, non-public, and state operated schools often enroll in adult education classes in order to complete high school and qualify for further training and/or education. The following chart illustrates the number of persons in Nebraska who dropped out of junior and senior high school (grades 7-12) during the past four academic school years:

<b>School Year</b>	<b># of Persons</b>
1994-1995:	4,199
1995-1996:	4,358

1996-1997: 4 163  
 1997-1998: 4,168

### 2.1.4 Unemployed Population

Nebraska's unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the nation. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 4.5 percent in June 1998; yet unemployment in Nebraska continues to decline, from 2.4 percent in June 1997 to 1.7 percent in June 1998, which, at that time, was the lowest in the nation.

Total employment for the last fiscal year grew 2.3 percent or 19,878 jobs. While a worker shortage problem is a threat to future economic development nationwide, it is an even greater challenge to Nebraska. For the past few years, business demands for workers have often exceeded the supply. From 1990 to 1997, Nebraska's population increased five percent while the number of jobs increased 17 percent.

The Nebraska Department of Labor reports the following:

Year	Av. # In Lab Force	Av. # Emp	Av. # Unem	Av. Unempl Rate
1996	910,674	884,004	26670	2.9%
1997	906,256	882,615	23,641	2.6%
1998*	929,535	910,029	19,506	2.1%

\* 1998 year average represents January through November 1998.

Certainly, some of the unemployed could improve their employability skills if served by the adult education program. Since employment is so high in Nebraska, many of the people who enroll in ABE are in need of intensive services to assist in helping them become employable. In some parts of the state, there are pockets of special populations (e.g. ESL, minorities) that are unable to get a job.

### 2.1.5 Participation in the Adult Basic Education Program

The total number of students (regardless of hours in attendance) served by the Nebraska Adult Basic Education Program for selected years is as follows:

FY	Level I (0-8)	Level II (9-12)	Total
1990	9,767	1,660	11,427
1991	10,689	2,091	12,780
1992	12,145	2,337	14,482
1993	11,862	2,317	14,179
1994	12,204	2,190	14,394
1995	12,541	2,301	14,842
1996	13,343	2,319	15,662
1997	14,823	2,518	17,341
1998	14,597	1,406	16,003
Totals	111,971	19,139	131,110

The number 131,110 represents those students who have attended Adult Basic Education classes in the last nine fiscal years. This number includes re-enrollees. Not all students are able to complete their objectives in one fiscal year; therefore, students may re-enroll a number of times through the years. One cannot simply reduce the 1990 census target population figure of 196,429 by 131,110. One must consider, too, that as completing students are removed from the rolls of those with less than a high school credential, others are being added.

Also of note is that 85.4 percent of the student participants in the ABE program during FY 1990 - 98 were functioning in Level I, the level in which the most in need and/or hardest to serve are included.

This demonstrates that the need for adult education and literacy services remains great. As a consequence, the Nebraska Adult Education Program presently considers 196,429 (1990 census) adults in the state to be eligible for adult education

services. Considering the history of students served and funding of immediate past years, it is anticipated the program will serve approximately 15,000 (12+ hour and -12 hour) students each year of the State plan.

## 2.2 Populations

Following are estimates of potential students in some of the special populations served by adult education.

### 2.2.1 Low Income Adult Learners Who are Educationally Disadvantaged

According to information provided by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Employment First, ADC recipients are not currently required to answer questions pertaining to educational attainment. In the FY 1997 Financial and Statistical Data study of the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) Program in Nebraska, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services reports that 9,584 ADC adults were served in FY 1997. Of this number, the educational level of 4,708 persons is known. Of this number, 1,445 persons, or 30.7%, of the ADC adults served in this particular year had less than a twelfth grade education.

There are an additional 4,876 persons, or 50.9% of the total ADC adults, whose educational level is not known. Therefore, there is a potential of up to 6,321 persons of the total ADC adult population who may not have a high school diploma and who would benefit from adult education and literacy services.

Twenty-five percent of the ADC adult recipients are considered exempt or unemployable. A large sampling was conducted by Health and Human Services of the remaining 75 percent. It is estimated that 32 percent of these ADC adults are enrolled in ABE programs throughout the state.

### 2.2.2 Individuals with Disabilities

#### 2.2.2.1 Adults with Disabilities

The latest information available from Vocational Rehabilitation regarding the educational attainment of adults with disabilities indicates that 16%, or 703, disabled adults in 1990 had less than a high school diploma. The population trend analysis predicted a .5% increase in the disabled population for the next three years. Most likely, the number of disabled adults has increased, along with the number who are in need of adult education.

#### 2.2.2.2 Learning Disabled

The number of learning disabled adults in adult education programs is startling. These persons, with or without knowledge of their particular learning disability, often drop out of school and eventually enroll in adult education. The statistics on this segment of the population vary somewhat according to the source, but the following numbers are often used:

- 48% of teens with learning disabilities drop out of school
- 40-70% of prison inmates have learning disabilities
- 40-60% of the students in adult basic education programs are learning disabled

These statistics bring a new set of challenges to both the students and the teachers in adult education. The number of learning disabled students in adult education is not likely to decrease.

### 2.2.3 Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

A report released in December 1998, *Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment*, indicates an increase in the numbers of displaced homemakers and single mother family groups in Nebraska. Many of these persons have basic educational needs. The latest data include:

	Single Mother Family Groups	Displaced Homemakers
<b>Number 1992</b>	29,735	22,246
<b>Number 1997</b>	58,422	33,021
<b>Percent of Increase from 1992-1997</b>	96.5%	48.4%
<b>Number without a high school diploma</b>	14,717	7,556
<b>Percent of total with income below the poverty level</b>	39.1%	37.2%

#### **2.2.4 Individuals with Limited English Proficiency**

According to the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, **new immigrants** to the state of Nebraska for FY 1994 - 1996 include:

Fiscal Year	Number of New Immigrants
1994	1,595
1995	1,832
1996	2,150

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, **new refugees** entering the state of Nebraska from 1980 - November 1998 totaled 10,637 persons. Since the 1990 census, the number of persons living in the state who have need of English proficiency classes has increased dramatically. While actual figures are not available, many businesses throughout Nebraska have seen a steady increase in the number of employees whose first language is not English.

In the Nebraska ABE program, the number of limited English speaking adults enrolled in English literacy classes has increased 186.5% in nine years, from 1,766 students in FY 90 to 5,060 students in FY 1998. In FY 1990, ESL students represented 10.2% of the total students served; in FY 1998, ESL students represented 31.6% of the total students served. In all likelihood, Nebraska will continue to see an increase in the number of new immigrants and refugees to the state. It is likely that a large number of these persons will be in need of English language and citizenship preparation services.

#### **2.2.5 Criminal Offenders/Other Institutionalized**

According to the Nebraska Department of Corrections, there are currently over 3,600 adults incarcerated in the state corrections system. This does not include those individuals in county or city jails. About 62%, or over 2200 adults, in the state correctional system do not have a high school diploma. In addition, many who do have their high school diplomas still need help in basic skill areas in order to become functionally literate. About 12% have less than an eighth grade education; another 60% have completed less than 12 years of school. About 10% of the inmates are limited English speaking.

According to the Nebraska Administrative Office of Courts/Probation, there were 25,594 adults on probation during 1998. Of this number, 6,022 persons, or 23.5%, have less than a high school diploma.

In Nebraska, city/county jails are not permitted to ask inmates if they have a high school diploma; however, the Nebraska ABE program, in FY 1998 served 1,556 persons in city/county jails and in other institutionalized settings.

Adult education has and will continue to play a vital role as one part of an integrated program to assist the criminal and other institutionalized to become contributing members of society.

#### **2.2.6 Homeless**

The most recent statewide study of the homeless and near-homeless in Nebraska was conducted in 1994. The report estimates the following data concerning the homeless population:

**Number of Homeless:** 9,280

Of this number, 5,080 were adults (18 and older) and 4,200 were children (17 and below)

**Number who are part of a family:** 5,690

Of this number, 72% were one parent families; of this number, 90% were females

**Number living alone:** 3,590

Of this number, 950 were unaccompanied youth, 17 years of age and under

**Employment Status (Adults):** 33% Employed; 77% Unemployed or not seeking employment

**Educational Status (Adults)** 10% Had a college degree; 60% Completed high school; 30% Had less than a high school diploma

Indeed, there is a population within the homeless community which would benefit from the educational services provided by adult education. In the three fiscal years (1993-1996) in which Nebraska received Adult Education for the Homeless federal funds, 2,189 persons received educational services. When this funding ended, those homeless persons needing adult education services were transitioned into the regular adult basic education programs wherever possible.

## 2.2.7 Family Literacy Program

There are currently approximately 225 families being served in the seven Even Start Literacy Programs in the state. The parents in family literacy programs are often at the lowest ends of the economic continuum and are in need of basic skills education.

Starting in 1991, with funding from Toyota, the National Center for Family Literacy has been able to open model programs in family literacy. These Toyota Families for Learning Programs use the four components of adult education, early childhood education, parent and child together time, and parent groups to bring children and their parents together to learn and help to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and undereducation. The National Center for Family Literacy reports the following demographics of families enrolled in Toyota Families for Learning Programs:

- 82% were receiving public assistance
- 83% of the parents were unemployed
- 73% of the parents were single
- 95% of the parents were women
- 60% of the parents were between the ages of 21 and 30

The demographic profiles of the Nebraska Even Start adult participants are probably very similar to those listed above; this is indeed a population segment that is in need of adult education and literacy services.

In conclusion, the need for adult education and literacy services has not decreased. Therefore, the educational needs of these population groups have been and will continue to be met in the Nebraska Adult Education Program. Local providers will continue to design educational programs which address the specific needs of these and other adults and to assist in a collaborative effort to make these adults contributing members of their communities and state.

## Chapter 3 - Description of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

*Section 224 (b) (2) requires a description of the adult education and literacy activities that will be carried out with any funds received under this subtitle.*

### 3.0 Description of Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Sec. 224 (b) (2))

#### 3.1 Description of Allowable Activities

As specified in Section 231 (b) of this Act, the eligible agency shall require that each eligible provider receiving a grant under subsection (a) use the grant to establish or operate one or more programs that provide services or instruction in one or more of the following categories:

1. Adult education and literacy services, which may include workplace literacy services (Section 203 (18) defines these as "literacy services that are offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills");
2. Family literacy services; and
3. English literacy services (Section 231 (b)).

The Nebraska State Plan for Adult Education proposes to provide for the fulfillment of the above mentioned literacy needs of individuals in the state by:

1. Assisting adults to become literate and attain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;
2. Assisting adults in completing a high school equivalency program;
3. Assisting adults needing improvement in speaking, reading or writing the English language;
4. Assisting adults to become citizens and/or become contributing members of their respective communities and the State;
5. Assisting adults who are parents to attain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children;

6. Evaluating local programs and projects by utilizing the Core Performance Measures listed in Section 212 of the Act and the Nebraska Indicators of Program Quality; (See Appendix B) and

7. Providing methods of administration as necessary for the proper and efficient administration of this Act.

Program content and activities include, but are not limited to:

Adult Basic Education  
English Literacy Program  
Adult Secondary Education/High School Equivalency Completion  
Citizenship Preparation  
Pre-employment/Work Readiness Skills  
Keyboarding Skills  
Workplace Literacy Program  
Consumer/Living Skills  
Family Literacy

As indicated in the Act, the emphasis will be on the education of adults. In family literacy programs, adult education funding will focus on providing literacy training to adults that will lead to self-sufficiency and for learning activities to assist parents in their role as primary teachers for their children. The activities for children must be funded by collaborative partnerships with other funding sources such as Even Start and Head Start.

To meet program needs, the adult education providers determine the content and organization of local program activities. For example, a beginning level English Language class may be offered prior to the beginning of a shift at a local manufacturing company in order to meet English proficiency needs of new employees. Program needs in rural Nebraska may differ greatly from those in the metropolitan areas of the state. The amount of local funding also influences the schedule and offerings in a community or service area. Local program advisory committees, with representation from other agencies and organizations, are a source of guidance and assistance to providers in determining local program needs. They provide input and resources for program expansion and improvement. It is essential that programs determine local needs and how best to serve the individuals seeking educational services.

### 3.1.1 Definitions of Terms

The terms used in this plan are as follows:

**Adult education:** services or instruction below the postsecondary level for individuals:

1. Who have attained 16 years of age

2. Who are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and who:

3. (A) lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to enable the individuals to function effectively in society;

(B) do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or

(C) are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

**Adult education and literacy activities:** These activities include:

1. Adult education and literacy services, including workplace literacy services

2. Family literacy services

3. English literacy programs

**Correctional institution:** refers to any of the following:

1. prison;

2. jail;

3. reformatory;

4. work farm;

5. detention center; or
6. halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

**Criminal offender:** any individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense.

**Eligible agency:** the sole entity or agency in a State responsible for administering or supervising policy for adult education and literacy in the State, consistent with the law of the State.

**Eligible provider:** refers to any of the following:

1. a local educational agency;
2. a community-based organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
3. a volunteer literacy organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
4. an institution of higher education;
5. a public or private nonprofit agency of demonstrated effectiveness;
6. a library;
7. a public housing authority;
8. a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of subparagraphs (1) through (7) and has the ability to provide literacy services to adults and families; and
9. a consortium of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of subparagraphs (1) through (8).

**English literacy program:** a program of instruction designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language.

**Family literacy services:** services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family, and that integrate all of the following activities:

1. Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children;
2. Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children;
3. Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and
4. Age-appropriate activities to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

**Individual with a disability:**

1. In general: an individual with any disability (as defined in Section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990(42 U.S.C. 12102).
2. Individuals with Disabilities: more than one individual with a disability.

**Individual of limited English proficiency:** an adult or out-of-school youth who has limited ability in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language, and:

1. whose native language is a language other than English; or
2. who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

**Institution of higher education:** the meaning given the term in Section 1201 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1141).

**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.

**Local education agency:** the meaning given the term in Section 14101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 8801).

**Postsecondary educational institution:**

1. an institution of higher education that provides not less than a 2-year program of instruction that is acceptable for credit toward a bachelor's degree;
2. a tribally controlled community college; or
3. a nonprofit educational institution offering certificate or apprenticeship programs at the postsecondary level.

**Secretary:** U.S. Secretary of Education

**State:** each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

**Workplace literacy services:** literacy services that are offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills.

**3.2 Special Rule for Use of Funds for Family Literacy (Section 231 (d))**

**Special Rule:** Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under Section 231 of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act shall not use any funds made available under this subtitle for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not individuals described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of Section 203 (1), except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy services. In providing family literacy services under this subtitle, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities other than adult education activities (Section 231 (d)).

**3.3 Descriptions of New Organizational Arrangements**

Nebraska Adult Education, at both the state and local levels, has and will continue to collaborate and cooperate with those agencies and organizations which serve the adult populations in need of educational services. Collaborative initiatives already in place, such as literacy classes being held in JTPA centers, representation of the one-stop partners on ABE advisory committees, and reciprocal referrals with partnering agencies, will continue and will expand in assisting adults in pursuit of education and employment. As policies and procedures of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 are implemented, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the appropriate agencies will be developed. It is anticipated that new systems-building will emerge as the State moves forward in the development of one-stop centers to assist in preparing a workforce delivery system that is responsive to the needs of its customers.

Performance measures and reporting, state leadership activities, and support services are all essential components to the overall administration and success of the Workforce Investment Act. To maximize activities and to avoid duplication in these areas, adult education will be a contributing member to this partnering effort.

**Chapter 4 - Annual Evaluation of Adult Education and Literacy Activities**

*Section 224 (b)(3) requires a description of how the eligible agency will evaluate annually the effectiveness of the adult education and literacy activities based on the core indicators of performance described in section 212 (B)(2), of the Act.*

**4.0 Annual Evaluation of Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Sec. 224(b)(3))**

The primary emphasis of evaluation will be to assess the effectiveness at both the state and local level, in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities. The core indicators of performance will be the major yardstick by which outcomes will be measured. Data will be both quantitative and qualitative to evaluate the progress and continuous improvement of program activities.

**4.1 Annual Evaluations**

Evaluation will occur using several methods and shall consist of:

1. Monthly program activity reports which reflect student enrollment and contact hours;

2. Quarterly administrator reports which describe continuing effectiveness in achieving goals and objectives as stated in the proposal;
3. Annual program activities reports which reflect overall success in reaching the goal of continuing improvement in program delivery;
4. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) pre-and-post testing scores as well as other student assessment tools including but not limited to portfolios, official GED practice tests, and English Literacy Program placement and progress assessments;
5. Self-evaluation instruments based on the Nebraska Indicators of Program Quality (See Appendix B);
6. Visits by state staff or designated persons to a minimum of 20% of the programs each year;
7. Program audits;
8. The local proposal to determine goals and how effectively they have been met;
9. State and local advisory committee minutes;
10. Local staff evaluations;
11. Evaluations of professional development activities at the local/state levels; and
12. Additional indicators for adult education and literacy activities that may be identified.

The data will be analyzed to determine the extent to which the programs are achieving the goals of the core indicators in Section 212 as well as the goals set forth in the State plan.

#### **Further Information**

Evaluation will also take place at the state level:

1. Statistics from the programs will be compiled and compared for effectiveness to the State established benchmarks;
2. Local program directors will evaluate the activities of the State office through needs assessments;
3. Local program directors will provide input regarding state program administration;
4. The fiscal, narrative, and statistical reports submitted annually to the United States Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education;
5. Evaluation of the speakers, general activities, and State ABE Newsletter, at the annual fall adult education personnel conference; and
6. Evaluation of professional development activities held for local program directors.

### **Chapter 5 - Performance Measures**

*Section 224 (b) (4) asks for a description of the performance measures described in section 212 and how such performance measures will ensure the improvement of adult education and literacy activities in the State or outlying area.*

#### **5.0 Performance Measures (Sec. 224(b)(4))**

The purpose is to establish a comprehensive performance accountability system to assess effectiveness in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities.

This will ensure optimal return of the federal funding investment for these programs.

During the past several years Nebraska has worked diligently at establishing the base for a system of accountability. This has been accomplished through Indicators of Program Quality

(See Appendix B) developed by a state committee of interested adult education professionals. The Indicators have been incorporated into the local evaluation process and are the benchmarks by which programs have been able to assess progress.

At this time another piece of the evaluation process is being developed. A committee of interested adult basic education professionals is being formed to begin the development of the Nebraska Basic Skills Certification Program. These certificates will be designed to provide students with an incentive to accomplish their goals, measure competency based outcomes, and document learning gains.

At this time, the established performance measures that local programs are accountable for include improving literacy levels to enable students to progress within a level, advance to a new level, or attain their goal. These measures are documented through the use of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), as well as other assessment tools. Additional quantifiable measures include earning the high school credential, entering a training program, continuing post-secondary education, gaining employment, or career advancement. The use of these benchmarks provides programs with a framework in which to judge continuous improvement.

### **5.1 Eligible Agency Performance Measures (Sec. 212)**

Levels of performance will be established for the Core Indicators of Performance as directed in Section 212 (b)(2)(A). These levels will be expressed in an objective, quantifiable, and measurable form so that local providers can show continuous improvement in performance. During the first year of the five year plan, benchmarks will be established to show progress of the eligible agencies toward continuous improvement. In order to ensure an optimal return on the investment of Federal funds in adult education and literacy activities, the Secretary and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) shall reach agreement on the level of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for the first three program years covered by the State plan. Prior to the fourth program year covered by the State plan, the Secretary and NDE shall reach agreement on levels of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for the fourth and fifth program years covered by the State plan. The levels agreed to shall be considered the adjusted levels of performance for NDE and shall be incorporated into the State plan.

The core indicators include:

1. Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills;
2. Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement; and
3. Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

### **5.2 Optional - Additional Indicators**

A focus group of interested local program directors will begin the process of identifying additional indicators for adult education and literacy activities. This activity will take place during the second and third years of the State plan. The levels of performance which are being established and benchmarked during the first year of the State plan will be used to define these additional indicators.

### **5.3 Levels of Performance for First Three Years**

The following charts identify the expected levels of performance for each of the core indicators of performance for the first three program years covered by the State plan.

### **Nebraska Adult Education Performance Measures**

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

**Beginning Literacy (ABE)** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Literacy who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **30%** of beginning level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **33%** of beginning level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **37%** of beginning level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Beginning ABE** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **28%** of beginning ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **31%** of beginning ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **36%** of beginning ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Intermediate ABE** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Intermediate ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **41%** of intermediate level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **44%** of intermediate level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **49%** of intermediate level enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

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

**Beginning Literacy (ELP)** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Literacy (ELP) who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **15%** of beginning literacy (ELP) enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **18%** of beginning literacy (ELP) enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **23%** of beginning literacy (ELP) enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Beginning ELP** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning ELP who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **20%** of beginning ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **23%** of beginning ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **28%** of beginning ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Intermediate ELP** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Intermediate ELP who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **30%** of intermediate ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **33%** of intermediate ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **38%** of intermediate ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Advanced ELP** The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Intermediate ELP who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = % completed)

Year 1: **19%** of advanced ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 2: **22%** of advanced ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

Year 3: **27%** of advanced ELP enrollees will acquire (validated by formal assessment) the level of English language skills needed to complete the educational functioning level.

**Core Indicator #2: Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.**

**Placement in postsecondary education or training.** The total number of adult learners entering other academic or vocational programs (at the postsecondary level). This data can be found in Table #6 of current report form.

Year 1: **725** adult learners will enroll in further academic or vocational programs.

Year 2: **750** adult learners will enroll in further academic or vocational programs.

Year 3: **790** adult learners will enroll in further academic or vocational programs.

**Placement in unsubsidized employment** The percentage of unemployed adult learners (in the workforce) who obtained unsubsidized employment.

The number of adults obtaining a job can be found in Table 6 of the current report form.

The number of adults unemployed and in the workforce can be found in Table 5 of the current report form. # unemployed adult learners (in the workforce) who obtained unsubsidized employment - # of unemployed adult learners (in the workforce) enrolled.

Year 1: **22%** of unemployed adult learners enrolled (and in the workforce) will obtain unsubsidized employment.

Year 2: **25%** of unemployed adult learners enrolled (and in the workforce) will obtain unsubsidized employment.

Year 3: **30%** of unemployed adult learners enrolled (and in the workforce) will obtain unsubsidized employment.

**Core Indicator #2: Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.**

**Performance Measures**

**Retention in or job advancement**

The total number of adult learners who retained employment or advanced on the job. This information can be found in Table 6 in the current report form.

Year 1: **260** adults will be retained on the job or advance on the job.

Year 2: **275** adults will be retained on the job or advance on the job.

Year 3: **325** adults will be retained on the job or advance on the job.

**Core Indicator #3: Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.  
High School Completion**

The total number of adults enrolled who earned a high school diploma or recognized equivalent. This information can be found in Table 6 in the current report form.

Year 1: **1400** adults will earn a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.

Year 2: **1450** adults will earn a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.

Year 3: **1490** adults will earn a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.

**5.3.1 Improvements In Literacy Skill Levels**

Improvements in literacy skill levels will be documented through the use of the TABE test and other assessments. The following TABE benchmark scale scores, adapted from the *National Reporting System For Adult Education Pilot Test Measures*, will be applicable for each of the following levels and used to measure learning gains and program outcomes. The grade levels and definitions are those used by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education and are found in the *Annual Program Report For Adult Basic Education*.

**Adult Education and Literacy  
Beginning Literacy**

Test Benchmark - Grade Level 0-1.9

TABE Benchmark: Scale Scores: total reading 1-529; total math 1-540;

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual cannot read basic signs or maps, cannot complete simple forms and has few or no basic computational skills.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual has no or minimal literacy skills and little or no formal schooling. There is little or no recognition of the alphabet.

*\*Computation.* The individual has little computational skills and has little recognition of numbers.

**Beginning ABE**

Test Benchmark - Grade Level 2-5.9

TABE Benchmark: Scale Scores: total reading 530-722; total math 541-729

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual is able or could learn to read simple directions, signs and maps with some difficulty, fill out simple forms and perform simple computations.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual can read and print letters, one syllable words, most two syllable words and some three syllable words; can alphabetize words and write name, address and phone number; can write simple messages and letters using simple and compound sentences; can use simple punctuation (e.g., periods, commas, question marks.)

*\*Computation.* The individual can count, add and subtract three digit numbers, can perform multiplication through 12; can identify simple fractions.

**Intermediate ABE**

Test Benchmark - Grade Level 6-8.9

TABE Benchmark: Scale Scores: total reading 723-761; total math 730-776

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual is able to handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks; is also able or could learn to read simple employee handbooks, interpret a payroll stub, complete a basic job application or medical information forms, and reconcile a bank statement. May have difficulty with calculations, however, such as gas mileage.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual can paraphrase written narratives containing poly-syllabi words within all types of sentence structures; can compose a paragraph using combinations of all major sentence types; can review a paragraph

and identify spelling and punctuation errors; can interpret actions required in specific written directions and write instruction to others, such as describing how to get to a specific address, or write a simple phone message.

*\*Computation.* The individual can perform all four basic math operations with whole numbers and fractions; can solve narrative math problems requiring use of fractions and decimals.

### **Adult Secondary Education**

Test Benchmark - Grade Level 9-12

TABE Benchmark: Scale Scores: Total reading 762-780; total math 777-793

*\*Functional Skills.* Individuals are able or could learn to follow simple multi-step directions, read common legal forms and manuals, write accident or incident reports. Create and use tables and graphs, use math in business transactions and communicate personal opinions in written form.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual can comprehend expository writing and identify spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors; can find, summarize and use information from literacy works, magazines and professional journals to compose multi-paragraph essays on historical, synthesis of them; can work productively and collaboratively in groups.

*\*Computation.* The individual can interpret and solve algebraic equations, tables and graphs, and can develop own tables and graphs, understands and can apply principles of geometry to measure angles, lines and surfaces; can make mathematical estimates of time and space.

### **English Literacy Programs**

The definitions for each level are those used in the *Annual Report For Adult Basic Education* as determined by the US Department of Education. A committee of interested English Literacy Program instructors is meeting to assist in locating an effective instrument of evaluation for this population.

### **Beginning Literacy**

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual functions minimally or not at all in English and can communicate only through gestures or a few isolated words. The individual may lack literacy in the native language and has had little or no formal schooling.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual cannot read or write or can read or write only isolated words. There may be little or no alphabet recognition.

*\*Speaking and Listening.* The individual cannot speak or understand English, or understands only isolated words or phrases.

### **Beginning ESL**

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual functions with difficulty in situations related to immediate needs and in limited social situations; has some simple oral communication abilities using simple learned and often repeated phrases.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual has a limited understanding of print only through frequent re-reading; can copy words and phrases and write short sentences.

*\*Speaking and Listening.* The individual can understand frequently used words in context and very simple phrases spoken slowly and with some repetition; survival needs can be communicated simply, and there is some understanding of simple questions.

### **Intermediate ESL**

*\*Functional Skills.* The individual can meet basic survival and social needs, can follow some simple oral and written instruction and has some ability to understand on the telephone.

*\*Reading and Writing.* The individual can read simple material on familiar subjects, but has difficulty with authentic materials; can write simple paragraphs on survival topics and personal issues with some error.

*\*Speaking and Listening.* The individual can understand simple learned phrases and new phrases containing familiar vocabulary, can converse on familiar topics beyond survival needs; can clarify speech through rewording and asking questions. There is a use and understanding of basic grammar.

## **Advanced ESL**

*Functional Skills.* The individual can understand general conversations, participate effectively in familiar situations, satisfy routine survival and social needs and follow oral and written instructions. Individuals also can understand conversation containing some unfamiliar vocabulary on many everyday subjects, but may need repetition, reworking or slower speech.

*Reading and Writing.* The individual can read materials on abstract topics and descriptions and narrations of factual material. The individual can write descriptions and short essays and can complete complex forms and applications. There is a general ability to use English effectively to meet most routine social and work situations.

*Speaking and Listening.* The individual can converse with no or minimal difficulty in conversation, can communicate over the telephone on familiar subjects and has basic control of grammar; understands descriptive and spoken narrative and can comprehend abstract concepts in familiar contexts.

### **5.3.2 Other Data For Evaluation**

Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement will be information that local providers will be required to obtain. The follow-up of students will be a priority. Pilot projects will be established to determine the best method of collecting accurate data about student outcomes from current and former participants in adult education programs. Additionally, data sharing will be encouraged by working collaboratively with the partners in one-stop centers and other appropriate agencies.

Data will also be reported from the local programs as to the number of adults enrolled who earned a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. Additionally, the State office will work in conjunction with the State GED office to document the number of GED diplomas issued each fiscal year.

Data collected will be used as part of the evaluation process to form the basis to measure continuous program improvement. This information will also identify professional development needs for program administration and/or staff. During the first year of the State plan, local programs will collect data necessary to reflect the content of the three core indicators. Data gathered at the state level through the Management Information System will be analyzed and shall become the benchmarks by which the following two program years will be evaluated as to levels of performance and continuous improvement.

### **5.4 Factors (Sec. 212(b)(3)(A)(iv))**

In preparing proposed levels of performance, the eligible agency shall take into account the following:

1. how the levels compare with the eligible agency adjusted levels of performance established for other eligible agencies, taking into account factors including the characteristics of participants who enter the program, and the services or instruction to be provided; and
2. the extent to which such levels promote continuous improvement in performance on the performance measures by such eligible agencies to ensure optimal return on the investment of Federal funds.

Several factors will influence student progress and affect outcomes and data collection. At this time, and for several of the past years, Nebraska has had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation. In the past, the need for completing a secondary education or upgrading skills has not been a necessity for employment. As this cycle changes, more students will be in need of further education.

Serving the needs of special populations is often difficult. ADC clients receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance For Needy Families) funds no longer have unlimited time to complete educational goals due to welfare reform. They often find regular attendance in educational programs difficult because of the constraints of time, family, and job obligations. The transient nature of the homeless may make it unlikely they will spend the time needed to complete a goal. Developmentally challenged students also have needs that make goal completion difficult. Students with learning disabilities may struggle to demonstrate continuous improvement toward satisfying their goals. Another barrier may be that most programs in Nebraska are part-time; therefore, it often takes students longer to demonstrate learning gains.

The diversity of needs for other special populations, as well as the cultural diversity of the state, must be considered as

Nebraska looks at evaluation of continuous progress in adult education and literacy programs. Single parents, displaced homemakers, and those who are physically challenged all have definite barriers which make progress and goal completion a difficult task. English Literacy Program students may come with no educational background and have great difficulty dealing with a new culture as well as a new language.

The commitments of family, jobs, personal concerns, health problems, transportation, and child care are additional barriers to educational success. All of these factors are a part of the transitional nature of adult students.

## **Chapter 6 - Procedures and Process of Funding Eligible Providers**

*Section 224 (b) (7) requires a description of how the eligible agency will fund local activities in accordance with the considerations described in section 231(e).*

### **6.0 Procedures and Process of Funding Eligible Providers (Sec. 224 (b) (7))**

#### **6.1 Applications**

The Nebraska Department of Education will fund local program activities pursuant to the considerations described in Section 231(e) of the Act and other considerations as described in 6.4.2, Local Program Proposal, including:

1. A description of how funds awarded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act will be spent; and
2. A description of any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities (Section 232).

#### **6.2 Eligible Providers**

Proposals will be accepted by the Nebraska Department of Education from eligible providers, which include:

1. a local education agency;
2. a community-based organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
3. a volunteer literacy organization of demonstrated effectiveness;
4. an institution of higher education;
5. a public or private nonprofit agency of demonstrated effectiveness;
6. a library;
7. a public housing authority;
8. a nonprofit institution that is not described in any of these subparagraphs and has the ability to provide literacy services to adults and families; and
9. a consortium of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described in any of the subparagraphs (1) through (8).

##### **6.2.1 New Applicants**

A first time applicant must provide evidence of a minimum of three years of consecutive, successful operation of the agency or institution. Evidence may be documented by annual reports, list of board members, letters of incorporation, program audit, and/or documentation approved by the Nebraska Department of Education.

###### **6.2.1.1 New Grant Recipients**

The State Adult Education staff will meet with the new grant recipients for a program orientation prior to the beginning of the grant period. A local adult education program will be identified as a mentor to provide technical assistance as requested.

###### **6.2.1.2 All Grant Recipients**

The following activities will take place during the multi-year grant period:

1. Each year, the local program will complete a self-evaluation instrument based on the Nebraska Indicators of Program Quality.
2. The State office will monitor each program throughout the year to determine if it is in compliance with the intent of the Act and the Nebraska Adult Education State Plan. If a program is not in compliance, a letter will be sent to the local program director and the chief executive officer of the institution listing the concerns, giving recommendations to rectify the concerns, and identifying a time line for changes to be made.

3. If a program is not in compliance, a site visit may be requested by either the local program or the State office.
4. By June 30 of the first year of operation, recommendations will be made, if applicable, to assist the program in meeting any deficiencies or program concerns. During the second program year, the local program must correct any deficiencies or concerns.
5. In year two of the project, items 1-4 listed above will be continued. If the program still does not meet the compliance requirements, no grant will be awarded for the third year of the grant period. A local program may appeal this decision within thirty days of notification of the grant termination.

#### **6.2.1.3 Appeal Process**

If a local program is notified that a grant will not be awarded for the third year of the grant period, the sponsoring institution may file a request for a formal hearing. Notice of termination of the grant will be by certified mail. The request for a hearing must be made within thirty days of receipt of notification from the Nebraska Department of Education. All hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures of Chapter 61 of Title 92 of the Nebraska Administrative Code.

#### **6.3 Notice of Availability**

The Adult Education Section of the Nebraska Department of Education will publish an announcement of the availability of Federal funds. An invitation to submit proposals will be placed in newspaper(s) which have the greatest coverage of the State.

Proposal forms for the succeeding program period will be sent to current sponsors of the program.

Local educational agencies, public or private nonprofit agencies, community-based organizations, agencies responsible for corrections education, postsecondary educational institutions, and institutions which serve educationally disadvantaged adults will be provided direct and equitable access to all funds provided under the Act.

#### **6.4 Process**

##### **6.4.1 Guidelines for Application**

The following schedule of program application and implementation is provided as a guideline:

1. Application packages will be available by March 1. Applications must be made prior to the beginning of the multi-year project period. Separate proposals will be submitted for Sections 225 and 231. Proposals will be due on May 1 in the Adult Education Section, Nebraska Department of Education. Applicants shall submit multi-year proposals, with yearly program and budget updates required for subsequent years of the multi-grant period (i.e. three years). Also required will be progress reports toward the attainment of the performance measures and standards.
2. Adult education proposals will be reviewed during the period of May 1 to July 1 by personnel from the Adult Education Section, Nebraska Department of Education; representatives of local program directors; and representatives of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives.
3. Local agencies will be notified of needed changes, approval and intended grant awards, or disapproval on or before July 1.
4. Upon receipt of Federal adult education funds in the Nebraska Department of Education, approved proposals will be funded. A grant award document will be issued to approved programs by September 15.
5. Funds available under Section 211 (b) (1) will be awarded to eligible providers on a competitive basis for adult education and literacy activities as allowed in the Act.
6. The Nebraska Department of Education shall not use less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under Section 231 and to carry out Section 225, of which not more than 10 percent of the 82.5 percent shall be available to carry out Section 225.
7. Of the amount available to local providers, not less than 95 percent shall be expended for carrying out adult education and literacy services; and the remaining amount, not to exceed 5 percent, shall be used for planning, administration, personnel development, and interagency coordination.

**Special Rule:** In cases where the cost limits described in (7) are too restrictive to allow for adequate planning, administration, personnel development, and interagency coordination, the eligible provider shall negotiate with the eligible agency in order to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for noninstructional purposes. (Section 233 (b)).

#### **6.4.2 The Local Proposal**

The local proposal shall contain the following:

1. The legal name and address of the sponsor;
2. The type of organization;
3. The name and address of the parent organization;
4. The name and address of the person responsible for directing the program;
5. The name and address of the legal fiscal agent;
6. A list of specific locations where services were provided during the last fiscal year;
7. A list of proposed, specific, locations where services will be provided;
8. A description of the needs of the adult population in the area to be served and the methods of assessment and whether the service area has a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs;
9. Presentation of evidence that demonstrates the commitment of the applicant to serve individuals in the service area who are most in need of literacy services, including individuals who are low income or have minimal literacy skills;
10. A description of the applicant's past effectiveness in providing services especially in respect to the recruitment, retention, and documentation of learning gains of adults. After the one year period beginning with the adoption of the core performance measures under Section 212 of the Act, describe the success of an eligible provider in meeting or exceeding such performance measures, especially with respect to those adults with the lowest levels of literacy;
11. A description of the collaboration and coordination with other literacy programs, social services agencies, elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, job training programs, business and industry, one-stop centers, and other available resources in the service area;
12. A detailed description of the required proposed program components:
  - (A) Measurable goals, methods, and strategies to address the identified needs, and the expected participant outcomes of the program;
  - (B) Information on the estimated number of persons to be served by category/level of instruction;
  - (C) Projected goals for participant recruitment, retention, and educational achievement, and how the applicant will measure and report progress in meeting participant goals;
  - (D) Means by which the delivery of adult education services will be expanded through collaboration with other agencies, institutions, and organizations, including efforts to reach the disadvantaged, disabled and handicapped, homeless, corrections education and other institutionalized, single parents and displaced homemakers, and learning disabled;
  - (E) Involvement of the program's advisory committee(s) in the development of the proposal and implementation of the program; and the committee's involvement in the expansion of the program through cooperative and collaborative efforts with other agencies and organizations;
  - (F) Means to provide for the needs of persons with limited English proficiency and where possible, methods of coordination and collaboration with other agencies and organizations;
  - (G) The particular educational needs of adult immigrants, the incarcerated, persons with disabilities, the unemployed, single parents and displaced homemakers, and the homeless will be addressed;
  - (H) Progress made in achieving the goals set forth in the previous proposal;
  - (I) The program is of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains;
  - (J) Use of instructional practices, such as phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension that research has proven to be effective in teaching individuals to read; and use of instructional practices in writing and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills;
  - (K) How the program is built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice;
  - (L) How the program effectively employs advances in technology, as appropriate, including the use of computers;

(M) How the program provides learning in real life contexts to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(N) Program is staffed by well-trained instructors and administrators, and, if applicable, counselors;

(O) How the program offers flexible schedules and access to support services (such as child care and transportation), by cooperative efforts with other agencies and organizations, that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

(P) A description of the procedures by which the project will be evaluated;

(Q) Whether the program maintains a high-quality management information system that has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance against the eligible agency performance measures;

(R) How the program complies with reporting requirements as agreed upon by signing the form titled *Compliances with Reporting*;

(S) A detailed budget and budget explanation/justification; At least 95 percent of the funds provided by the Nebraska Department of Education to eligible recipients shall be expended for carrying out adult education and literacy services; and the remaining amount, not to exceed 5 percent, shall be used for planning, administration, personnel development, and interagency coordination.

**Special Rule:** In cases where the cost limits described in (S) above are too restrictive to allow for adequate planning, administration, personnel development, and interagency coordination, the Nebraska Department of Education shall negotiate with the eligible agency in order to determine an adequate level of funds to be used for noninstructional purposes (Section 233 (b)).

13. Describe the steps to be taken to permit students, teachers and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers that impede their access to, or participation in, a funded program. Barriers are those involving equity, gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age. (In compliance with Section 427 of GEPA.)

## 6.5 Evaluation of Applications

Local proposals for adult education funds will be read and evaluated by a panel of three or more persons who are knowledgeable professionals in the field of adult education. The panel will include members from the State Adult Education staff and others invited from the ranks of adult basic education local program directors and members of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI) who are familiar with the State of Nebraska. Members of the reading committee who have submitted proposals will not be allowed to evaluate or vote on their proposals.

**Special Rule:** The eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this subtitle for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not individuals described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 203 (1), except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy services. In providing family literacy services under this subtitle, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this subtitle for activities other than adult education activities (Section 231 (d)).

### 6.5.1 Criteria for Evaluating Local Proposals

In awarding grants, on a competitive basis, the Nebraska Department of Education shall consider the following:

1. the degree to which the eligible provider will establish measurable goals for participant outcomes;
2. the past effectiveness of an eligible provider in improving the literacy skills of adults and families, and, after the one year period beginning with the adoption of an eligible agency's performance measures under Section 212, the success of an eligible provider receiving funding under this subtitle in meeting or exceeding such performance measures, especially with respect to those adults with the lowest levels of literacy;
3. the commitment of the eligible provider to serve individuals in the community who are most in need of literacy services, including individuals who are low-income or have minimal literacy skills;

4. whether or not the program:

(A) is of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains; and

(B) uses instructional practices, such as phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension that research has proven to be effective in teaching individuals to read;

5. whether the activities are built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice;

6. whether the activities effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate, including the use of computers;

7. whether the activities provide learning in real life contexts to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

8. whether the activities are staffed by well-trained instructors and administrators, and counselors, if applicable;

9. whether the activities coordinate with other available resources in the community, such as establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies;

10. how the program offers flexible schedules and access to support services (such as child care and transportation), by cooperative efforts with other agencies and organizations, that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs;

11. whether the program maintains a high-quality management information system that has the capacity to report participant outcomes and to monitor program performance against the eligible agency performance measures;

12. whether the local communities have a demonstrated need for additional English literacy programs;

13. the cost effectiveness and/or efficiency of proposed activities in relationship to statewide average program costs;

14. timeliness of program and financial reports; and

15. other items as requested in the proposal.

## **6.6 Special Rule**

**Special Rule:** Whenever the State implements any rule or policy relating to the administration of - or operation of - a program authorized under this subtitle that has imposed a requirement that is not imposed by Federal law, the State shall identify, to eligible providers, the rule or policy as being State imposed. If a State agency has created any rule that impacts the activities, that aspect should be provided. (Section 223 (c)).

### **6.6.1 Response to Special Rule**

Nebraska does not apply any rules, policies, or requirements relating to the administration of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act that are not imposed by Federal law.

## **Chapter 7 - Public Participation and Comment**

*Section 224 (b) (9) requires a description of the process that will be used for public participation and comment in respect to the State plan.*

### **7.0 Public Participation and Comment (Sec. 224 (b) (9))**

#### **7.1 Description of Activities**

Prior to the release of the draft State plan for public input, several meetings were held which included: local program directors; members of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI), the state advisory committee for Adult Education; and State office staff. Discussions focused on the development of the new State plan in relation to the new

Federal legislation. With input from these persons, the State office developed a rough draft which was then edited by this group prior to release to the public.

To gather public comment and input regarding the State plan, these procedures were followed:

On or before February 15, 1999

1. State plan draft made available via the Internet at the website: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us> A request for feedback regarding the plan was included.

2. Hard copies of the draft were sent to the following:

(A) All Nebraska adult education local program directors

(B) All members of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI), and representatives of the groups enumerated on page 9.1 of this plan.

(C) State Literacy Resource Center Director at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

(D) Office of Nebraska Governor Mike Johanns

### **February 15 - March 15, 1999 (Public Comment Period)**

Local adult education programs gathered comments and input from their respective program staff and advisory committees.

#### **March 4, 1999**

1. Public comment session at Southeast Community College - Lincoln, 9:00 - 11:00 am.

2. Meeting of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI) for review of the State plan draft and made recommendations and comments concerning the plan.

#### **March 15, 1999**

End of 30 day public comment period.

### **7.2 Governor's Comments** (Section 224 (d))

The eligible agency shall submit the State plan and any revisions of the State plan to the Governor of the State for review and comment and ensure that any comments regarding the State plan are submitted to the Secretary. (Section 224 (d)) Comments from the Governor's Office are included in Appendix C.

### **7.3 Participation in the Preparation of State Plan**

Appendix D includes a listing of participants and meetings held with local program directors, NCLI members, and working committees in the preparation of the State plan. Public comments can be found in Appendix G.

## **Chapter 8 - Description of Program Strategies for Populations**

*Sec.224 (b) (10) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act requires a description of how the eligible agency will develop program strategies for populations that include, at a minimum, low-income students; individuals with disabilities; single parents and displaced homemakers; and, individuals with multiple barriers to educational enhancement, including individuals with limited English proficiency.*

### **8.0 Descriptions of Program Strategies for Populations** (Sec. 224(b)(10))

#### **8.1 Strategies**

##### **Low income adult learners who are educationally disadvantaged**

Adult learners with the lowest levels of education are often those with the lowest levels of income. This population is often the most difficult to serve and the hardest to reach. Innovative methods must be employed to enable this population to take advantage of adult education and literacy activities. Brochures and other means of advertising need to demonstrate

the economic advantage to improving educational skills. Classes should be offered at convenient times and locations. Collaboration must take place with other agencies serving this population, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Health and Human Services, JTPA, and Family Services. This will help in overcoming barriers such as child care, transportation, health issues, and in accessing vocational counseling, job training, and other related services. As Nebraska moves to establish one-stop centers, these cooperative efforts among agencies will benefit all clients.

Professional development activities will assist staff in learning how best to serve those with low educational skills. Emphasis will be placed on teaching job readiness and employment skills, numeracy skills, reading and writing skills, and successful life management skills.

### **Individuals with disabilities**

Programs serve students with several types of disabilities, including physical, mental, emotional, medical, developmental, and learning related. The needs of these students vary widely and the ability to meet these diverse needs can be affected by the class location and delivery system. To overcome some of these barriers, Nebraska has been conducting intensive professional development activities, especially in the area of learning disabilities. Selected participants are being trained to identify students who might have a learning disability, where to refer the student for accurate diagnosis, and what accommodations would enhance the learning experiences. At the conclusion of this training, several participants will be identified to conduct workshops across the state. Instructors will learn how to assist students suspected of having some type of learning disability. To further assist students with possible learning disabilities, a collaborative committee has been established with professionals representing Hotline For the Handicapped, Department of Labor, Assistive Technology, Special Populations/Transitions (working with at-risk youth), Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Health and Human Services. Through this group, referral avenues have been established so that students who may have learning problems can obtain the help they need for diagnosis. They may also be referred by the agency to an adult education and literacy program in their area of the state.

