

# ABE Policy Issues 2018

*Summer Institute Discussion*

## Individual/Small Group Warm Up

**What questions do you have about ABE policy?**

**What issues are you dealing with in your local consortia?**

**How could state ABE policy help resolve these issues?**

## Policy Overview

**ABE Policy Levels**

* Federal
* State
* Consortium
* Local Organization

**What do we mean by “the state?”**

* State ABE Office in the Office of Career and College Success at the Minnesota Department of Education

**How do state ABE policies develop?**

* Request from the field
* Federal requirement (e.g. U.S. Departments of Education or Labor, Presidential Order)
* State requirement (e.g. Legislature, Education Commissioner, State WIOA Plan)
* Recommendation from ABE Support Network (supplemental service provider)
* Special Task Force

**Policy Sources**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Organization** | **Sources** |
| **Federal** | Congress  U.S. Dept. of Education   * Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) | Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)  National Reporting System (NRS)  Federal Register  Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) |
| **State** | Legislature  Minnesota Department of Education   * Office of Career & College Success * State ABE Office | Minnesota State Statute  Grant Assurances & Requirements  State ABE Policies  State ABE Memos and Technical Assistance  Minnesota Department of Education Rulemaking |
| **Local** | ABE Consortium  Fiscal Agent  City  School District  Organization/Site  Labor Union | District, Union & Organization Rules  Employment Contracts  Community Norms/Regulations  Supervisor Direction |

**Minnesota ABE Policies can be found online at: www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy**

## Issue: How should ABE programs teach? Language of Instruction

Overview

* Currently there is an ABE policy from 2004 that does not allow instruction to be offered in any language other than English. The state ABE office has been getting feedback and talking with local ABE programs about eliminating the policy.

Policies Involved

* Policy on Teaching Languages Other than English
* Eligible Content Policy

Factors to Consider

* Minnesota ABE programs can request a waiver to offer instruction in other languages with the current policy. Since 2010, only one program has requested a waiver (Hmong Cultural Center).
* Federal definition of adult education under WIOA: Academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual’s ability to: read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment” (Section 203 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014).
* Many ABE English Language Learning programs have students from many countries and languages; few ABE programs have only English Language Learners from a single first language.
* Many ABE programs embed some first language help informally in their classes either from instructors or other students (e.g. interpretation of some concepts, translation of words, small group discussion, etc.).
* Offering pure first language literacy classes could be difficult for some ABE programs because automatically some students would be excluded and because finding expertise and licensure in teaching the first language in multiple languages is beyond the budget of many ABE programs.

The Question

* Should we change or eliminate the Policy on Teaching Languages Other than English? What does this mean for which languages can be used for instruction? What does this mean for languages we teach?

## Issue: Who should ABE serve? Potential ABE Students and Visas

Overview

* Currently a potential student is ineligible for ABE if they have certain types of visas. Some ABE programs have created fee-based classes to serve certain students.

Policies Involved

* Eligible Student Policy
* Federal Visa requirements, such as for Student Visas that prohibit Student Visa holders from participating in Adult Basic Education programs

Factors to Consider

* More than 10 years ago, the state ABE office distributed a list of visas that were deemed ineligible, meaning if an ABE program found out a student or potential student had one of those visas, the program had to remove the student and their contact hours from the ABE database. If programs wanted to serve them they needed to have them pay for their portion of the service provided, especially staffing and classroom materials. However, methods of enforcing this policy are extremely difficult and potentially unlikely.

The Question

* Should we change the definition of eligible ABE students regarding certain visas?

## Issue: What should ABE teach? Eligible Instructional Content

Overview

* ABE programs in Minnesota are aligning instruction to ABE content standards. The Eligible Content Policy does not include any mention of ABE content standards or the allowable activities under WIOA. Also, some ABE programs want to offer classes that are considered conditional content without core content.

