



A Companion Paper to  
*A Primer on Adult Education in Texas*

## Adult Education Providers: Instructional Approaches and Service Delivery Methods

Texas Workforce Investment Council  
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## Introduction

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature. As an advisory body to the Governor and the Legislature, the Council assists with strategic planning for and evaluation of Texas' workforce development system. The Council promotes the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas and advocates a workforce system that provides quality workforce education and training opportunities. The 19-member Council includes representatives from business, labor, education, community-based organizations and the Council's five member state agencies.

## Statutory Directive

Under Title 10 Texas Government Code (TGC) Section 2308.1016, the Council is responsible for facilitating the efficient delivery of integrated adult education and literacy services in Texas. The Council is charged with evaluating the adult education programs administered by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and identifying duplication of planning, lack of adequate client information sharing, and any other problems that adversely affect the delivery of adult education and literacy programs.

## Defining Adult Education

*Adult education* is often applied as a broad reference for numerous and distinct types of adult learning activities. For the purpose of the Council's work, the definition of adult education is determined by Title II of the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Title II of WIA defines adult education as the instruction and services below postsecondary level provided for individuals:

- Who are 16 years old and older,
- Not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law,
- and who:
  - Lack basic educational skills to function effectively in society,
  - Do not have a secondary diploma or equivalent, or
  - Are unable to speak, read, or write English.

Adult education programs generally emphasize basic skills in reading, writing, math, and English language competency to prepare adults for jobs or further academic instruction. This definition, though somewhat narrowed by statutory parameters, provides a starting point for understanding the role of adult education in workforce development. In this report, adult education includes adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), and English as a second language (ESL). A further discussion of the definition of adult education and its limitations is included in *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* (Texas Workforce Investment Council [TWIC], 2010a).

## The Council's Previous Work on Adult Education

Building on earlier work presented in *A First Look at Critical Issues Surrounding Adult Education and Literacy in Texas* (TWIC, 2003), the Council examined aspects of adult education focused largely on TEA's adult education programs funded by Title II of WIA. The Council also reviewed the current adult education initiatives at TWC and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). This research was published in *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas (Primer)* in January 2010. The *Primer* detailed adult education legislation, funding, the service delivery system, current and future populations in need of adult education services, and program reporting and accountability. The *Primer* was written as a foundation upon which further research could provide additional in-depth analyses of specific issue areas.

The first companion paper to the *Primer*, *Identifying the Current and Future Populations in Need of Adult Education (Current and Future Populations)*, was prepared in coordination with the Office of the State Demographer and published in March 2010. The analyses in *Current and Future Populations* utilized updated data that were not available when the *Primer* was published and employed a more detailed projection methodology determined by the Office of the State Demographer. *Current and Future Populations* includes further analyses of the current population in need of adult education services, a more precise estimate of the future need for services based on projections for the Texas population, and the geographic dispersion of both current and projected adult education eligible populations in Texas by local workforce development areas (LWDA).

### Scope of Report

This report is the second companion paper to the *Primer* and focuses on the instructional approaches and methods utilized to provide adult education throughout the state. A representative sample of adult education providers in Texas was compiled with assistance from various experts in state agencies, community colleges, and literacy organizations. Providers were interviewed about the approaches and models that they use to deliver adult education. Because the Council promotes the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce, the most common methods of providing ABE, ASE, and ESL are of major interest since these programs offer the basic instruction necessary for adults to transition successfully into the labor market and to pursue further education and training. To better describe the adult education system in Texas, this report includes information about the numerous types of providers such as local education agencies, community colleges, and volunteer/non-profit organizations, including those that do and do not receive funding through TEA. After analysis of the gathered information, findings are reported and observations offered.

Even though this report is a companion paper to the *Primer*, it has been written to serve as a stand-alone publication. Relevant information originally printed in the *Primer* has been included to provide necessary background and contextual information for readers who might not be as familiar with the subject matter. Individuals who have previously read the *Primer* may recognize some of the general background information describing the adult education delivery system.

## Methodology

Building on information first presented in the *Primer*, the intent of this report is to develop a deeper understanding of how adult education programs are being delivered throughout the state in order to inform future policy considerations aimed at improving the delivery system and increasing capacity through enhanced coordination. This section provides a concise summary of the methodology used to sample providers, how the responses were collected, and how the data were analyzed. Appendix A provides a more detailed discussion about the methodology.

Five adult education experts in state agencies, community colleges, and literacy organizations were contacted and asked to suggest a cross section of adult education providers who offer ABE, ASE, and ESL programs in Texas, including those that do and do not receive funding from TEA. The adult education providers listed by the five experts were consolidated and compared to the 431 providers in the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL) provider directory, which is currently the most complete listing of adult education providers in Texas. Additional providers were selected to ensure that the sample matched the overall characteristics of the providers in the directory on characteristics such as provider type (local education agencies, community colleges, volunteer/non-profit organizations) and location within the state.

Twenty-seven adult education providers were contacted by phone and interviewed about their ABE, ASE, and ESL programs. Providers were questioned about the student enrollment process, instructional delivery, classroom materials, and the most effective aspects of their programs. The specific questions asked during the interview are included in Appendix B. The open ended format of the interview also allowed providers to offer supplementary information. Additionally, since the research process required locating and contacting specific adult education providers using information from the TCALL directory and provider websites, the Council also gained insight on the degree to which prospective students and other entities can access accurate information about available programs and services. After the interviews were completed, all of the responses were reviewed and analyzed. Providers' responses to the main questions are included in Appendix E. The results are summarized in a way that is consistent with the qualitative methods used.

## **The Adult Education Delivery System**

The adult education delivery system in Texas is a complex network of numerous loosely interrelated organizations operating at the state, regional, and local levels. In many ways, the adult education delivery system in Texas can be conceptualized as being bifurcated, or divided into two parts, due largely to differences in provider funding. One part includes the organizations that receive funding through TEA; the other includes the organizations that do not receive funding from TEA. Even though the organizations that do not receive funding from TEA can utilize the support services offered by the state, they are exempted from many of the requirements associated with the receipt of funds. This section describes the adult education delivery system with a focus on this division.

At the state level, adult education services are the responsibility of TEA's Department of State Initiatives. In 2003, TEA contracted with Texas LEARNS, the state office of Adult Education and Family Literacy at the Harris County Department of Education, to provide nondiscretionary grant management, program assistance, and other support services to Texas' adult education providers. Additionally, TEA established several statewide leadership projects to support local adult education programs: the Adult Literacy Clearinghouse Project, the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center, the Adult Education Credential Project, and Project GREAT (Getting Results Educating Adults in Texas).

The Adult Literacy Clearinghouse Project is hosted by TCALL. TCALL is a center in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University and serves as the official state literacy resource center. The Texas Family Literacy Resource Center at Texas State University-San Marcos serves as the statewide center for professional development and technical assistance for family literacy projects. The Adult Education Credential Project, at the Education Institute (Texas State University-San Marcos), was established to provide adult education administrators and teachers the knowledge and skills necessary to build strong and successful programs. Finally, Project GREAT, delivered through eight regional professional development virtual centers is focused on improving the quality of adult education instruction.

In addition to the statewide projects and assistance provided by TEA and Texas LEARNS, local adult education programs are also supported by numerous important professional and volunteer associations that operate in Texas. The Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education and Literacy Texas, for example, hold annual conferences and provide professional development opportunities for adult education teachers and administrators. Also of note, groups such as the Texas Council for Adult Basic Education and the Texas Family Literacy Organization advocate for adult education.

### **Adult Education Cooperatives and Affiliates**

A statewide system of adult education cooperatives was established by Title 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section 89.27 in order to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of federal and state supported adult education services. An adult education cooperative (co-op) is defined as a community or area partnership of educational, workforce development, human service entities, and other agencies



that agree to collaborate for the provision of adult education and literacy services. One member of each co-op is designated as the fiscal agent by the participating organizations in order to minimize administrative costs and better leverage related services. TEA funds 55 adult education co-ops that offer an array of adult education services. The fiscal agents for the cooperatives are located in 24 community colleges, 29 local education agencies, and two community-based organizations. Sixty additional organizations provide services as affiliates of one of the 55 cooperatives. In the cooperative-affiliate relationship, the fiscal agent of the cooperative funds the affiliated members as subcontractors or partners. Members of the cooperative may have a sub-recipient contract in which the fiscal agent reimburses members for allowable activities or the fiscal agent may provide services for and with the member through a non-financial agreement (e.g., the fiscal agent may pay for salaries and class materials while the member provides classroom space). The co-ops and affiliates that receive funding through TEA must follow all applicable federal and state laws including *The State Assessment and Goal Setting/Attainment Policy for Adult Education* (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2009).

### Organizations Not Receiving Funding From TEA

Many other volunteer and non-profit organizations provide adult education services while receiving no funding from TEA and are exempted from the monitoring, accountability, and administrative requirements placed on co-ops and affiliates. These volunteer and non-profit organizations include local literacy councils and other volunteer and community-based groups across the state. Many of these organizations depend on donations or grants from private citizens, local businesses, foundations, or local municipalities. Some are members of ProLiteracy, an international literacy organization that provides advocacy, resources, and credentialing services. Other providers are members of Literacy Texas, the statewide literacy coalition that offers resources, training, networking opportunities and advocacy for literacy programs. These volunteer and non-profit organizations can take advantage of support services and professional development opportunities such as those offered by Project GREAT. Additionally, TCALL offers reimbursements for volunteers to attend professional development and training through Title II WIA leadership funds. Many volunteer and non-profit organizations hold their adult education classes in libraries, schools, churches, and similar settings.

## **Adult Education Providers**

Adult education providers in Texas operate in the complex, multi-level system described in the previous section. The major types of adult education providers in Texas are local education agencies, community colleges, and volunteer/non-profit organizations. Some of these providers are funded through TEA as co-ops or affiliates. In this section, data from the TCALL directory are used to generally describe the adult education providers throughout Texas. Next, the different types of adult education providers are discussed. Finally, the different types of adult education instructors working in Texas are detailed.

TCALL maintains a statewide directory of adult education providers. As of April 2010, the directory listed 431 providers with their contact information, service areas, cooperative affiliations, and the services offered by each organization. The actual number of providers operating in Texas is unknown since inclusion in the directory is not mandatory and numerous for-profit providers, faith-based, and non-profit organizations that do not receive funding through TEA are less likely to be included. Despite this, the directory is currently the best source of information on adult education providers in Texas and affords an opportunity to analyze provider characteristics at the state level.

The TCALL statewide directory contains listings for the 55 adult education fiscal agents of the cooperatives and the 60 adult cooperative affiliates. The two cooperatives with the largest number of affiliates are Community Action, Inc. of Hays, Caldwell, and Blanco counties with 17 and the Houston Community College System with 12. Austin Community College, Corpus Christi ISD, Region 4 Education Service Center, and Seguin ISD each have three affiliates. Faith-based literacy providers account for 145 providers and 46 providers are local literacy councils: non-profit community-based organizations usually members of Literacy Texas. An additional 60 providers are associated with Literacy Texas or ProLiteracy.

The TCALL directory also lists the city in which providers are located. Table 1 lists the 10 cities with the most providers. Houston has the most providers of all Texas cities with 54 followed by Dallas and Fort Worth. The directory also lists the counties in which the providers are located. Of the 254 counties in Texas, 55 counties have two or more providers physically located within their boundaries whereas 52 counties have one provider. Every county is served by at least one provider even though a provider may not be physically located within each county.

**Table 1: Ten Texas Cities with the Most Adult Education Providers**

<u>City</u>	<u>Number of Providers</u>
Houston	54
Dallas	25
Fort Worth	21
Austin	20
San Antonio	15
El Paso	10
Waco	10
Arlington	9
Irving	7
Plano	7

Source: TCALL statewide directory of providers, April 5, 2010.

TCALL also documents the services offered by each provider. Many of the providers offer more than one service. Table 2 indicates that ESL is offered by 320 providers and 191 providers offer ABE. ASE, including General Educational Development (GED) test preparation and the adult high school diploma, is offered by 195 providers.

**Table 2: Services Offered by Providers**

<u>Service</u>	<u>Number of Providers Offering</u>
English as a Second Language	320
Adult Basic Education	191
Adult Secondary Education (GED Prep. and Adult H.S. Diploma)	195

Source: TCALL statewide directory of providers, April 5, 2010.

The local education agencies, community colleges, and volunteer/non-profit organizations that provide adult education hold their classes in schools, colleges, churches, workforce centers, community buildings, businesses, libraries, and other public and/or private facilities. Most co-ops and affiliates are local education agencies and community colleges funded through TEA, whereas most volunteer and non-profit organizations are not funded through TEA. Due in part to the previously noted requirements associated with the receipt of federal funds, local education agencies and community colleges generally tend to be more similar than the volunteer and non-profit organizations.

### *Local Education Agencies*

Local education agencies such as school districts and regional education service centers are major providers of adult education in Texas. School districts in Texas have the primary responsibility for implementing the state's system of public education and ensuring student performance under Title 2 Texas Education Code (TEC) Section 11.002, but many also offer adult and community education

services. Education service centers were established under Title 2 TEC Section 8.001 to assist school districts in improving student performance, to enable school districts to operate more efficiently and economically, and to implement the initiatives assigned by the legislature or TEA.

Twenty-nine local education agencies are the fiscal agents for adult education cooperatives. All eight of the education service centers in the TCALL directory are co-ops. Of the approximately 100 school districts listed in the TCALL directory, 21 are co-ops and 17 are affiliates. Most of the school districts in the directory that are not co-ops or affiliates offer family literacy or ESL classes.

### *Community and Technical Colleges*

In addition to offering courses leading to certifications and associate degrees, community colleges are mandated by Title 3 TEC Sections 130.0011 and 130.003(e) to have open-admission policies and to provide remedial education, adult literacy, and other basic skills programs for adults. Community colleges offer developmental courses that focus on basic skills including classes in reading, writing, mathematics, and study skills for students who do not have an appropriate academic foundation for postsecondary education. Additionally, community colleges offer literacy courses focusing on oral communication, reading, and writing skills to speakers of languages other than English.

Community and technical colleges do not receive money for adult education in their formula funding. However, 24 community colleges out of the 36 listed in the TCALL directory receive funding from TEA as adult education cooperative fiscal agents in Texas and are the primary providers of Title II WIA funded adult education and literacy for their areas. An additional six community colleges are affiliates of other co-ops.

### *Volunteer and Non-Profit Organizations*

The least amount of information is known about the volunteer and non-profit organizations that provide adult education. If these organizations do not receive TEA funding as co-ops or affiliates, they do not have an obligation to report how many students they serve, student completion rates, funding information, or any other program outcomes. Of all volunteer and non-profit organizations that provide adult education, two are co-ops that receive funds from TEA and must meet the reporting requirements. Even though some non-profit organizations are listed in the TCALL statewide directory, there is currently no way of knowing how many more organizations are providing services or how many adult students are being served by these groups.

## Adult Education Instructors

Organizations that offer adult education services in Texas must provide instructors to teach the adult learners unless an adult education program is completely computer-based or self-guided. This section details the qualifications necessary to be an adult education teacher and the unique nature of the job. TEA statistics and information gathered during the provider interviews are used to illustrate the different types of adult education personnel working in Texas. Responses gathered during the phone

interviews provide valuable additional information about differences in instructors between the programs.

Because many adult learners are motivated and attend class by choice, adult education teachers do not encounter some of the behavioral problems sometimes found with younger students (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010). However, adult students may have challenges that can make attending class quite difficult such as conflicting work schedules and family responsibilities. Even though many of the providers interviewed stated that working with adult learners is very rewarding, recruiting and retaining adult education teachers is often difficult, especially for smaller programs. Very few full time employment opportunities exist for teachers because of limited funding. Finding qualified teachers is also hard in some areas of the state. Additionally, teaching adult education may not be attractive to a teacher desiring continuous employment because adult education programs often follow the K-12 and college schedules with classes ceasing for up to a month in December and three months during the summer. The numbers of adult education classes are also reduced when facilities are not available. As a result, many adult education teachers work on a part time basis to supplement their regular income. In 2008, the average hourly wage for an adult education teacher (SOC code 253011) in Texas was \$20.70 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Table 3 indicates that for school years 2005 through 2007, over 2,000 local teachers worked part time whereas only about 200 were employed full time.

**Table 3: Adult Education Personnel by Function and Job Status for School Years 2005 to 2007**

Personnel	2005-2006			2006-2007			2007-2008		
	Part Time	Full Time	Unpaid Volunteers	Part Time	Full Time	Unpaid Volunteers	Part Time	Full Time	Unpaid Volunteers
State-Level Administrative / Supervisory / Ancillary Service	0	14	0	0	13	0	0	14	0
Local-Level Administrative / Supervisory / Ancillary Service	629	400	32	470	348	29	452	344	32
Local Teachers	2,480	193	32	2,235	188	29	2,185	237	23
Local Counselors	48	6	0	18	3	0	17	4	0
Local Paraprofessionals	888	108	29	637	108	20	502	118	15

Table Notes: Includes regular adult education, English literacy civics education, and corrections/institutionalized programs. Source: TEA (2008).

Requirements for adult education teacher qualifications vary between specific programs. According to Title 19 TAC Section 89.25, adult education teachers hired by TEA-funded programs must have at least a bachelor's degree and a teaching certificate or have a bachelor's degree and attend an additional 12 hours of in-service professional development annually until they have completed either six hours of adult education college credit or attained two years of adult education experience. Teachers in volunteer and non-profit programs not receiving TEA funds do not have to meet these requirements. However, some of the sampled volunteer and non-profit providers choose to hire only degreed volunteers and all of the providers interviewed offer some type of training or professional development for their staff.

All seven of the local education agencies interviewed for this report confirmed that their instructors are degreed teachers. Many are retired school teachers, but some teachers currently employed in the school district teach adult education classes at night. The five community colleges also reported using degreed instructors and three colleges stated that most of the teachers in the programs are retired school teachers. The volunteer and non-profit organizations, of which five are affiliates, tend to be much more dependent on unpaid volunteers to provide instruction.

## **Adult Education Programs and Service Provision**

There are numerous types of adult education programs for individuals who are at least 16 years old and beyond compulsory education. Many of these programs improve basic education skills, develop language fluency, and prepare individuals to take the GED exam. This section details how services are provided in ABE, ASE, and ESL classes across Texas. Even though considerable variations exist, each subsection will first generally describe the typical program characteristics reported by a majority of the sampled providers. A more specific discussion follows to illustrate the variation between the providers and programs.

### **Enrollment and Intake**

Most of the adult education providers in the sample reported a similar basic enrollment process. In general, students attend an orientation session, complete a diagnostic assessment to determine their educational functioning level, and are then placed in a class or with a tutor. The complete enrollment process may occur over several days. Important differences in the enrollment process do exist between the specific providers and programs. These differences largely concern the sequencing of the enrollment process and if enrollment is ongoing or only during certain periods of the year. More community colleges and volunteer/non-profit organizations in the sample enroll their programs on an ongoing basis whereas more local education agencies enroll during scheduled periods. More ABE and ESL programs are enrolled on an ongoing basis whereas more ASE programs are enrolled during scheduled periods.

Larger providers and some providers with managed enrollment announce the start of their adult education classes through newsletters, postcards, internet sites, public service announcements, local news broadcasts, or –if the program is sponsored by a school district– by sending information home with students. Five providers reported using both types of enrollment such as managed enrollment for their ASE programs and ongoing enrollment for their ESL programs. Three of the five community colleges and nine of the 13 volunteer/non-profit organizations enroll most of their adult education programs on an ongoing basis. Three of the seven local education agencies surveyed primarily have ongoing enrollment periods. Additionally, students are enrolled on an ongoing basis in 13 of the 22 ABE and 14 of the 24 ESL programs. Students in nine of the 20 ASE programs are enrolled on an ongoing basis.

No entirely consistent pattern exists that illustrates particular types of providers or programs enrolling during periods or on an ongoing basis. The choice of ongoing or managed enrollment seems to be determined largely by the way that instruction is delivered and provider preference. Numerous providers with enrollment periods and classes that follow a semester schedule stated that distractions are minimized for the students and teachers since no new individuals are being added to the class. Providers who enrolled students on an ongoing basis and placed students in small groups or with one on one tutors described the flexibility and rapid placement as strengths of their programs. A third group of

providers reported that they enrolled and registered on an ongoing basis, but only placed students when a new class started.

### *Orientation*

*The State Assessment and Goal Setting/Attainment Policy for Adult Education* states that programs receiving TEA funding are required to provide a new student orientation with a program overview, goal setting activities, and an initial assessment. Programs that enroll on an ongoing basis usually require adult students to make an appointment to attend a group or individual orientation session. The initial orientation can last between four to 12 hours, depending on the required activities and tasks. During the session, the educational programs are described, the program's policies, procedures, and rules are reviewed, and students may be briefed about topics such as basic study skills. Some programs also require students to sign a contract acknowledging their responsibilities and commitment to attend class.

Registration information is collected including contact information, basic demographics, information required to enter students into the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS) if providers are co-ops or affiliates, and any necessary supporting data to establish eligibility for the particular program, if required. Because of different funding sources, adult students in certain programs must be below a specified income level, within an age range, or live within a determined geographical area. During either orientation or registration, some programs also require students to detail their educational goals, future career aspirations, interests, and describe how they will handle any circumstances that may potentially interrupt their attendance, such as childcare and a conflicting work schedule.

### *Assessment*

The educational functioning levels of the students are assessed to determine the class in which they will be placed and the curriculum and materials that will be used. *The State Assessment and Goal Setting/Attainment Policy for Adult Education* requires adult students to be assessed before the first contact hour and after at least 60 hours of instruction. The policy lists the approved assessments that must be used by adult education programs that receive funding through TEA:

- **Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE):** Assesses basic skills in reading, vocabulary, language, mathematics, and spelling using a battery of sub-tests. The TABE is the designated assessment for ABE and ASE students.
- **Basic English Skills Test (BEST) – Literacy:** Measures reading and writing skills in everyday situations like reading a newspaper want ad and writing a rent check. The BEST is the designated assessment for ESL students.
- **Basic English Skills Test Plus (BEST-Plus):** Assesses interpersonal communication speaking and listening skills using everyday language. The test is administered as a face-to-face interview.
- **Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Complete Language Assessment System - English (CLAS-E):** Assesses the reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills of ESL students.



Providers receiving TEA funding are required to report students' assessment scores to TEA using TEAMS, an internet-based management information system. Most ABE and ASE programs in the sample utilize the TABE whereas most ESL programs use the BEST or BEST-Plus. Adult education programs that do not receive TEA funding are not required to use the specified assessments, even though some still utilize the TABE and BEST. Other providers that do not receive TEA funding, mostly volunteer and community programs, choose to use assessment instruments such as the Woodcock-Johnson III, San Diego Quick Reading Assessment, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), and the Single Word Reading Test. Some other smaller volunteer programs rely on verbal assessments of the students' strengths and weaknesses or assessments made by tutors. During the assessment process, programs may also require students to complete a learning styles inventory or diagnostic tests for learning difficulties.

### *Program Variations in Enrollment Sequencing*

All of the sampled providers reported using some type of orientation session and diagnostic assessment. However, the sequence of the activities and the time required to complete the enrollment process varied between the providers. A majority of providers have an orientation followed by the assessment and then registration or placement within a class. A few providers assess students before the orientation occurs. Additionally, the total amount of time required to complete the enrollment process and to be placed within a class also varied among the providers. Eleven providers reported requiring students to complete the enrollment process in multiple visits. Much of the variation in enrollment sequencing between programs seems to be for pragmatic reasons. Small, rural programs with fewer applicants may complete enrollment in one day, especially if the adult students have to drive long distances to reach the site. Larger programs with a greater number of applicants may need multiple visits to allow additional time for the completion of administrative tasks such as scoring assessments and determining educational functioning levels before assigning students to classes.

Thirteen providers (seven volunteer and non-profit groups, four local education agencies, and two community colleges) reported having waiting lists for at least one of their programs. Smaller volunteer and non-profit groups were more likely to have waiting lists since many use one-on-one instruction and purposefully match compatible volunteers with adult students. However, the volunteer and non-profit groups were also more likely to provide alternative activities for adult students on waiting lists such as ESL conversation groups and access to computer labs for independent study.

## Adult Basic Education

ABE programs provide instruction in reading, writing, and math to out-of-school youth and adults functioning at less than a secondary education completion level, usually 8<sup>th</sup> grade and below. Twenty-two of the 27 providers interviewed offer an ABE or adult basic literacy (ABL) program. Generally, ABE students receive individual or small group instruction using textbooks, workbooks, and computer aided learning activities. However, some ABE programs are very flexible and focus on the students' particular needs and goals.

ABE tends to be taught in small groups or with an individual tutor, especially in programs provided by volunteer and non-profit organizations. Nine of the 10 sampled non-profit organizations that offered an ABE or ABL program reported using only small group or individual instruction. The sampled local education agencies and community colleges were more likely to offer ABE to a class but reported dividing students into small groups or working individually with students during some portion of the class time. If ABE is taught to a larger class, most programs have students at different educational functioning levels in a single class. ABE students attend class for an average of 10 hours a week, but this varies by provider type. ABE students spend an average of six hours a week in classes offered by volunteer and non-profit organizations, 12 hours a week on average in classes offered by community colleges, and an average of 13 hours a week in programs sponsored by local education agencies.

Fifteen providers in the sample reported that ABE teachers or tutors developed their own instruction or had significant flexibility to make modifications depending on student need. Of the local education agencies and community colleges, only two providers reported using a pre-established ABE curriculum, but those two stated that the teachers were still given flexibility. Affording the teachers at local education agencies and community colleges the ability to develop their own instruction is understandable since many employ retired teachers. Volunteer tutors at non-profit organizations are less likely to develop their own curriculum or lesson plans and are more likely to use pre-established curriculum either written by the organization's staff or provided by groups such as ProLiteracy.

Various ABE curricula and classroom materials are used depending on the educational functioning level of the student. Most providers reported using typical classroom equipment such as dry erase boards, overhead projectors, and document cameras. Many providers in the sample that offer an ABE program reported using textbooks and workbooks from various publishers. The most frequently mentioned were Steck-Vaughn and McGraw-Hill. Four providers stated that they use *Laubach Way to Reading*, a structured phonics based reading and writing program for adults at low educational functioning levels. Thirteen providers reported using computers to provide supplemental instruction for their ABE students. The Aztec, Plato, and Instruction Targeted for TABE Success (ITTS) computer programs (discussed in Appendix D) were specifically mentioned by the providers.

## Adult Secondary Education

As defined in Title 19 TAC Section 89.21, ASE includes instruction below the college credit level in reading, writing, literature, mathematics, science, and social studies for adults who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent. ASE can be context-specific, but usually prepares adults for high school completion or the GED test. Twenty of the 27 providers interviewed offer ASE or GED preparation.

Generally, ASE students receive instruction as a class but are often divided into small groups or allowed to work independently using textbooks, workbooks, and computer aided learning activities. Of the 16 providers in the sample who stated that ASE is taught to a class, 15 said that the class was divided into small groups during instruction or that students sometimes worked independently on lessons. All of the 11 local education agencies and community colleges in the sample that offer ASE provide instruction to

a class, and 10 of the 11 state that the class is divided into smaller groups at some time during the instruction. Only three of the eight sampled non-profit organizations that offer ASE programs provide instruction to individuals or to small groups. One non-profit organization offers ASE through self-paced computer aided learning activities. ASE students in the sample spend an average of 11 hours in class per week, the longest amount of the three programs. However, differences exist between the providers with ASE students in programs sponsored by local education agencies averaging 13 hours, students in programs sponsored by community colleges averaging 12 hours, and students in programs sponsored by volunteer and non-profit programs averaging 8 hours.

Thirteen providers in the sample reported that ASE teachers or tutors developed their own instruction or had significant flexibility to make modifications to the curriculum. Similar to the ABE classes, only two providers out of all the local education agencies and community colleges reported using a pre-established ASE curriculum, but still stated that the teachers were given flexibility. The non-profit organizations with volunteer tutors are more likely to use pre-established curriculum developed by the staff.

Various classroom materials and curricula are used with ASE students depending on the specific needs of the student. The GED test has five sections: math, social studies, science, language arts, and an essay. Instruction is geared towards the skills needed to master these sections while still making the information relevant for the student. Like the ABE programs, many providers in the sample that offer an ASE program reported using textbooks and workbooks from Steck-Vaughn and McGraw-Hill. Twelve providers reported using computers to provide supplemental instruction for their ASE students. Two providers stated that their ASE classes were largely self directed with students completing lessons in course packets or interactive computer programs. Three providers stated that students completed projects and gave class presentations to exercise their academic skills.

## English as a Second Language

ESL instruction is for adults who are beyond the age of compulsory education and lack competence and proficiency in English. ESL programs provide intensive instruction in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending English. Twenty-four of the 27 providers interviewed offer ESL instruction. Generally, ESL students receive classroom and small group instruction using textbooks, workbooks, various supplemental materials such as picture dictionaries, and computer aided learning activities.

ESL tends to be taught to a group of students; however, 12 of the 20 providers that teach ESL to a class also stated that students were often divided into smaller groups to practice skills like talking and listening. Unlike ABE in which one class may have learners at different educational functioning levels, ESL classes are sometimes divided into separate classes by skill level such as beginning, intermediate, and advanced. All but one of the 11 local education agencies and community colleges in the sample that offer ESL provide instruction to a class. Only three of the sampled non-profit organizations offer individual or small group ESL programs. ESL students spend an average of 8.5 hours a week in class, the shortest amount of time of all three programs. ESL students in programs sponsored by community

colleges averaged 11.5 hours a week, 11 hours in programs sponsored by local education agencies, and 6 hours in programs sponsored by volunteer organizations.

Compared to students in ABE and ASE programs, ESL students can have very diverse educational backgrounds. For example, some ESL students may have a college degree from their home country but are not able to speak English. These individuals are therefore literate and educated in their native languages and only need to learn English. Other ESL students may have a limited education and are not literate in their native language. These ESL students at lower educational functioning levels require additional adult education services to learn English as well as literacy and numeracy skills. The diversity of ESL students was illustrated by specific examples given by different providers during the interviews. An ESL student could be an illiterate refugee who has never seen a book or a research scientist's wife who was a physician in her home country.

Seventeen providers in the sample reported that ESL teachers or tutors developed their own instruction or had significant flexibility to make modifications to the curriculum. Among the local education agencies and community colleges, one provider reported using a pre-established ESL curriculum, but stated that the teachers were still given flexibility. Many providers in the sample reported using materials from Steck-Vaughn, Longman, and McGraw-Hill. The *All-Star* and *Side by Side* materials were the specific titles most frequently mentioned. The *Oxford Picture Dictionary* was also mentioned by five providers. For students at very low educational functioning levels, Total Physical Response is used by some providers in which students respond with physical movement to verbal commands. Thirteen providers reported using computers to provide supplemental instruction for their students. The most frequently mentioned programs were Rosetta Stone, Access to English, and English for All.

## Integration of Adult Education and Workforce Training

Historically, models of adult education required individuals to complete a GED program before they could start the occupational specific skills training needed for a career. This sequential service delivery model made it difficult for adult students with limited available time to complete all of their basic education and to enter occupational training. Because the completion of separate basic education and occupational programs required a considerable time commitment, some students were either discouraged from completing their GED or from pursuing further career training. In recent years, an increased focus has been placed on programs that offer concurrent adult education instruction and skills training rather than a separate, sequential format.

Numerous integrated adult education and occupational skills programs now exist, but are still not mainstream. At the national level, the U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps program combines basic education with job skills for individuals between the ages of 16 to 24. Washington State's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program is a well known example of an integrated program. I-BEST is similar to a regular apprenticeship program in which students spend time on the job and in the classroom; however, the classroom curriculum combines technical education with ESL instruction. In Texas, TWC funded four programs that provided integrated ESL instruction and specialized job training.

Additionally, TEA worked with TWC and THECB to develop the Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL) program. TISESL is a comprehensive set of resources designed to deliver instruction in ESL, industry-related math, technology, and employability skills while introducing beginning and intermediate ESL adult students to vocabulary in three industry sectors: healthcare, sales and service, and manufacturing. These programs, along with other current adult education activities and initiatives, are discussed in more detail in Appendix C.

Responses from the interviews also illustrated various attempts to integrate workforce training into adult education programs. Of the providers sampled, nine reported that they offered some type of job skills training or workforce component with their adult education programs such as job seeking skills, interviewing skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and time management. Of those nine providers, two reported using the TISESL curriculum and stated that local employers have shown interest in the program. Even though one community college in the sample stated that workforce preparation was a very important part of the adult education programs, the providers in the sample most likely to integrate workforce services into their programs were volunteer and non-profit organizations. The types of workforce specific services vary greatly among the programs. Some providers integrate various employability skills such as job seeking skills, interviewing skills, and soft skills (such as communication, time management, and interpersonal skills) into the ASE and ESL curriculum. Other providers require the completion of workplace modules during the ASE program. One program reported providing an industry-specific adult education class for a group of local businesses. A final way that providers addressed workforce issues was more indirect. A few ABE and ESL providers stated that students were encouraged to bring materials from work so that tutors could help students with their reading skills.

## **Comparison of Instructional Approaches and Service Delivery Methods**

The providers' interview responses illustrate a great deal of variation in the provision of adult education in Texas. However, after analyzing the information collected from the providers in the sample, several general trends become apparent. This section summarizes the differences between the providers and programs with a focus on instructional approaches and adult education service provision. Many of these differences result from the bifurcation of funding referenced earlier in this report.

### **Differences in Instructors**

Providers funded through TEA are required to utilize teachers with a bachelor's degree and a teaching certificate or a bachelor's degree and annual professional development. More local education agencies and community colleges in the sample reported that their teachers develop their own instruction. More local education agencies mentioned that their teachers use the content standards (discussed in Appendix C) to develop instruction.

The eight volunteer and non-profit organizations in the sample that did not receive funding through TEA were more likely to use volunteer instructors and tutors. A majority of the volunteer and non-profit programs have paid staff members such as volunteer or literacy coordinators that develop the curriculum and provide guidance to the volunteer instructors. The volunteers most often work one on one with ABE and ESL students. When the volunteer and non-profit organizations stated that they had retired teachers, the teachers were most often providing ASE instruction to a class. This does not suggest, however, that the volunteers lack competence. At a minimum, volunteers receive training from program staff members who have often attended workshops provided through Project GREAT or organizations such as Literacy Texas and learned how to train tutors. Some non-profits stated that they only allow volunteers with a four year degree to assist students. Another literacy program utilizes graduate students from a nearby college as volunteers.

### **How Instruction is Provided**

Local education agencies and community colleges in the sample also tended to offer instruction to a class of students, even though some teachers would divide the class into smaller groups during instruction. Volunteer and non-profit organizations, even those affiliated with co-ops were more likely to deliver instruction on an individual basis or with small groups. The class materials were very similar across the different types of providers.

According to the providers sampled, ABE students are more likely to receive one on one and small group instruction, especially in programs provided by volunteer and non-profit organizations. ASE students most often receive instruction as a class, but are usually divided into smaller groups or allowed to work independently on individual lessons. ESL students also tend to receive instruction as a class and are often divided into smaller groups to practice talking and listening skills. Most providers reported that

ABE, ASE, and ESL students progressed through the programs at their own pace. However, in six of the 20 ASE programs and six of the 24 ESL programs, students complete instruction as a cohort.

### Flexibility of the Curriculum

Providers report that ESL and ABE teachers and tutors are more likely to develop their own instruction or have significant flexibility to make modifications depending on student need. ESL and ABE classes offered by volunteer and non-profit organizations, especially the adult basic literacy programs, tend to be more flexible and tailored to students' interests or specific needs. Additionally, ESL and ABE students in programs offered by volunteer organizations often bring in their own materials such as a novel or training manuals from their job.

Because most ASE students are preparing to take the GED exam, the curriculum is more structured and more focused on the skills that students need to master the test. Some ASE providers offer self paced programs in which students work independently using instructional packets or interactive computer programs. Many of the ABE, ASE, and ESL programs in the sample utilize textbooks, workbooks, and computer aided learning activities. However, ABE and ESL teachers and tutors are more likely to use supplemental materials such as picture dictionaries and flash cards depending on the educational functioning levels of the students.

### Transitions into Postsecondary Education and Relevant Outcomes of Adult Education

Focus on transitioning adult students into postsecondary education varies across providers. One local education agency stated that developmental and adult education conflict with each other and that integrating the functions would help in transitioning adult students. Two local education agencies and two volunteer organizations stated that they work closely with the local community colleges in their consortium and encourage their adult students to enroll in college classes when they are ready. More of the community colleges in the sample mentioned the importance of transitioning adult basic education students into postsecondary education and training opportunities than the other providers.

The relevant outcome of adult education generally differed between the types of providers in the sample. As previously stated, the community colleges in the sample were the most likely providers to discuss their efforts in transitioning ASE students to postsecondary programs. More of the local education agencies, especially school districts, were concerned about family literacy and mentioned the importance of moving higher level ESL students into ASE programs with the ultimate goal of attaining a GED. The volunteer and non-profit organizations in the sample varied even more in their emphases. Some of the non-profit groups that received funding through TEA as an affiliate were similar to local education agencies and community colleges. Other smaller volunteer providers not receiving funding through TEA were more likely to focus on specific and sometimes pressing student needs such as studying for an occupation-related exam. These volunteer groups were also more likely to integrate workforce services into their programs.

These different emphases generally seem to be parallel with the primary institutional function of the different types of providers. The ultimate outcomes of the public education system and the community college system are the attainment of a high school diploma and associates degree or industrial certification, respectively. Of course, this is a general trend, and some local education agencies and volunteer organizations did mention that they worked closely with community colleges, especially when they were in the same adult education consortium.



## Observations and Suggested Actions

In this section, the specific information collected from the providers, the trends identified in the last section, and the general impressions acquired through the process of interviewing 27 providers are the basis for observations and suggested actions to improve the adult education system in Texas. The observations will be discussed in relation to previous recommendations made by the Council in *A First Look at Critical Issues Surrounding Adult Education and Literacy in Texas*, recent recommendations in *Building Bridges to Success: An Action Plan to Transition Adult Basic Education Students into Postsecondary Education and Training* (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [THECB], 2010), and the specific adult education initiatives of partner agencies discussed in Appendix C.

### The Unknown

As stated often throughout this report, significant variation exists in many aspects of the adult education system in Texas. Even though general trends can be identified, specific contradictory examples are easy to find. Therefore, any generalizations about program characteristics or service provision must be discussed probabilistically as averages or “most likely situations.”

Even more challenging for researchers and policy makers than this wide variation is the simple fact that much is still unknown about who is providing adult education, to what degree, and to what outcomes. The TCALL directory is currently the most complete list of adult education providers in the state. However, inclusion in the directory is not mandatory and organizations not receiving funding through TEA are less likely to be listed. The TCALL directory must be expanded to include a larger percentage of adult education providers in Texas. It must also be updated with current provider contact information so that individuals in need can easily find services. Outdated information was frequently identified in numerous attempts to contact providers for this report. Additionally, reiterating THECB’s fourth recommendation in *Building Bridges to Success: An Action Plan to Transition Adult Basic Education Students into Postsecondary Education and Training*, TEAMS should also be expanded to collect student data from all providers regardless of whether they receive funding through TEA.

### Collaboration at All Levels

Even a cursory review of the 17 adult education initiatives sponsored by the five agencies discussed in Appendix C and the 431 different providers listed in the TCALL directory is more than adequate to illustrate the immensity and complexity of the Texas adult education system. Such a complicated system has the potential for duplicated and disconnected activities and initiatives. In order for the system to be effective, collaboration is needed at multiple levels. Whereas such focus has been placed on collaborative efforts between agencies at the state level, collaboration and cooperation at the local level is just as critical but not as apparent. Though provider responses indicate that some collaborative efforts exist, they are more anecdotal than systemic.

Echoing the Council's first recommendation from *A First Look at Critical Issues Surrounding Adult Education and Literacy in Texas*, a shared adult education identity and priorities must be developed through the formalization and implementation of cross-agency planning, administrative and contracting processes, and data collection, reporting and evaluation to support that identity. At the state level, cross agency collaborations such as those encouraged by THECB Rider 50 in House Bill (HB) 1 (2007) – forming a TEA, TWC, and THECB partnership to maximize literacy, basic skills, and workforce training– and THECB Rider 45 in Senate Bill (SB) 1 (2009) –directing THECB to coordinate with TEA to align adult and postsecondary education– are necessary for the system to be efficient.

At the regional and local levels, communication, collaboration, and partnerships are even more essential since this is the point of service provision. Partnerships among the different types of providers could yield strategies to serve a region's needs and to pool and leverage resources. For example, collaboration between providers could enable a program to refer a student to another provider that can more effectively serve that student's needs or that has space for the student. Different types of providers also have unique strengths that can contribute to the effectiveness of the whole adult education system. As previously discussed, responses from the interviews illustrate that community colleges focus on transitioning ASE students to postsecondary programs. Local education agencies provide most of the family literacy in the state and can reach a large number of potential adult education students by sending announcements to the parents of children in the district. Finally, smaller volunteer groups are more flexible and work individually with students. Smaller organizations can also provide a context that is better for students who are intimidated by a classroom environment or embarrassed about needing basic educational skills. In areas with more than one provider, referring a student to a program that is a good fit based on his or her specific needs has the potential to increase completion rates.

Comprised of representatives from state agencies, the private sector, and non-profit literacy organizations, the Texas Interagency Literacy Council (TILC) is in a unique strategic position to identify and promote ways to build regional collaborations. TILC's statutory charge, including its responsibility to develop a comprehensive statewide action plan for the improvement of literacy, is included in Appendix C. The TILC should consider utilizing existing organizations as a means of encouraging systemic collaboration at the local level. For example, two organizations that support regional collaborations are the 38 regional P-16 councils and the 28 local workforce boards. P-16 efforts promote a more integrated education system, from early childhood education through postgraduate study. HB 2808 (79th Texas Legislature, 2005) charges the State P-16 Council with the responsibility to coordinate plans and programs, including curricula, instructional programs, research, and other functions as appropriate. HB 2808 specifies that this coordination shall include seven key education areas, including adult education programs. However, regional P-16 councils do not appear to include adult education in their primary areas of focus. The local workforce boards oversee a network of workforce centers in their regions that offer a variety of employment and training services to both individuals and employers. Local boards also convene broad partnerships of business, economic development, workforce, and education entities to identify strategies to strengthen the region's workforce. Utilization of existing regional P-16 councils or local workforce boards can enhance collaboration without the need to create another

organization with duplicated functions. However, such an expansion of responsibilities should include the authority and resources necessary to successfully fulfill the charge, particularly in light of the current demand on resources at the local level. An example of a current collaboration between a local workforce board, non-profit organizations and education entities is referenced in Appendix C. These and other successful partnerships could be studied to determine how to replicate that success in other areas of the state.

## Developmental and Adult Education Alignment

There is growing recognition of the importance of postsecondary education for family-sustaining employment. Projections indicate that nearly half of all job openings between 2004 and 2014 will be in middle-skill occupations that require more than high school, but less than a four-year degree (Holzer & Lerman, 2007). Therefore, passing the GED exam should not be viewed as a final outcome of the adult education system since many students may continue their education at a community or technical college. This is especially true if a student's initial motivation for earning a GED is to qualify for a better job.

Transitioning into postsecondary education or training is not always a smooth process for any student, especially if he or she received an inadequate secondary education. For example, ASE students who earn a GED may also be required to take developmental education classes at a community college if GED attainment has not prepared them to succeed in college level work. Ideally, an efficient and integrated system would enable students completing an adult education program to transition seamlessly into postsecondary education or training programs. For this to occur, adult education content standards should be aligned with the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (THECB & TEA, 2009) that were developed by THECB and TEA in the areas of language arts, social sciences, mathematics, and science to better align the public and higher education curriculum. TEA and THECB should also continue their work together to consolidate some of the redundant functions of developmental and adult education. THECB's sixth recommendation in *Building Bridges to Success: An Action Plan to Transition Adult Basic Education Students into Postsecondary Education and Training* calls for the alignment of developmental education and adult education into a coherent system in which students below a high intermediate ABE level (grades 7-8.9) would enroll in an ABE program and students at or above a high intermediate ABE level would enroll in developmental education. This alignment and consolidation of adult education, developmental education, and the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards has the potential to increase the efficiency of the adult education system and encourage adult students to continue their education.

## Capacity

Past research conducted by the Council and published in *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* (TWIC, 2010a) and *Identifying the Current and Future Population in Need of Adult Education* (TWIC, 2010b) shows that 3,871,173 Texans met the federal guidelines to qualify for adult education services in 2007

whereas 100,393 individuals were served by adult education providers in 2008-2009. Projections indicate that 7,919,901 Texans will be eligible for adult education by 2040. These results in conjunction with the information collected during the provider interviews suggest a critical need to increase the capacity of the adult education system in Texas. Additionally, when providers in the sample were asked how they would enhance their programs, the top three most frequently mentioned answers (more funding, more staff, and more space or facilities) were related to increasing program capacity.

Reiterating the Council's second recommendation from *A First Look at Critical Issues Surrounding Adult Education and Literacy in Texas* and THECB's fifth recommendation in *Building Bridges to Success: An Action Plan to Transition Adult Basic Education Students into Postsecondary Education and Training*, the capacity of adult education and literacy providers must be increased. More funding and more staff members are needed to increase capacity. However, funding has been traditionally limited for adult education and resources are often scarce. Additionally, numerous providers discussed the barriers and challenges that can sometime limit how services are provided. If more classes are offered, more staff, facilities, and materials are needed. Many times, classes taught in public school buildings cannot be offered during the summer months because districts must close the building to save utility costs or they schedule annual maintenance at that time. Classes offered in a public library must end before the library closes. Yet, many providers are still creatively solving these problems and are helping as many students as they can, utilizing whatever materials they have. Any major attempt aimed at increasing capacity must include flexibility for providers to do what works in their specific situation as well as opportunities to share their most effective strategies with each other.

Since funds are likely to continue to be limited in the current economic environment, the distance learning initiative (discussed in Appendixes C and D) should be utilized to increase capacity by providing supplemental instruction and services to students who cannot access classes at specific locations or times. If sites have adequate computer facilities available, students can work independently at times that are convenient for them and complete more hours of instruction per week. Additionally, more qualified volunteer staff members, such as retired teachers, should be recruited to increase capacity. Partnerships could also be formed with local universities so that undergraduate or graduate students majoring in education or in specific content areas such as English or math could volunteer to work with adult learners.

## **Concluding Comments**

Providing effective adult education services for the millions of Texans who need them, both today and in the future, is a daunting challenge for Texas. While in recent years, state agencies have consistently collaborated on integrated models, strategies to improve performance, and opportunities to share resources, much work remains to create a true system of adult education. Unless collaboration exists at both the state and regional levels, promising practices and partnerships cannot be leveraged to better serve those Texans in need.

As the TILC develops its comprehensive statewide action plan, the Council will continue to monitor and report on collaboration by workforce system agencies. The suggested actions presented in this paper are the next steps that will continue to move adult education in Texas towards a cohesive system. The Council, its member agencies, and the TILC all have unique contributions to make as partners in the development and implementation of joint initiatives, the sharing of resources and new methods of service delivery, and the development of strategies to promote regional collaboration.

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## Appendix A: Detailed Methodology

Selecting a representative sample is difficult because the actual number of providers operating in Texas is unknown. A combination of expert and stratified sampling techniques were utilized to assemble a statewide sample of 27 adult education providers. Various adult education experts were identified in state agencies, community colleges, and literacy organizations based on criteria such as their previous professional experiences, daily job duties, or previous publications. The five experts were contacted and asked to list a representative cross section of adult education providers who offer ABE, ASE, and ESL programs in Texas. The adult education providers listed by the five experts were consolidated and compared to providers in the TCALL directory by characteristics such as provider type (local education agencies, community colleges, volunteer/non-profit organizations) and location within the state. Even though the TCALL directory does not list every adult education provider in the state, the comparison provides a general guideline that aids in choosing a sample. Additional providers were selected to ensure that the sample characteristics better matched the overall characteristics of the providers in the directory. Table 4 illustrates the characteristics of the providers in the sample and the directory.

**Table 4: Comparison of Sample and Directory Provider Characteristics**

	Provider Type				Service Region				
	Local Education Agency	Community College	Volunteer/ Non-profit	Other	West/ Far West	North	Central	East/ Coastal	South/ South Central
<b>TCALL Directory</b> n=431	107 25%	36 8%	212 49%	76 18%	43 10%	128 30%	69 16%	123 28%	68 16%
<b>Sample</b> n=27	7 26%	5 19%	13 48%	2 7%	5 19%	7 26%	4 15%	7 26%	4 15%

The sample closely matches the characteristics of the providers in the TCALL directory with three exceptions. Additional community colleges were selected since almost half of the adult education cooperatives in Texas have community colleges as fiscal agents. Fewer providers in the “Other” category were selected since these providers tend to be relatively small and offer adult education to supplement other programs such as workforce training or parenting skills. Additionally, more sample providers are located in the West and Far West service regions compared to the TCALL directory. These two regions comprise 96 of the 254 counties in Texas and extend from the Mexican border through the panhandle and from New Mexico to 60 miles west of Austin. Because the service regions are so large and encompass diverse areas of the state, more providers had to be chosen to ensure adequate representation.

Because of the difficulties in identifying the population of providers and choosing a representative sample, quantitative methods requiring assumptions about the population and a minimum sample size to produce generalizable results with adequate margins of error, such as a survey, would not be appropriate. Instead, a qualitative technique was chosen so that highly detailed information could be collected from a relatively smaller number of respondents. The adult education providers in the sample



were contacted by phone and interviewed about their ABE, ASE, and ESL programs using an open-ended interview guide. Each phone interview was completed in approximately 45 minutes. Providers were questioned about the student enrollment process, instructional delivery, classroom materials, and most effective aspects of the program. The specific questions asked during the interview are included in Appendix B.

Data saturation, the point at which no new information or insights are discovered, occurred within the first 20 phone interviews. Grounded Theory procedures were utilized in which the notes taken during the interviews were reviewed, recurring information and themes were identified, and a list of codes was generated. All of the notes were iteratively coded and analyzed by summarizing the frequency of codes, grouping similar codes into categories, or by noting similarities and differences in related codes for each of the adult education program types. The matrix used to analyze providers' responses is included in Appendix E.

## Appendix B: Adult Education Provider Questions

1. Name of provider.
2. Provider type: Local Ed. Agency, Community College, Volunteer, other. Coop / Affiliate
3. Location (city).
4. Services offered: ABE, ASE (GED), ESL, Family Lit, English Lit and Civics, Corrections, Even Start, Other.
5. Approximate number of students served last calendar year (2009).

*Questions 6-17 were asked for each program type: ABE, ASE, ESL, and Integrated.*

6. What is the process for enrolling a student in your program?
7. Do you enroll students on an ongoing basis, or do you have scheduled enrollment periods during the year?
8. Do you advance students through the program in a cohort or do students progress at their own pace and exit at various times as they complete their goal?
9. On average, how many hours per week do students attend class?
10. How is the instruction delivered?
11. What classroom materials / equipment do your teachers use?
12. Do teachers develop their own instruction or do they teach from a pre-established program?
13. Approximately what percent of the instruction in the class is determined by the teacher?
14. As far as you know, is this method of delivery standard across providers —or— are you unique?
15. If unique—What makes your method of delivery unique?
16. What is the most effective aspect of your program —or—do you have a 'best practice'?
17. What enhancements would you make to your program (e.g. to improve outcomes or serve more people)?
18. Is there another service provider that you think we should talk to?

## Appendix C: Adult Education Activities and Initiatives

This appendix addresses the major adult education activities and initiatives in Texas since Fiscal Year (FY) 2004. Much of the information presented in this appendix first appeared in the *Primer*, but has since been updated. For convenience, adult education activities and initiatives are grouped according to managing agency or organization such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, TEA, TWC, THECB, and Texas LEARNS / TCALL. The number, duration, and depth of these initiatives show that aspects of adult education in Texas, especially at the state level are becoming more consistently collaborative. Recent legislation has encouraged collaboration among the three agencies and increased the roles of TWC and THECB in the Texas adult education system. THECB Rider 50 in HB 1 (2007) formed a TEA, TWC, and THECB tri-agency partnership so that programs and resources could be used to maximize literacy, basic skills, and targeted workforce training. Also, THECB Rider 45 in SB 1 (2009) directed THECB to coordinate with TEA to align adult education and postsecondary education.

### U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) is in the U.S. Department of Education. OVAE administers and coordinates programs that are associated with career and technical education, adult education and literacy, and community colleges. Divisions within OVAE administer the Title II WIA formula grants that states use to fund adult education and literacy programs, administer the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act state formula and discretionary grant programs, and provide assistance so that states can improve program implementation, quality, and accountability.

#### *Student Achievement in Reading (STAR)*

STAR is a reading reform initiative of OVAE. Essentially, the program is a comprehensive tool kit and training package developed using evidence based reading instructional strategies. The STAR initiative includes professional development, technical assistance, tools, and online resources that expand participants' knowledge of effective reading instruction for intermediate level (4 to 8.9 grade level) adult learners. The program stresses the use of diagnostic assessment procedures in targeting appropriate instruction to improve the four components of reading: alphabets, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

Texas first implemented STAR as a pilot, but adult education leaders are committed to expanding the availability of STAR training. During the 2008-2009 school year, 43 participants from Texas representing thirteen programs and three professional development centers attended STAR professional development training. Three of these participants were selected to be certified STAR trainers and will be providing technical assistance to programs and training a limited number of teachers in Texas during the 2009-2010 school year (Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning [TCALL], 2010).

### *Policy to Performance (P2P)*

The goal of the Policy to Performance: Transitioning Adults to Opportunity initiative is to assist states with effective policy development that will successfully transition low-skilled adults and adult learners to adult education, postsecondary education, and employment opportunity. Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, New York, Virginia, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and California were selected through a competitive application process to participate in Policy to Performance. From February 2010 through August 2012, the eight states will receive targeted technical assistance and customized coaching to create strategies and policy that strengthen connections between adult basic education, postsecondary education, and employment. The Texas Policy to Performance team consists of representatives from each of the state agencies responsible for adult education programs and services: TEA, TWC, and THECB. The goal of the team is to develop a seamless, coordinated education system for adults that integrates basic skills and workforce training to meet employers' need for an educated and skilled workforce. Project activities focus on postsecondary transitions and strengthening coordination, communication, and relationships between TEA, TWC, and THECB. The prioritized project activities include developing a list of adult education providers in Texas, aligning adult education content standards with the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and aligning the data systems of the three agencies for a transparent and unified client tracking system.

### *Performance Based Funding in Adult Education*

OVAE also selected Texas to participate in its performance based funding project. During the 18-month project, TEA will be provided with targeted technical assistance and leadership activities to assist efforts in designing and implementing the performance based funding of adult basic education. This work will validate the revisions to the adult education funding formula rules required by TEA Rider 46 in SB 1 (2009) or may identify areas in which the revised rules can be improved.

## Texas Education Agency

TEA receives funds from the federal government for adult education services. The U.S. Department of Education allocates Title II WIA and Even Start funds to the states. In turn, TEA allocates the Title II WIA funds to eligible adult education providers. Even Start funds are used to provide grants to local family literacy projects that integrate early childhood education, adult literacy, parenting education, and interactive parent and child literacy activities for low-income families with parents who are eligible for services under Title II of WIA and their children from birth through age seven. TEA also receives Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. TANF funds support the provision of ABE, ASE, and ESL to TANF recipients who are required to participate in adult education and job training programs as a condition for eligibility. TEA administers Title II of WIA, Even Start, and TANF adult education funds and contracts with Texas LEARNS to provide program assistance and support services to Texas adult education and family literacy providers. These support services, ultimately funded by TEA, are discussed in the "Texas LEARNS and TCALL" section later in this appendix.

### *TEA Rider 46 Implementation*

Previously, TEA allocated Title II WIA funds in accordance with the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved formula detailed in 19 Texas Administrative Code Section 89.29. These rules state that after federal funds are set aside for state administration, special projects, and leadership activities, state and federal fund allocations are developed annually for each county and school district geographic area. Of the available funds, 75% is allocated based on student contact hours reported by each school district geographic area and for the most recent complete fiscal year reporting period. The remaining 25% of available funds is allocated based on the number of eligible adults in each county and school district geographic area within each county.

TEA Rider 46 in SB 1 (2009) requires revisions to the funding formula. TEA will now allocate federal and state adult education funds to service providers based upon the amount of funding they received in the second year of the previous biennium and the proportionate share of need. Need is defined as persons 18 years and older who have not received a high school diploma. Specifically, Rider 46 directs TEA to enact rules establishing that adult education service providers will be paid a base allocation based on student contact hours and a performance allocation based on the provider's level of performance for state and federal performance measures. TEA staff prepared a revised funding formula that must be approved through the State Board of Education (SBOE) rulemaking process. The agency gathered stakeholder input and submitted the proposed rule for first reading at the March 2010 SBOE meeting. The proposed rule went into a 30 day public comment period and was approved at the May SBOE meeting.

## Texas Workforce Commission

TWC does not receive direct funding for adult education but uses its existing funds to support specific adult education projects aimed at building capacity in the workforce system to serve English language learners and integrating adult education with occupational skills training. Additionally, TWC actively coordinates and collaborates with other state agencies. Since FY2004, TWC has published the *Limited English Proficiency Guide*, provided adult technology training grants for ESL and workplace literacy programs, supplied incentive grants for regional cooperation and local coordination, and established the Texas Interagency Literacy Council as directed by HB 4328 (2009).

### *Limited English Proficiency Guide*

Because of the increased numbers of individuals in Texas who do not speak English, TWC contracted with Genesis 21, a private consulting firm, to obtain baseline data and feedback from the Local Workforce Boards about their preparedness to serve the ESL population. In 2008, Genesis 21 found that 62% of the Workforce Development Boards throughout the state reported an increase in the number of the ESL population accessing services and that 57% of the 28 workforce areas did not have local training providers that offer ESL accessible occupational training programs, Spanish language, or bilingual training programs. TWC developed the *Limited English Proficiency Guide for Workforce Professionals* (Green, 2007) to support local boards' efforts in ensuring the ESL population has access to workforce

services. The guide provides practical guidance about program implementation, recommends research-based program design models, and includes planning and assessment tools. Genesis 21 provided training on the LEP Guide for all 28 local Workforce Development Boards and staff in 2007-2008. The training included four modules: effective intake and case management, nontraditional occupations and entrepreneurial opportunities, scorecards for evaluating training services for ESL, and comprehensive assessment for ESL. A total of 113 sessions were held in 27 cities with over 1,700 participants.

*Adult Technology Training Grants for English as a Second Language and Workplace Literacy*

In 2007 and 2008, TWC awarded \$699,989 in grants through a competitive procurement process for four innovative projects supporting the increasing need of businesses to recruit and employ job candidates from Texas’ growing ESL workforce. The projects matched critical skill shortages with customized, work-based English language training in high demand occupations. The contractors, projects, and grant amounts are presented in Table 5. Projects are discussed in more detail in Appendix A of *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* (2010a).

**Table 5: Adult Technology Training Grant Recipients and Amounts (2007-2008)**

Contractor	Project	Grant Amount
Alamo Community College District (ACCD)	Bilingual Dietetic Food Service Supervisor and Certified Nurse’s Aide (CNA) program training.	\$268,400
Capital Area Workforce Board (CAWB)	Medical Administrative Assistant and Dental Assistant training.	\$143,014
Harris County Dept. of Education (HCDE)	Training for employment in the petrochemical construction industry.	\$144,575
San Jacinto Community College District (SJCCD)	Training for bilingual customer service representatives.	\$144,000

Source: TWC information request.

TWC will publish a request for proposals by July 2010 that will provide \$500,000 in grant funding for workplace literacy projects similar to those funded previously under the ESL adult technology training grants. A major goal will be to align workplace literacy with job skills training in high demand occupations.

*Incentive Grant for Regional Cooperation and Local Coordination*

TWC provided the Texoma Workforce Development Board with an incentive award for regional cooperation. The Texoma Workforce Development Board partnered with the Grayson Literacy Team, the Boys and Girls Club of Sherman, the Boys and Girls Club of Denison, United Way of Grayson County, the Fannin Literacy Council, the Bonham Housing Authority, Four Rivers Outreach (a local faith-based drug and alcohol dependency program), and North Central Texas College to coordinate literacy initiatives to serve 573 adult learners. The project partners used a computer-aided adult learning model, the Aztec Learning System, to allow adult learners to work at their own pace and to reduce the number of required instructors. Aztec (discussed in Appendix D) is a conceptual learning system based on real-life and work scenarios. The system provides instruction from a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade reading level through

the community college level in subject areas such as language arts, mathematics, critical thinking, geography, biology, and vocational topics.

### *Implementation of HB 4328 (2009): The Texas Interagency Literacy Council*

Recent legislation is increasing TWC's role in the adult education system. HB 4328 authorizes the Texas Workforce Commission to establish the TILC for the study, promotion, and enhancement of literacy in the state. Additionally, the TILC will develop a statewide action plan for the improvement of literacy in Texas. The TILC is composed of representatives from TWC, TEA, and THECB along with six community leaders from businesses and non-profit organizations. The inaugural meeting of the TILC was on December 14, 2009. The TILC met again in April and will meet three more times in 2010. To date, the TILC has focused on reviewing its charge and gathering information from various state agencies and providers.

## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

The THECB does not receive federal funding for adult education. However, state legislation is gradually increasing THECB's role in adult education and FY2010 was the first year that THECB received state appropriations for adult education programs. THECB's recent adult education initiatives include the Intensive College Readiness Program for Adult Students, adult basic education innovation grants, and the Adult Education Transition Research Project.