Students with physical disabilities will be offered reasonable accommodations. Partnerships will be pursued with agencies such as Services For The Visually Impaired, Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, League of Human Dignity, Vocational Rehabilitation, Nebraska Hotline For The Handicapped, and the Nebraska Assistive Technology Partnership. Instructional strategies will vary in order to address individual learning styles. Agencies, such as Goodwill and Salvation Army, or sheltered workshops providing job training, may also receive funding from other sources for education for their clients. Local programs will be encouraged to work in partnership with these groups to provide appropriate adult education and literacy services.

### **Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers**

Single parents and displaced homemakers are often referred to educational programs through agencies such as Health and Human Services, JTPA, and/or Single Parent/Displaced Homemakers programs. The barriers to succeeding in an educational setting are difficult to overcome for this population without the combined efforts of several agencies. Employment is a priority so the time spent in an educational setting needs to address workplace issues to help these students secure and/or retain a job and become self-sufficient. Other groups such as Even Start and Head Start refer the parents to adult education programs. This population will be served more easily when one-stop centers become fully operational.

### **Limited English Proficiency**

Nebraska has seen a rapid growth in the refugee and immigrant population during the past ten years. This has impacted small and large communities, businesses, the legal system, the K-12 school systems, and the adult education and literacy programs. Professional development activities have been varied and frequent to disseminate information on the best practices in the field.

The students with limited English language proficiency often enter programs with multiple barriers. Mutual referrals with such agencies as Health and Human Services, JTPA, Job Service, and resettlement organizations are of primary importance in serving the population. A new culture, employment, family considerations, health issues, and little or no ability to communicate are challenges facing many students. For some, the program needs to provide immediate survival English skills. For others, gaining employment or improving job skills, improving English communication skills, pursuing citizenship, advancing academically, and participating in their new community and culture are integral parts of the adult education and literacy program.

Various instructional strategies are employed to help English literacy students progress toward their goals:

1. Programs employ *Crossroads Cafe* as well as other video instruction.
2. Communicative English is the focus of the instructional practices to provide learning in real life contexts.
3. Flexible class schedules and collaboration with agencies to provide support services are an essential component of the program design.
4. Workplace literacy partnerships have been established in several communities.
5. Curriculum is being developed for meeting specific needs of English Literacy Program participants.
6. Professional development activities will continue to be offered practitioners to keep them up to date on the latest in research in language acquisition.
7. A committee is working toward the selection of a formal student assessment instrument for effectively documenting continuous improvement in English Literacy Programs.

## **Chapter 9 - Integration With Other Adult Education and Training**

*Sec.224 (b)(11) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act requires: a description of how the adult education and literacy activities that will be carried out with any funds received under this subtitle will be integrated with other adult education, career development, and employment and training activities in the State or outlying area served by the eligible agency.*

### **9.0 Integration With Other Adult Education and Training (Sec. 224 (b) (11))**

#### **9.1 Description of Planned Integrated Activities**

The Nebraska Department of Education recognizes how important it is to integrate adult education and literacy services, including workplace development, with other agencies and institutions within the State. For example, mutual client referrals with such agencies as Department of Labor, Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Health and Human Services have been in place for many years in Nebraska. Local programs, through their advisory committees and interagency agreements, have formed close associations with agencies such as literacy councils, community business and industry, correctional services, Job Service, welfare, and Vocational Rehabilitation. This cooperation always leads to program improvements through which to better serve students.

At the State level there is a real desire to see integration of agencies involved with adult education and literacy and workplace literacy. Cooperation exists with:

1. Department of Labor
2. Human Resource Investment Council
3. Nebraska Committee For Literacy Initiatives
4. State Library Commission
5. Department of Health and Human Services
6. Department of Education
7. Department of Correctional Services
8. Vocational Rehabilitation
9. Department of Economic Development
10. State Legislature
11. Governor's Office of Policy Research
12. State AFL-CIO
13. State Literacy Council
14. Post-secondary institutions
15. Business and industry

Programs at the local level are always expected to collaborate. Partnerships come from agency and business/industry representatives sitting on local program advisory committees. In return, program administrators take an active role by participating on other agency committees. All of these efforts help to educate business and industry leaders about the

benefits of workplace literacy and basic skills programs. There are also local program representatives participating on the regional Workforce Development Boards.

As a strong supportive partner in the one-stop centers, adult education will provide basic skills instruction and specific workplace skills. This will enable the target population to obtain the skills necessary for successful employment. It is anticipated that, where feasible, adult education will provide on-site instruction and/or education counseling and/or referral services. All of these activities help to build strong local programs that benefit the lives of students.

## **Chapter 10 - Description of the Steps to Ensure Direct and Equitable Access**

*Section 231(c) requires that each eligible agency receiving funds under this subtitle shall ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts under this section; and the same grant or contract announcement process and application process is used for all eligible providers in the State or outlying area.*

### **10.0 Description of the Steps to Ensure Direct and Equitable Access (Sec. 224 (b) (12))**

#### **10.1 Description of Steps**

The Nebraska Department of Education ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The same grant announcement and application process is used for all eligible providers in the state. (Reference to Section 231 (c)).

The Nebraska Department of Education will ensure direct and equitable access by:

1. Advertising availability of funds in those newspapers with statewide distribution and on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.
2. Accepting proposals from all eligible providers as listed in Section 6.2 of this plan and no later than the May 1 submission deadline.
3. Evaluating all eligible proposals using the same process, criteria, and evaluation committee.

**Special Rule:** Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this subtitle for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not individuals described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of Section 203 (1), except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy services. In providing family literacy services under this subtitle, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this subtitle prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this subtitle for activities other than adult education activities (Section 231 (d) of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998 and Section 3.2 of the Nebraska State Plan).

#### **10.2 Notice of Availability**

The Adult Education Section of the Nebraska Department of Education will publish an announcement of the availability of federal funds. An invitation to submit proposals will be placed in newspapers with statewide distribution.

## **Chapter 11**

### **Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals**

*Section 225 requires for each fiscal year, each eligible agency to carry out corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals using funding authorized by Section 222 (a) (1). Section 222 (a) (1) allows not more than ten percent of 82.5 percent of the funding for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional programs or for other institutionalized individuals.*

#### **11.0 Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Adults**

The Nebraska Department of Education, pursuant to the Act, shall not use less than 82.5% of the grant funds to award grants and contracts under Section 231 and to carry out Section 225, of which not more than 10 percent of the 82.5 percent shall be available to carry out Section 225 activities.

#### **11.1 Types of Programs**

From funds made available under Section 222 (a) (1) for a fiscal year, each eligible provider shall carry out corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals, including academic programs. Funds shall be used for the cost of educational programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions, which include local and county jails, state correctional facilities, as well as programs/agencies serving other institutionalized individuals. The academic program services include:

1. basic skills acquisition;
2. English literacy programs;
3. high school equivalency completion;
4. pre-employment skills; and
5. life management skills.

The policies, procedures, and activities for providing instructional services to this clientele are the same as those for regular programs of instruction for adults. In addition, programs will be encouraged to use guidance and supportive services where possible and to provide education and training through cooperative efforts with providers in correctional and other institutionalized settings.

### **11.2 Priority**

The Nebraska Department of Education will ensure that programs providing educational services for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Eligible agencies providing instruction under this section will address the priority issue in the local program proposal.

The same application and review processes will be used for Section 225 as is used for Section 231 applicants.

### **11.3 Types of Institutional Settings**

A correctional institution refers to any:

1. prison;
2. jail;
3. reformatory;
4. work farm;
5. detention center; or
6. halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or any other institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders.

Facilities which serve those individuals referred to as "other institutionalized" include State hospitals, drug/alcohol rehabilitation centers and/or halfway houses, and institutions serving those persons who have parole/probation/house arrest status.

## **Chapter 12 - State Leadership Activities**

*Sec. 223 (a), (b) Each eligible agency shall use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) for one or more of the following adult education and literacy activities.*

### **12.0 State Leadership Activities**

#### **12.1 Description of Activities**

Each eligible agency shall use funds made available under Section 222(a)(2) for one or more of the following adult education and literacy activities:

1. The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under section 231(b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area.
2. The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities.
3. The provision of technology 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 State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.
5. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.
6. Incentives for
  - (A) program coordination and integration
  - (B) performance awards
7. Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension.
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. Integration of literacy instruction and occupational skill training, and promoting linkages with employers.
11. Linkages with postsecondary educational institutions.

#### **12.1.1 Activities Identified for Funding**

The following is an overview of the activities identified for funding:

##### **Professional Development Programs**

The commitment to professional development at both the state and local level has been a priority in Nebraska for many years. The state will continue to provide the very best activities and resources possible with available funding. The quality of the state leadership activities impacts students and educators and leads toward continued growth on both levels.

A State Staff Development Advisory Committee helps to identify the needs and resources for professional development programs. The members represent the diversity of our state, from small to large programs, and from urban to rural areas. A needs assessment was developed by this group and distributed to educators, both salaried and volunteer, across the state. Priority will be given at the state level to those staff development needs as determined by the survey. This includes instruction in phonics, reading comprehension, numeracy, preparation for work, writing skills, and English language acquisition. In each instance, cooperation and collaboration with other agencies, including other funded programs, one-stop centers, schools, Educational Service Units, and post-secondary institutions will be pursued.

Individual programs will have the opportunity to request funds for activities that will meet the needs of their community. A specific example is the rapid increase in some communities of the English Literacy Program population. The need for instructional techniques and diversity education for this special population would be an appropriate activity. A committee of interested English Literacy Program practitioners has been formed to assess the best methods of providing professional development activities. Again, cooperation and cross training with other agencies will be encouraged. Other statewide committees involving practitioners are also meeting to look at addressing the changing needs of the student population. A Learning Disabilities group, and a Careers Committee are examples of those that are in existence. Others will be added as the professional development needs of programs change.

##### **Technical Assistance**

Assistance will be made available to providers of adult education and literacy activities to achieve continuous program improvement. This includes dissemination of the latest teaching techniques and best practices, knowledge of how to work with special populations, continuing development of program design and improvement, planning for follow-up activities, and program administration.

##### **Technology Assistance**

The delivery system for technology assistance needs to be as varied as possible to accommodate the adult education and literacy programs across the state. Nebraska is a large, mainly rural state; therefore, distance becomes a factor in service delivery.

Staff training needs will be accomplished through regional workshops, Nebraska's annual adult education personnel conference, distance learning, video conferencing, materials available for checkout from the state video library, the development of a listserv for sharing ideas and problem solving, and collaboration with agencies at the local level.

Nebraska is in the process of adopting a Management Information System for the adult education program. This will require training and support for staff across the state. Regional training workshops, distance learning, and video conferencing will play important roles in reaching all staff.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are an essential part of state leadership activities. Several methods of program evaluation will be used to measure success in meeting the established core indicators. Each year 20% of the funded programs will assess their activity through a written self-evaluation tool based on the Indicators of Program Quality which will be followed by an on-site visit by State staff. All other programs will use a modified evaluation instrument to assess continuous program improvement.

Monitoring activities will take place through the evaluation of monthly, quarterly, and annual reports; pre-and-post testing results; advisory committee meeting reports; student follow-up; financial reports; and professional development participation.

### **Developing and Disseminating Curricula**

Programs will be encouraged to present to others across the state effective curriculum which has been developed to assist students in meeting their determined goals. Areas of focus will be family literacy activities, employment skills, English literacy skills, consumer/living skills, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Some program areas nearing completion and ready for dissemination include a package of materials designed to take those seeking citizenship through the process, a curriculum designed for rural English Literacy Program students, and a careers assessment program which incorporates job shadowing and employability literacy skills.

One method of accomplishing dissemination is the development of a website that can be easily accessed by students and staff across the state. Other methods of delivery will be regional and/or statewide conferences and workshops, video conferencing, distance learning, the Nebraska ABE Newsletter, and the dissemination of software, video, or print materials from the State lending library.

### **Other Activities**

Planning for and implementing follow-up activities at the local level for students who have left the program will be a priority. The information gathered will be part of the evaluation process. Follow-up will also occur with continuing students in the local programs. This will highlight how the needs of the students are being met, how the adult education and literacy skills acquired by the participants have impacted their lives, and whether programs are offering the most effective curricula to help students achieve continuous progress.

Other activities which promote the purpose of this Act will be offered as need arises.

Activities not listed above will be considered if funding becomes available.

## **12.2 Collaboration with Other Related Agencies and Programs**

In carrying out this Section, eligible agencies shall collaborate where possible, and avoid duplicating efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities.

As discussed in the identified activities for funding, partnering is always encouraged. Resources outside of the core adult education program always need to be considered when looking at professional development needs, technical assistance, curriculum development, and technology assistance.

## **Appendix A**

### **NALS**

#### **Description of the Prose, Document, and Quantitative Literacy Levels**

##### **Level 1: 0-225**

**Prose:** Most of the tasks in this level require the reader to read relatively short text to locate a single piece of information which is identical to or synonymous with the information given in the question or directive. If plausible but incorrect information is present in the text, it tends not to be located near the correct information

**Document:** Tasks in this level tend to require the reader either to locate a piece of information based on a literal match or to enter information from personal knowledge onto a document. Little, if any, distracting information is present.

**Quantitative:** Tasks in this level require readers to perform single, relatively simple arithmetic operations, such as addition. The numbers to be used are provided and the arithmetic operation to be performed is specified.

##### **Level 2: 226-275**

**Prose:** Some tasks in this level require readers to locate a single piece of information in the text; however, several distractors or plausible but incorrect pieces of information may be present, or low-level inferences may be required. Other tasks require the reader to integrate two or more pieces of information or to compare and contrast easily identifiable information based on a criterion provided in the question or directive.

**Document:** Tasks in this level are more varied than those in Level 1. Some require the readers to match a single piece of information; however, several distractors may be present, or the match may require low-level inferences. Tasks in this level may also ask the reader to cycle through information in a document or to integrate information from various parts of a document.

**Quantitative:** Tasks in this level typically require readers to perform a single operation using numbers that are either stated in the task or easily located in the material. The operation to be performed may be stated in the question or easily determined from the format of the material (for example, an order form).

### **Level 3: 276-325**

**Prose:** Tasks in this level tend to require readers to make literal or synonymous matches between the text and information given in the task, or to make matches that require low-level inferences. Other tasks ask readers to integrate information from dense or lengthy text that contains no organizational aids such as headings. Readers may also be asked to generate a response based on information that can be easily identified in the text. Distracting information is present, but is not located near the correct information.

**Document:** Some tasks in this level require the reader to integrate multiple pieces of information from one or more documents. Others ask readers to cycle through rather complex tables or graphs which contain information that is irrelevant or inappropriate to the task.

**Quantitative:** In tasks in this level, two or more numbers are typically needed to solve the problem, and these must be found in the material. The operation(s) needed can be determined from the arithmetic relation terms used in the question or directive.

### **Level 4: 326 -375**

**Prose:** These tasks require readers to perform multiple-feature matches and to integrate or synthesize information from complex or lengthy passages. More complex inferences are needed to perform successfully. Conditional information is frequently present in tasks at this level and must be taken into consideration by the reader.

**Document:** Tasks in this level, like those at the previous levels, ask readers to perform multiple-feature matches, cycle through documents, and integrate information; however, they require a greater degree of inferencing. Many of these tasks require readers to provide numerous responses but do not designate how many responses are needed. Conditional information is also present in the document tasks at this level and must be taken into account by the reader.

**Quantitative:** These tasks tend to require readers to perform two or more sequential operations or a single operation in which the quantities are found in different types of displays, or the operations must be inferred from semantic information given or drawn from prior knowledge.

### **Level 5: 376-500**

**Prose:** Some tasks in this level require the reader to search for information in dense text which contains a number of plausible distractors. Others ask readers to make high-level inferences or use specialized background knowledge. Some tasks ask readers to contrast complex information.

**Document:** Tasks in this level require the reader to search through complex displays that contain multiple distractors, to make high-level text-based inferences, and to use specialized knowledge.

**Quantitative:** These tasks require readers to perform multiple operations sequentially. They must disembed the features of the problem from text or rely on background knowledge to determine the quantities or operations needed.

*Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Adult Literacy Survey, 1992*

## **Appendix B**

### **Indicators of Program Quality**

**Approved by the Full Committee, 12/1/95**

### **Nebraska Indicator #1: Learners Demonstrate Progress Toward Attainment of Basic Skills and Competencies That Support Their Individual Educational Goals and Needs.**

#### **Performance Measures:**

1.1 Program documents standardized test scores for ABE/GED.

#### **Performance Standard:**

1.1.1 Program records show an average of .5 grade level increase for all students reassessed as demonstrated by reassessment according to state policy.

1.2 Program assesses ESL students utilizing TNAT, NIT (Nebraska Interview Test by Ken Mattran), Best, LAS, STEL, TABE or locally developed tests.

**Performance Standard:**

1.2.1 Program records demonstrate measurable gains appropriate to the student's goals using one or more of the specified tests.

**Nebraska Indicator #2: Learners Advance in the Instructional Program or Complete Program Educational Requirements That Allow Them to Continue Their Education, Training And/or Employment.**

**Performance Measures:**

2.1 Students advance at a satisfactory rate.

**Performance Standard:**

2.1.1 Of those students who have been reassessed according to state policy, at least 25 percent advance within a level, to the next level or attain their goal.

2.2 Students attain a local or State of Nebraska High School Diploma.

**Performance Standard:**

2.2.1 At least 70 percent of 12 plus hour students who take the GED Test battery successfully complete the GED and qualify for a local or State of Nebraska High School Diploma.

**Nebraska Indicator #3: Program Has a Planning Process That Is Ongoing and Participatory, Is Guided by Evaluation, Is Based on a Written Plan (e.g. ABE Proposal) That Considers Needs and Resources, and Is Realistically and Adequately Implemented.**

**Performance Measures:**

3.1. Program has a planning document (e.g. ABE proposal).

**Performance Standards:**

3.1.1 The planning document addresses the requirements for local proposals as stated in the Nebraska State Plan for Adult Education.

3.1.2 The planning document is regularly reviewed and revised to determine congruence between planned program activities and actual activities.

3.2 An active advisory committee exists with appropriate representation of community agencies and other organizations.

**Performance Standards:**

3.2.1 Program-wide advisory committee meets at least three times a year.

3.2.2 Minutes of advisory committee meetings are kept.

3.2.3 Current list of advisory committee members and area of representation is available.

**Nebraska Indicator #4: Program Has a Staff, Including Paid Instructors and/or Volunteers, Who Are Skilled in Working with Adult Students.**

**Performance Measures:**

4.1 A program acquires qualified staff in accordance with the personnel policies of the sponsoring institution.

**Performance Standards:**

4.1.1 Program uses written job descriptions for all paid and volunteer positions.

4.1.2 Program personnel interview all potential staff to determine their appropriateness to serve on the ABE staff.

4.2 Program has an effective evaluation component.

**Performance Standards:**

4.2.1 Program evaluates paid staff using policies of the sponsoring institution if in place. In the absence of policies, paid staff are evaluated annually for the first three years, then biannually thereafter.

4.2.2 Program demonstrates evidence that the volunteer staff receives evaluative performance information on a continuing basis during the course of their service.

4.2.3 Program demonstrates a process for addressing areas of individual instructor and/or volunteer improvement.

**Examples:**

- \*A written policy of performance evaluation of staff
- \*Staff evaluation instrument
- \*Conferences with staff
- \*Student evaluation of instruction/instructor
- \*Classroom observations

**Nebraska Indicator #5: Program Has Curricula and Instructional Approaches Which Provide a Variety of Materials and Methods of Instruction to Address Learning Styles, Preferences and Educational Needs.**

**Performance Measures:**

5.1 Program personnel use student assessment information to guide the instructional process.

**Performance Standard:**

5.1.1 One hundred percent of the students receive an initial assessment of basic skills upon enrollment in the program.

5.2 Students participate in a goal-setting process.

**Performance Standards:**

5.2.1 Program provides evidence of communication between the student and teacher in the development of realistic student goals.

5.2.2 At least seventy - five percent of all student files contain evidence of student's educational goals.

**Examples:**

- \*Student-teacher conference notes
- \*Anecdotal records

\*Progress notes

\*Student information/intake/registration forms

5.3 Student goal-setting process is linked to decisions on instructional materials and methods.

**Performance Standards:**

5.3.1 Instructional methods and assigned materials correlate with skill levels as determined by appropriate assessment instruments.

5.3.2 Program provides evidence that a variety of appropriate instructional methods are available.

5.3.3 Program provides evidence that a variety of appropriate instructional methods are being used and linked to the goals of students.

**Examples:**

\*Up to date instructional material

\*Group instruction; one-on-one instruction; peer tutoring; cooperative learning

\*Video, audio and computer-assisted instruction where available

**Nebraska Indicator 6: Program Has a Staff Development Process That Considers the Specific Needs of its Staff and Offers Training in the Skills Necessary to Provide Quality Instruction.**

**Performance Measures:**

6.1 Program demonstrates a process for identifying and planning for staff development needs.

**Performance Standards:**

6.1.1 Program director utilizes staff input to identify staff development needs.

6.1.2 Staff development activities address identified areas of improvement.

**Examples:**

\*Local workshops

\*Audio tapes

\*Video tapes

\*Teleconferences

\*National, regional and state conferences

\*Special innovative and demonstration projects

\*Teacher visitation program

6.2 One hundred percent of paid staff participate in 24 hours of approved professional growth activities over a three-year period of time.

**Performance Standard:**

6.2.1 Program provides documented evidence of participation.

6.3 Program makes available staff development activities to all instructional volunteers.

**Indicator #7: Program Identifies Students' Needs for Support Service and Makes Services Available to Students Directly or Through Referral to Other Educational and Service Agencies with Which the Program Coordinates.**

**Performance Measures:**

7.1 Program has a process to identify student needs for support services.

**Performance Standards:**

7.1.1 Program identifies and documents student needs for support services.

**Examples:**

- \*Student intake interview
- \*Teacher observation
- \*Coordinator, teacher, agency referral
- \*Input from planning committees

7.1.2 Program identifies community resources for student support.

7.1.3 Program informs clients of the availability of support services.

7.2 Program collaborates with human service providers.

**Performance Standard:**

7.2.1 Program demonstrates active working relationships with community support agencies.

**Examples:**

- \*Vocational Rehabilitation, Jobs and JTPA
- \*Child care, transportation and other services
- \*Local education agencies and community colleges
- \*Social Services

**Nebraska Indicator #8: Program Actively Recruits from the Service Area the Population Identified by the Adult Education Act as Needing Literacy Services.**

**Performance Measures:**

8.1 Program effectively reaches its target population.

**Performance Standard:**

8.1.1 Program enrolls at least 3 percent of the program's target population.

8.2 Program utilizes active recruitment tools.

**Performance Standard:**

8.2.1 Program has current program information that is distributed to the target population in the service area.

**Examples:**

- \*Pamphlets, brochures, use of media and other recruitment strategies

**Nebraska Indicator #9: Students Remain in the Program Long Enough to Meet Their Educational Goals.**

**Performance Measure:**

9.1 Program effectively retains students for a minimum of 12 hours.

**Performance Standard:**

9.1.1 Proportion of students, for whom it is appropriate, remaining in the program for a minimum of 12 hours, is at least 50 percent.

9.2 Students meet their educational goals.

**Performance Standard:**

9.2.1 Over a state plan period, a program demonstrates progress in the proportion of students who achieve their educational goals.

**Appendix C**

(This letter accompanied the draft plan to Governor Johanns.)

February 14, 1999

The Honorable Mike Johanns, Governor  
State Capitol  
2nd Floor, N.E.  
P. O. Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Dear Governor Johanns:

As required by Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998, of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, enclosed is a draft copy of Nebraska's State Plan for Adult Education for your review. Your review and comments of the state plan for FY 1999-2004 would be welcomed.

This plan encompasses the goals and scope of Nebraska's Adult Basic program from which we serve those adults who: 1) lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills that prevent them from functioning effectively in society; 2) do not have a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent; or 3) are unable to speak, read, or write the English language.

The state plan is due in Washington on or before April 2, 1999. Therefore, we would appreciate your comments no later than Monday, March 15, 1999, so that revisions can be made prior to the submission of the plan to Washington.

If you or any of your staff have questions concerning the draft plan, please call Vicki Bauer at (402) 471-4807. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Douglas D. Christensen, Commissioner  
Nebraska Department of Education

**Appendix D**  
**State Plan Development Committee**

Ms. Vicki Bauer  
Adult and Community Education  
Department of Education  
Post Office Box 94987  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

Ms. Lana Burr  
Adult and Community Education  
Department of Education  
Post Office Box 94987  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

Jan Drbal  
Adult and Community Education  
Department of Education  
Post Office Box 94987  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

Shirley Gruntorad  
Adult and Community Education  
Department of Education  
Post Office Box 94987  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

Ms. Carolyn Apland  
Northeast Community College  
801 East Benjamin Avenue  
Norfolk, Nebraska 68701

Ms. Ann Chambers  
Central Community College  
Post Office Box 4903  
Grand Island, Nebraska 68802-4903

Mrs. Babette Dickinson  
Southeast Community College  
Route 2  
Beatrice, Nebraska 68310

Dr. Connie Eichhorn  
Omaha Public Schools  
3215 Cuming Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68131

Ms. Joan Haslow  
Western Nebraska Community College  
1601 East 27 Street  
Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361

Mr. James Holen  
Southeast Community College  
8800 "O" Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68520

Dr. Jane Hunter  
2100 Circle Drive, #212  
Scottsbluff, NE 69361-1777

Ms. Deanna Odean  
Mid-Plains Community College Area  
1101 Halligan Drive  
North Platte, Nebraska 69101

Mr. Harold Ortmeier  
Blair Community Schools  
Box 288, 440 North 10 Street  
Blair, Nebraska 68008

Ms. Georgia Overstreet  
Alliance City Schools  
1604 Sweetwater  
Alliance, Nebraska 69301

Mrs. Jean Rankin  
Sidney Public Schools  
Post Office Box 482  
Sidney, Nebraska 69162

Ms. Janice Sears  
Crete Public Schools  
920 Linden  
Crete, Nebraska 68333

Ms. Cassie Smith  
Central Community College  
608 North Lincoln, PO Box 827  
Lexington, Nebraska 68850

Ms. Jane Zatechka  
Southeast Community College  
8800 O Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68516

### **Meetings Held in Preparation of the Nebraska State Plan for Adult Education**

**October 7, 1998:** Meeting of Nebraska ABE Supervisors in Kearney to review new federal legislation and development of new Nebraska State Plan, including a time line for preparation.

**November 20, 1998:** Meeting of ABE Supervisors' Working Committee in Lincoln to review State plan components and refine time line for preparation of the plan.

**December 7, 1998:** Meeting in Lincoln comprised of ABE Supervisors' Working Committee, other interested ABE Supervisors, and some members of the Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI), the State advisory committee for ABE, to address the following sections of the Act: Section 212(b)(2) (A) Performance Measures, and Section 231(e) Considerations in Awarding Grants.

**December 8, 1998:** Continuation of Monday's meeting to deal with additional items to be addressed in the State plan, including: State plan components, follow up of students, program reporting, additional performance measures, etc.

**January 14 - 15, 1999:** Meeting in Grand Island to review and edit rough draft of State plan; gather additional information from participants.

**February 8, 1999:** Meet with and submit draft plan to NDE Adult Program Services Administrator for review and comment prior to distribution for public comment.

**March 4, 1999 (AM):** Public comment session held in Lincoln.

**March 4, 1999 (PM):** Meeting of NCLI in Lincoln for review and comment of the State plan.

**March 22, 1999:** Video conference scheduled to review final copy of State plan. (Canceled due to minimal revisions required of draft copy.)

## Appendix E

### Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives for Adult Basic Education

Nancy Busch, Deputy Director , Library Commission, The Atrium, 1200 N St., Suite 120, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-2023, (402) 471-4002

Area Represented: State library program, Public sector employment, Women, Urban

Term Expiration: August 2001

Gary Caster, Goodyear Tire and Rubber, 4021 North 56 Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68504, (402) 467-8265

Area Represented: Private sector employment, Workplace literacy, Urban areas

Term Expiration: August 2001

Don Crouch, Div. of Rehab. Services, NE Dept. of Education, 301 Centennial Mall, So. , P.O. Box 94987, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987, (402) 471-3657

Area Represented: Public education, Public sector employment, Handicapped

Term Expiration: ExOfficio

Maria Diaz, Dept. of Health & Human Services, P.O. Box 95026, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-5026, (402) 471-9200

Area Represented: Resettled foreign born Refugees, Public sector employment Women, Racial and ethnic minorities

Term Expiration: August 1999

Judith L. Ellingson , RR 1, Box 28A, Denton, Nebraska 68339, (402) 475-7318

Area Represented: Private literacy, volunteer literacy, Community-based literacy Women

Term Expiration: August 2001

Vicki Geisler, Job Training Program Coordinator, Department of Labor, 550 So. 16th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4600, (402) 471-9883

Area Represented: Public sector employment, State Job Training Agency, Women

Term Expiration: August 2000

Vacant as of 1/1/99, NE Dept. of Correctional Service, P.O. Box 94661, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4661, (402) 479-5758

Area represented: Public sector employment, Urban area

Term Expiration: August 2000

M. Jane Hunter, 2100 Circle Drive, #212, Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361-1777, (308) 630-8212

Area Represented: Adult Basic Education, Education of the adult learner, Evaluation of adult programs, Public education, Public sector employment

Term Expiration: August 1999

Vacant as of 1/1/99, Policy Research Office, P.O. Box 94661, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4601, (402) 471-2744

Area Represented: Governor's Office, Public sector employment, Urban

Term Expiration: August 2001

Kenneth Mass, Nebraska State AFL-CIO, 5418 South 27th St., Suite #1, Omaha, Nebraska 68107-3492, (402) 734-1300

Area Represented: Private sector employment, Recognized state labor organizations, Private, voluntary, or community literacy organizations, Urban area

Term Expiration: August 1999

Terrence McAuliffe, Nebr. Dept. of Economic Development, PO Box 94666, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4666, (402) 471-3741

Area Represented: Economic Development, Public sector employment, Public education

Term Expiration: August 2001

Daviana Lundy McFadden, NE Dept. of Education, 301 Centennial Mall, South, Post Office Box 94987, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987, (402) 471-2471

Area Represented: Public education, Public sector employment, Rural area, Women, Persons with handicaps  
Term Expiration: August 2000

Helen Morten, 9115 Pioneer Ct., Lincoln, Nebraska 68520, (402) 484-6848  
Area Represented: Rural area, Women  
Term Expiration: August 2001

Senator Jennie Robak, 2006 28th Street, Columbus, Nebraska 68601, Work (402) 471-2715, Home (402) 564-8080  
Area Represented: Nebraska Legislature  
Term Expiration: August 1999

Cassie Smith, Central Community College, Lexington Campus, 608 North Lincoln, PO Box 827  
Lexington, Nebraska 68850, (308) 324-5936  
Public education, Public sector employment, Community based & voluntary Literacy organizations, Rural areas, Women  
Term Expiration: August 2001

Jane Zatechka, Southeast Community College, 8800 O Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68516  
(402) 437-2719  
Area Represented: Adult Basic Education/reading ed., Public education, Public sector employment, Urban area, Women  
Term Expiration: August 1999

**Appendix F**  
**Organizational Chart**

COMMISSIONER  
Doug Christensen  
Chief Executive Officer  
Policy  
State Board

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER  
Polly Feis  
Chief of Staff  
Inter-Agency/Legislative Relations

ADMINISTRATOR  
Marge Harouff  
Leadership Council Member  
Certification  
Adult Program Services

DIRECTOR  
Vicki Bauer  
Adult Education  
GED Administrator

ABE CONSULTANT  
Lana Burr  
Adult Education

ABE PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANT  
Jan Drbal

## Appendix G Public Comment Session

**MARCH 4, 1999 - 9:00 to 11:00**  
**Southeast Community College, Room G-1**

Dr. Hunter, NCLI Chair: The Committee for Literacy Initiatives has called together a session for public comment on the State Plan for Adult Education. At this time, we are open to receiving comments from any person in the public who wishes to comment on any section of the State Plan that has been prepared in 1999.

The first commenter will now come forward and sign in.

1. My name is Judy Ellingson. I am a consultant for literacy. I am mostly associated with the volunteer literacy organizations associated with the Literacy Councils of Nebraska.

In reviewing your plan, I think it is a very well written plan. The indicators of quality including student progress measurement and training of providers are very necessary items that I was very pleased to find in the program. I think that it is a very well defined process and gives a very good idea of what a providing agency would need to participate.

I do have a couple of areas of concern. The first one is within the indicators of progress: would an agency need to follow up on student progress as they continue through college or job retention? While I think that is a really necessary part, I find difficulty in performing that within the 5 percent administrative budget. In my own program, that would be an impossibility. Our administrative costs run about 10 percent normally, and then to add into that student follow up.

I also see some problems. We deal with very low literacy students. As soon as they have gained enough progress, we try to refer them to another institution or agency to gain more in-depth literacy training. And if we have to keep track of all those referrals, we would need to ask the people we refer to report quarterly or annually to us. They are not going to want referrals. I see this could be a sticky point in the process. Perhaps with more in-depth training, this will be addressed, but this is area of concern.

My other area of concern is one that has been with us for a long period of time, and that is the area of flexibility in three particular areas.

First of all, in using the TABE. As I read the Plan, it appears to me that the TABE was required. The clients in my own local program usually are not literate enough to use the TABE. And so for us, this would be a meaningless time waste. I would be real concerned with that, as well as the instructors we use are volunteers. They meet with the students for one hour a week. It would be a problem for us in terms of meeting our students' needs to do the TABE testing. Certainly could be a goal that would be a goal for the organization. But for us, standardized testing is not an efficient way to meet the students' needs. The quality measurements that we use. We have a time measurement that we ask so that we keep track of how many hours the students are involved. We also have a method of measurement so that we have some indication of what materials they are using. We don't necessarily use the materials in a method because we meet our students goals. And therefore, they are not necessarily the educational goals that we would like to see like to gain a grade point. So this could present a problem.

And the other area that we measure are our students' goals. We ask our students and tutors to come up with three personal goals that they will work on in a particular period of time, usually a quarter. They report quarterly to us. Our whole system is aimed at meeting strictly the students' needs and not particularly the agency needs. To me grade level testing, that type of an indicator, is more of an agency need than a student need. That is one of the areas of flexibility.

One of the areas is instructor. There is always some confusion about instructor because most people feel an instructor is paid. And none of our services are provided by paid instructors. They are all provided by certified volunteers who are trained. This can create problems for us were our agency to apply for this type of funding.

The final one that I would like to see. I have some concerns in the area of training, training of instructors, because many of our volunteers could certainly get a great deal of experience in attending some of the trainings that the Department of Education provides for the instructors. And many times if they are not a participating agency, they cannot attend those trainings, especially in the area of basic literacy. For many of our students are coming to us with a lot challenges that they have to meet. And when we have a 12 hour training for our volunteers, it is very hard to include a great deal of information on how to meet with a specific challenge. And so those are some areas of training that our volunteers could certainly and

our agency could really profit and the students then would then profit across the state by having their instructors have access to that training.

So those are the areas of concern. Overall I think it is a very good program. Thank you.

2. My name is Jim Holen. I am from Lincoln, Nebraska, Southeast Community College.

As far as the proposal is concerned, I think the proposal looks good. I think there is a lot of changes coming that I think will be a positive thing for our ABE program. Hopefully, we can do a good job of serving the needs of the ABE student across the state of Nebraska. I think there are some realistic goals that are listed in the proposal that will require work on our part to do, but I think it is something that is doable and workable.

I don't have any negative comments as far as the proposal. I think that everything that is talked about in there is all said and I think it is a positive approach as far as our Community Ed section and the State Department and meeting the needs of our ABE clientele in the State of Nebraska. Thank you.

**Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives (NCLI)  
March 4, 1999**

**Attendance:** Maria Diaz, Judy Ellingson, Cathy Plager (substituting for Vicki Geisler), Daviana McFadden, Cassie Smith, Jane Zatechka, Chairperson Jane Hunter

**Staff:** Vicki Bauer, Lana Burr, Jan Drbal

Jane Hunter called the meeting in order at 10:35 in Room G-I, Southeast Community College, Lincoln, Nebraska. Dr. Hunter welcomed everyone on behalf of the staff at the State office. Each member introduced herself and the area in which she represents. A motion to approve the **Agenda** was made and passed. A motion to approve the **minutes** as written of the last meeting, October 16, 1997, was made and carried.

**Presentation on One Stop Center in Crete** by Jan Sears and Connie Lentell from Crete Public Schools. The Crete Family Resource Center has been providing a one-stop center the past few years. A slide show presented the collaborative efforts that could be a model for the rest of the state. The success stories were uplifting. The Crete one stop center has been invited to present at COABE this spring.

**Review and comments of the Draft of State Plan for Adult Education**

Ms. Plager from the Department of Labor will visit with Ms. Bauer and Ms. Burr concerning clarification of certain sections in reference to the Department of Labor.

The Department of Labor will be one of the main partners in the One-Stop concept. Coordination and collaboration between agencies will be encouraged. There will be 12 partners in the effort. Within the next year, the Department of Labor hopes to have 6 one-stops certified and operating. The Department of Labor's State Plan is not due for another year.

A system of sharing data was discussed. The Department of Labor has a system in place but continued study is needed. ABE will need confidentiality when providing student information. A generic release form must be part of the application data.

Ms. Ellingson feels that TABE testing should not be mandatory. Many of the students she works with cannot and/or will not take the test. The volunteers do not feel they have the time or desire to change what they are doing. Ms. Ellingson felt that these requirements are servicing the organization and not meeting the needs of the students.

Ms. Bauer explained that standardized testing and accountability is a big part of the new Act. TNAT is available for those who do not have the ability to test in TABE. The Department is investigating a uniformed assessment for English Literacy Programs.

Another area that would be helpful to the literacy organizations is the training and workshops that are provided to Adult Basic Education staff.

**Jane Zatechka moved that this committee (Nebraska Committee for Literacy Initiatives) recommend the State Plan for Adult Education, as amended, be sent to the Commissioner of Education for his signature. Maria Diaz seconded and the motion carried.**

**Report of FY 1998 program activities.**

Ms. Bauer reported the program activities for fiscal year 1998. She reviewed the comparison chart and the annual report tables that were included in the packets.

There is a growing need for ESL classes in Nebraska. This has become a major focus of staff development. Ms. Diaz informed the committee of a survey about ESL progress for non-English speaking adults. The survey showed that 16 percent of the ESL students could not speak English after five years of study and 30 percent could not speak English very well.

Table 6 does not accurately show what is happening. Follow up is major emphasis of the new Act. We are researching a management information system and hope to have one operating in the next fiscal year.

Ms. Bauer reported that we have four focus groups.

The Working with Troubled Youth committee has developed recommendations for assisting the increased number of teenagers in our programs.

The Technology committee is researching a management information program software and classroom hardware and software computer needs.

The Program Promotion committee is creating a brochure, a poster, and a PSA video that can be used throughout the state.

The GED 2000 committee is examining the effects of the new series of GED tests. The changes include the following: new test scores cannot be combined with the old series, calculators will be used for 80% of the math test, and scanners will be used for scoring.

Other activities of the State office include:

A committee has been created to work on a "basic skills certificate."

We will continue to evaluate 20 percent of ABE programs this year. This round of evaluations includes a self-evaluation instrument based on the Indicators of Program Quality and a visit from Ms. Bauer and Ms. Burr.

Ms. Burr detailed the staff development activities for FY 1998.

Regional ESL workshops

ABE Personnel Conference in October

Tuition Reimbursement.

Advisory Committee for Staff Development Activities

Several people went to the Assessment for Employment Conference in Lincoln

A series of LD Workshops included 25 people from programs across the state. As a result, we developed an advisory committee.

NOVL workshop in Grand Island.

Subscriptions for each program to Adult Learner, Math Practitioner and Hands-On English.

Teacher Visitations

Sponsoring people to the TESOL Conference, Iowa ESL conference, National Disabilities Conference, COABE,

Technology Conference, Governor's Conference on Community Service

Supervisors' Conference (the second part of the Pacific Institute on Change)

Volunteer Coordinators' meeting. Volunteer numbers and hours are down compared to five years ago.

**Other Business**

**Bylaws:** Dr. Hunter commented that the Bylaws for this committee need to be updated. The new legislation does not require an advisory committee. Ms. Bauer will discuss its continuation with Dr. Harouff. Presuming the group continues,

the next meeting is scheduled prior to the ABE Personnel Conference on October 13, 1999, in Kearney.

Ms. Zatechka thanked Ms. Bauer and Ms. Burr for the work they have done on the State Plan. They have done an outstanding job.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

### **Public Comments Regarding Nebraska State Plan for Adult Education**

#### ***From Omaha Metropolitan Community College, ABE Advisory Committee:***

Why the significant drop in Level II students from 1997 - 1998? Seems to be an indication that employers are not requiring the GED as an entry-level credential during this time of low unemployment/scarcity of available workers.

Numbers of reported immigrants seem unrealistic in terms of the rapid growth and increasing demands for ESL training. In Omaha alone, during the past two years, 2000 Sudanese refugees have settled in the city. It would appear the figures are for registered immigrants only. The data, therefore, inadequately describe the tremendous need for services/funds in this area.

The opportunity to forge new partnerships through one-stop centers and other collaborations is indeed exciting and makes so much sense. Making ABE/GED a truly integral component among the services offered welfare recipients should truly enhance access and expand our role in the community.

The annual evaluation process would appear to be changed very little. However, the concept of continuing improvement is noted throughout the plan and would seem to be the keystone upon which the program will unfold over the next five years. The increased accountability is evident throughout.

A Nebraska Basic Skills Certificate is a great idea to give recognition to students who may not be able to achieve the GED.

Performance measures appear to be on target. Bench marking is important. Main concern is with the labor-intensive task of tracking outcomes, placement into employment and/or further education. This is a process that involves time, money and technology resources. Most of this will have to be contributed by the local provider. Given the nature of an extremely transient student population, follow-up data may be very difficult to obtain.

Overall comments: The future looks exciting. The emphasis being placed upon outcomes based instruction, integration of work-based skills, technology integration and community "partnershiping," should serve to give impetus to dramatic changes in our local program.

#### ***From Nebraska Department of Labor, Job Training Administration:***

Section 2.2.1 -- Due to reporting requirements, JTPA is required to ask questions pertaining to educational attainment. You may want to cross check with JTPA to get a better count in the area of Low Income Adult Learners Who are Educationally Disadvantaged.

Section 5.3.2 -- The plan indicates that working collaboratively with one another will encourage data sharing. One method to do this may be joining the partners that are coming together with the Department of Labor who is in the process of developing a common intake and access system for Nebraska. This system will facilitate the sharing of client data between partners plus ensure more accurate and timely data. It will increase customer satisfaction when dealing with our clients.

Section 8.1 -- JTPA deals with three population areas under this section yet they are not mentioned as partner in serving these clients. The three areas would be: Low-Income Adult Learners Who are Educationally Disadvantaged; Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers; and Limited English Proficiency.

Throughout the plan one stop centers are mentioned. It indicates that as soon as they are operational, coordination and collaboration will begin. This coordination and collaboration is already ongoing and can be built upon by the existing program structure that is currently in place.

Section 3.3 -- For an example of the above statement. The Omaha Workforce Development Center currently is conducting GED classes two days a week to customers who choose to take those classes at the Center. The partnership is very successful and of great benefit to our customers.

Is it foreseen that ABE will be contacting the Workforce/One-Stop Centers to encourage ABE services to be provided to customers from the Centers? I would also encourage that a cross-training or cross-informing would take place with

Workforce Staff since funding is an issue with ABE that having information at the Centers and staff aware may direct appropriate customers to the program. It allows for more choice for our customers.

Section 2.1.4, page 2.4 -- The first paragraph, the second sentence (These unemployment figures can be misleading because this figure refers to those persons who register with Job Service.) This sentence is wrong. It would be my recommendation that the sentence be completely disregarded. With the sentence being gone, it would appear to me that the meaning of the paragraph would not change. If you were to insert the correct terminology, it would be longer than one paragraph.

The plan is well written and follows the plan instructions in a very clear manner. Congratulations on a well thought out plan.

***From Susan Martinez, Chairperson of the Western Nebraska Community College ABE Program Advisory Committee:***

Health and Human Services needs to be a partner with ABE in determining the educational background of those receiving benefits. My understanding as I read the Plan is that recipients of TANF, etc. are not asked for their level of education. This information would be helpful to ABE programs in learning the extent of needs in the community, and might also be an opportunity for individual tracking and assessment of progress resulting from ABE intervention. If HHS can partner with Curtis and Associates, surely they can contract with ABE or at least make referrals and assist with follow-up.

In this day of collaboration, partnering with schools may be beneficial. ...If ABE could partner with the schools to assist those young people at risk of dropping out, we would all benefit.

I believe many of the people entering GED programs have learning disabilities. Some of these students may have learning disabilities yet to be identified. I feel that GED programs should receive additional funds to test students for disabilities in order to find the best method for tutoring and preparing students for GED completion. I imagine that testing is expensive; however, if we are able to help increase successful completion through ABE programs, the extra cost can be justified.

I am glad that efforts are being made to be outcome based. Head Start has also made that shift, as have numerous other grant operated programs. Strategies for follow-up need to be created since people are so mobile and are difficult to track from community to community. The ability to note progress, even small steps, is so important to both the person utilizing the program and the front-line staff providing services. Both parties need to feel a sense of accomplishment.

***From Stuart Wiley, ABE Supervisor for York Public Schools:***

Page 5.3, Performance Measures -- Are the percentages based on the 12+ hour students we report, or ALL students who enroll? The word "enrollees" bothers me.

Page 5.10, Item 5.3.2, Line 2 -- The words REQUIRED TO OBTAIN are interesting, considering the fluidity of our student population. Our high school has a hard time tracking its graduates, who have family in York, for any length of time.

Page 5.11, Section 5.4, Paragraph 4 -- Do we have evidence that the unemployment figure in Nebraska is changing in such a way as to increase the need for education?

Page 6.8, Item 6.5, Paragraph 1, Lines 6 & 7 -- I have a problem with reading committee members who have submitted proposals; this is a conflict of interest. And I have a problem with reading committee members from large urban programs evaluating my smaller, rural proposal.

Page 4.2, Item 10 -- Can you explain local program evaluations as separate from items 1 - 9, and define staff evaluations? Are we going to evaluate all our staff at the local level?