Policies Involved

* Eligible Content Policy
* Conditional Work Referral Policy
* Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014

Factors to Consider

* ABE Content Standards (College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS), Academic, Career and Employability Skills Transitions Integration Framework (ACES TIF), and NorthStar Digital Literacy Standards
* Federal definition of Adult Education in WIOA: The term ‘‘adult education’’ means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual’s ability to:
  + Read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
  + Transition to postsecondary education and training; and
  + Obtain employment.
* Federal Definition of allowable adult education activities: The term “adult education and literacy activities” means programs, activities, and services that include:
  + Adult education,
  + Literacy,
  + Workplace adult education and literacy activities,
  + Family literacy activities,
  + English language acquisition activities,
  + Integrated English literacy and civics education (IELCE),
  + Workforce preparation activities, or
  + Integrated education and training (IET)
* Local ABE programs ask about offering citizenship only classes and digital literacy only classes.

The Question

* Should we change the definition of eligible content for ABE? What does this mean for citizenship instruction? Digital literacy instruction? Other content?

## Issue: How many contact hours should GED testers earn for the testing center and ABE program? Counting GED Testing Hours

Overview

* Current policy only allows a testing center to count 7.5 hours yet students need to arrive early to check in with the local GED Testing Center, adding roughly 30 minutes per testing session. Current testing (full battery) is 445 minutes. The average tester takes 1-2 tests per session.

Policies Involved

* GED Testing Center Contact Hours Policy
* Contact Hour Policy
* Contact Hour Counting Policy

Factors to Consider

* Some testers need to retake tests and currently hours cannot be counted for retakes.
* Some GED testing centers consider having all testers go through ABE registration so they can count the testing hours as ABE contact hours.
* Many GED testing centers say that operating as a testing center is expensive and are losing money, even with the current contact hours counted and the $10/test income they receive.

The Question

* Should we change the maximum number of GED testing hours allowed to be counted? Which testers should get their hours counted?

## Issue: What experience and training do we expect of ABE colleagues? Staff and Volunteer Training Standards

Overview

* Currently the volunteer training standards are outdated and there are no state-level standards for administrative or support staff or standards for instructors in non-district ABE programs.

Policies Involved

* Volunteer Training Standards Policy
* State Statute on Licensure (Minnesota State Statute 122A.26): COMMUNITY EDUCATION TEACHERS; LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS.
  + Subdivision 1. Exemption. Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary and except as otherwise provided in this section, a person who teaches in a community education program established pursuant to sections 124D.18 and 124D.19 is exempt from all licensure requirements.
  + Subd. 2. Exceptions. A person who teaches in a community education program which qualifies for aid pursuant to section 124D.52 (Adult Basic Education) shall continue to meet licensure requirements as a teacher. A person who teaches in an early childhood and family education program which is offered through a community education program and which qualifies for community education aid pursuant to section 124D.20 or early childhood and family education aid pursuant to section 124D.135 shall continue to meet licensure requirements as a teacher. A person who teaches in a community education course which is offered for credit for graduation to persons under 18 years of age shall continue to meet licensure requirements as a teacher. A person who teaches a driver training course which is offered through a community education program to persons under 18 years of age shall be licensed by the Board of Teaching or be subject to section 171.35. A license which is required for an instructor in a community education program pursuant to this subdivision shall not be construed to bring an individual within the definition of a teacher for purposes of section 122A.40, subdivision 1, or 122A.41, subdivision 1, clause (a).
  + Subd. 3. English as a second language. Notwithstanding subdivision 2, a person who possesses a bachelor's or master's degree in English as a second language, applied linguistics, or bilingual education, or who possesses a related degree as approved by the commissioner, shall be permitted to teach English as a second language in an adult basic education program that receives funding under section 124D.531.

Factors to Consider

The Question

* What should the standards be for volunteers and staff in different roles in hiring and training?

## Issue:

**Overview**

**Policies Involved**

**Factors to Consider**

**The Question**

# ABE Policy Recommendation

**What issue(s) are you prioritizing to resolve?**

**What ideas do you propose? Please be specific! (Note which policies to revise, eliminate or develop. Articulate the specific language rewrites you recommend.)**

**Why and who do you think these potential solutions will help?**

**Who might disagree with these potential solutions and why?**

**What could be some side effects or unintended consequences with these solutions?**

**Would these potential solutions have a possible cost to these potential solutions to ABE students, local ABE programs, the state ABE office, or others? (Money or other resources?)**

**If I have questions about this potential solution, who should I contact for clarification?**

Name:

Email:

Phone: