



Defining Program Quality in Minnesota ABE

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Summer Institute 2018

- Understand the background and context for the current effort to create program quality standards
- Consider how to define and describe quality programming in ABE programs
- Consider efforts to define program quality in ABE in other states
- Inform the development of statewide program quality standards for Minnesota ABE

Program Quality

NOTE!

This conversation has begun and will continue on Schoology.

To join the group:

1. Go to www.schoology.com
2. Open a free INSTRUCTOR account (NOT a student or parent account)
3. Login
4. Click “Groups”
5. Click “Join Groups”
6. Enter access code:
4SCJ6-GX7XM

The screenshot shows the Schoology interface for a group titled "ABE Program Quality Standards discussion group". The top navigation bar includes "schoolology", "UPGRADE", "COURSES", "GROUPS", and "RESOURCES". The group page features a sidebar with "Group Options", "Updates", "Discussions (4)", "Albums", "Members (54)", and "Resources". An "Access Code" box displays "4SCJ6-GX7XM" with "Reset" and "Edit" options. The main content area shows a post by Jodi Versaw, dated "Wed Feb 7, 2018 at 3:27 pm", with the text: "Welcome new group members! There have been quite few people who've joined the group in January and February, so welcome to all of you and thanks for joining! In January I posted a discussion topic about a study of program quality in adult education programs in New York City. I'd love any thoughts on this. Here's a teaser: [this report about program quality was used to advocate for an increase...](#)". The post has 3 likes and a "Post" button is visible at the bottom right of the main content area.

Getting started: What does quality look like?

Think about an example of high-quality ABE programming.

What does that look like?

Describe to someone near you.

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Background and Context

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Context**

Background: National Literacy Act

The National Literacy Act of 1991: required Adult Education in each state to produce and adopt “Program Quality Indicators” (PQI)

- “... ensure that educational services supported with federal funds are quality services”
- The guidance for creating PQI emphasized quality of program processes more than outcomes
- “Minnesota ABE Quality Indicators” were created in 1992 and updated in 1994
 - Used up until 2013 as the basis for the PEGASUS award
- Other states have continued to update their PQI



Background: ABE Quality Indicators (1994)

1. Program planning, evaluation and continuous improvement
2. Learner educational gains
3. Other learner-specific goals (e.g. self-esteem, cooperation, leadership, employment)
4. Learner recruitment, development and retention
5. Learner-centered assessment and instruction
6. Community and program development
7. Staff recruitment, development and retention
8. Program management and fiscal planning



Background: Workforce Investment Act

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) replaced the National Literacy Act.

- Emphasis changed from program processes to student outcomes
- To fulfill requirements of WIA, the National Reporting System (NRS) was established
 - NRS defined performance targets and reporting procedures for states. Core indicators of performance were defined as:
 - Measurable improvement in reading, writing and/or math
 - Obtaining a secondary credential
 - Entering post-secondary education
 - Entering or retaining employment



Background: Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) updated and replaced WIA.

- Emphasis on program outcomes as defined by NRS remains largely unchanged



Current Efforts

Current effort to develop program quality standards

My position (“Program Quality Specialist”) was created in 2016: tasked with developing Program Quality Standards

Intentions for the development process:

- Builds on earlier work of program quality indicators
- Not another set of content standards (like ACES/TIF or CCRS)
- Bottom-up accountability (to balance existing top-down accountability)
- Focus on description and understanding of what quality ABE programming looks like in our buildings and classrooms
- Recognition that there are many factors that affect student outcomes
- Gather input, expertise and knowledge from across the field, from both staff and students

Current efforts, continued

Potential uses of program quality standards:

- Inform the 5-year narrative
- Inform the Program Improvement process
- Provide evidence to legislators and funders in support of additional funding

Program Quality

Still contemplating...

How can racial equity be reflected in these standards?

What about the fact that ABE programming looks very different in different settings across the state?

How can program quality standards be measurable?

What about the relationship between program quality and funding? Couldn't we provide higher quality programming with more funding?

Work goes faster when there is a deadline.



Key Questions

Key question 1

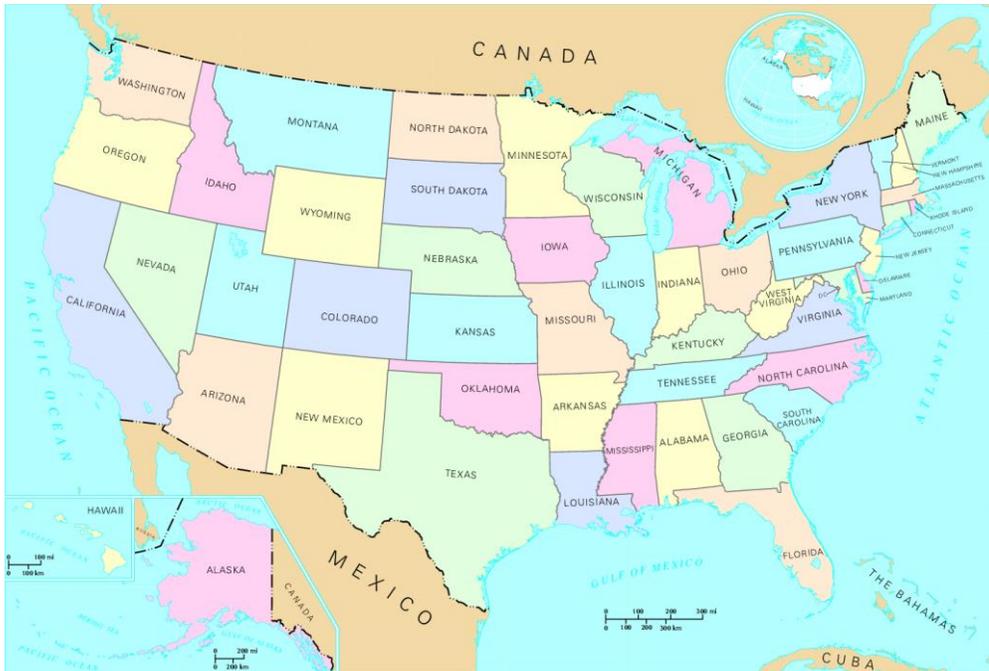
What should be kept from the 1994 ABE Quality Indicators? What is missing?

ABE QUALITY INDICATORS
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
April 12, 1994

I. PROGRAM PLANNING, EVALUATION & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

INDICATORS	SAMPLE MEASURES Demonstrating Improvement
1. Program Goals - are established which reflect community and learner needs as well as socio-economic realities such as employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ community-wide meetings are held annually to solicit input into community goals & operations;▪ program updates information on community demographics at regular intervals to identify & address changes in community needs that impact its operations & goals;▪ program participates in formal & informal local, regional & statewide networks to share information, coordinate resources & keep abreast of changing needs.
2. Program Plans - Annual and multi-year program plans exist which relate to the program goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ program leadership works w/ a planning team made up of representatives of internal & external constituencies;

Key question 2



What program quality standards for ABE have been developed in other states, and what can we learn from them?

Examples from:

- Maryland
- Colorado
- Arkansas

Key question 3

What about the relationship between program quality and funding?

What does the “Investing in Quality” study from New York adult education tell us about this?



Literacy Assistance Center

Investing in Quality: A Blueprint for Adult Literacy Programs and Funders

Key (overarching) question

How do we account for racial equity within Program Quality Standards?

Let's talk
about **RACE**

Group discussions

1. Divide into groups
 2. Identify a note-taker
 3. Start with one key question
 - All groups can consider the overarching question of racial equity
 - Move on to another key question if time
 4. Email or give notes to Jodi
- If possible: Post notes to Schoology group



Questions for group discussions

Key questions (one per group):

1. What should be kept from the 1994 ABE Quality Indicators? What is missing?
2. What program quality standards for ABE have been developed in other states, and what can we learn from them?
3. How do we understand the relationship between program quality and funding? What does the “Investing in Quality” study from New York adult education tell us about this?

Overarching question (for all groups):

How do we account for racial equity within
Program Quality Standards?



Thank you!

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