### *Intensive Summer Program and Intensive College Readiness Program for Adult Students*

In the summer of 2009, THECB allocated approximately \$350,000 for the Intensive Summer Program (ISP). Ten adult education providers (eight colleges and two school districts) delivered a college preparatory model designed to promote the successful transition of recent GED graduates into college. The programs provided a minimum of 80 hours of instruction in English language arts or math with the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards incorporated into the curriculum. Additionally, the programs included study skills, self-management skills, an orientation to college culture, and other college success strategies.

In FY2010, THECB is expanding the Intensive Summer Program. The program has been renamed the Intensive College Readiness Program for Adult Students. The FY2010 program significantly expands the amount of funding available for grants. Eligible applicants include Texas public institutions of higher education, Texas public school districts, regional education service centers, and community-based organizations. Partnerships are encouraged between Texas public higher education institutions and non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. A 501(c)(3) organization in partnership with an institution of higher education may serve as a fiscal agent. THECB expects to award up to \$3,500,000 in grants for FY2010 to 20-30 providers. The minimum grant award will be \$62,500 and the maximum grant award will be \$125,000. The application deadline was February 15, 2010.

### *2010-2011 Adult Basic Education Innovation Grants*

THECB is preparing to provide grants to community colleges and public technical institutions to increase participation and the success of adult basic education students in workforce training programs. The grants will be funded using the \$5,000,000 in general revenue funds for FY2010 and \$5,000,000 for FY2011 appropriated by Rider 56 of HB 1 (2009). The release of a Request for Applications (RFA) was approved at the THECB October 2009 quarterly meeting. The Adult Basic Education Innovation Grants will provide opportunities for lower level adult education students to receive support and assistance while pursuing post-secondary training programs with an emphasis on vocational level one certificates and continuing education programs. The applicant eligibility for this program is limited to community colleges and technical institutions. Applicants are required to partner with at least one adult literacy provider and the Local Workforce Board. Competitive preference points will be given to community and technical colleges that secure two or more partnerships and agree to work with non-AEFLA funded adult literacy programs. The minimum grant award will be \$200,000 and the maximum grant award will be \$500,000. The application deadline was May 10, 2010.

### *The Adult Education Transition Research Project*

THECB has provided \$600,000 to fund phases 1 and 2 of the Adult Education Transition Research Project at Texas State University-San Marcos. Phase 1 of the project focuses on determining the promising and emerging best practices for adult education transition to post-secondary training programs. Phase 2 expands the scope of the project to include non-AEFLA funded adult literacy providers and volunteer literacy organizations. THECB held a statewide summit in Round Rock, Texas in May 2009. AEFLA funded project directors discussed the future direction of adult education transition and shared their perspectives on the most effective strategies to transition adult students to post-secondary training programs. THECB published an action plan for adult education transition into postsecondary education and training programs (THECB, 2010). A report from the Phase 1 data collection period will be released at a later date. Future activities for the transition research project include a four site pilot of promising practices identified from the Phase 1 research.

## Texas LEARNS and TCALL

As discussed previously, TEA established several statewide leadership projects to support local adult education programs: the Adult Literacy Clearinghouse Project, the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center, the Adult Education Credential Project, and Project GREAT. TEA contracts with Texas LEARNS, housed at the Harris County Department of Education, to provide nondiscretionary grant management, program assistance, and other support services to Texas adult education and family literacy providers. TCALL is a center in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University. Since its creation in 1989, TCALL's purpose has evolved to include responding to the needs of Texas' adult and family literacy service providers. TCALL receives Title II WIA leadership activity funds from TEA to serve as the official state literacy resource center and host the Adult Literacy Clearinghouse Project. Texas LEARNS and TCALL often collaborate on adult education initiatives and provide professional development to the adult education community in Texas through the GREAT Centers.



## Texas Adult Education Content Standards

In early 2004, Texas LEARNS funded TCALL to convene a taskforce to assess the state’s adult basic education curriculum standards (the Texas Standardized Curriculum Framework) and to recommend future directions for Texas LEARNS as they considered adopting new statewide standards. TCALL formed the Texas Adult Education Standards Project (TAESP) and assigned staff members to accomplish the assignment. From January 2004 to June 2007, TAESP surveyed adult education teachers and administrators, adopted standards, formed writing teams, developed benchmarks, conducted field tests, modified benchmarks, field tested, analyzed the field test data, and further modified benchmarks. After this lengthy process, the finalized standards and benchmarks were presented and professional development on how to teach using the Adult Education Content Standards was provided at the statewide conference in June 2007.

The Adult Education Content Standards were designed as a global guide to be used by ABE, ASE, and ESL providers. The content standards do not prescribe a specific curriculum. Instead, they describe what is important for learners to know and be able to do within a particular content area. Content standards provide an outline of content and skills that allows programs to develop and align curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Each content standard contains a number of different strands describing the knowledge, strategies, and skills that a student must learn to meet the standard. In turn, each strand consists of benchmarks that describe expected student abilities at particular levels. The benchmarks are written for teachers to be specific enough to guide instruction but broad enough to allow for multiple approaches to curriculum. Benchmarks become more challenging and require increased independence from the learner as levels increase (TCALL, 2008). For example, one of the ABE/ASE content standards states that the student will “Read with Understanding.” This content standard has six associated strands: determine purpose, decode and recognize words, vocabulary development, locate information, build comprehension, and analyze and organize information. Each strand has six levels, Beginning ABE Literacy through High Adult Secondary Education, with a benchmark for each level. Table 6 illustrates the benchmarks for the first strand (Determine Purpose) of the Read with Understanding content standard.

**Table 6: Strand 1 Benchmarks of the “Read with Understanding” Content Standard**

<b>ABE/ASE Content Standard: Read with Understanding</b>						
<b>Strand 1 of 6: Determine Purpose</b>						
	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>
	<i>Beginning ABE Literacy</i>	<i>Beginning Basic Education</i>	<i>Low Intermediate Basic Education</i>	<i>High Intermediate Basic Education</i>	<i>Low Adult Secondary Education</i>	<i>High Adult Secondary Education</i>
<b>Benchmarks</b>	1.1 Read for simple, real-life purposes as directed.	1.2 Read for real-life purposes.	1.3 Demonstrate awareness of reading for real-life purposes.	1.4 Identify purpose (e.g., to be informed to be entertained, interpret) to focus reading.	1.5 Determine the appropriate purpose for reading a variety of materials.	1.6 Determine the appropriate purpose for reading a variety of materials.

Source: TCALL, 2008.

### *Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language Curricula (TISESL)*

Originally called the Industry Specific Curriculum Development project, Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL) was developed in response to Education Rider 82 of HB 1 (2005) that required TEA to work with TWC to develop a demand-driven workplace literacy and basic skills curriculum. TISESL is a comprehensive set of instructional resources designed to introduce beginning and intermediate ESL adult students to vocabulary in three industry sectors: manufacturing, sales and service, and healthcare – as well as to employability skills in general. TISESL was designed to meet the needs of adult English language learners and the needs of the three industry sectors in which many adults seek entry level employment. TISESL curricula are modular and “bundle” skills together in a thematic context that includes English language learning, related math, technology, and employability. The materials for each industry sector contain four modules with five lessons in each module. Each of the lessons covers approximately 10 hours of instruction. A stand alone, 60 hour employability component is also included. All state and federally funded adult educational programs in Texas have access to the copyrighted TISESL materials and professional development training for instructional staff is available through the GREAT Centers (Texas LEARNS, 2009).

### *The Texas Adult Basic Education Statewide GED Mathematics Institute*

Texas LEARNS, with assistance from the Texas A&M University-Kingsville South Region GREAT Center staff, formed the institute to raise scores on the GED mathematics test. The institute offers training sessions to provide master trainers with the necessary tools for improving math instruction and the capability to train their peers throughout the state of Texas. The master trainers receive sample questions from the four most commonly missed areas of the GED mathematics test (geometry and measurement, reading and interpreting graphs and tables, application of basic math principles to calculations, and problem solving and mathematical reasoning) and an analysis of common errors that cause students to miss the questions. They also learn how to train other GED math teachers to identify the skill gaps, share specific ideas on how to incorporate those skills into classroom instruction, and provide resources such as math websites and videos of lessons. Training is available for every adult education program in the state and can be requested through the regional GREAT Centers.

### *Distance Learning Initiative*

The adult education distance learning initiative in Texas began in 2006 with the support of Project IDEAL, a national consortium of states working to develop effective distance education programs for adult learners. On July 1, 2007, OVAE approved policy and reporting requirements for adult learners enrolled in distance education programs including guidance on how to measure contact hours and requirements for assessment and reporting. Since 2007, adult education programs have offered distance education to supplement classroom instruction or to serve students who cannot access classes in the locations or at the times they are scheduled. In 2008, fifteen adult education and English Literacy/Civics programs offered distance education and served nearly 700 students (Stevenson, 2009).

The State Assessment and Goal Setting/Attainment Policy for Adult Education states that a list of approved curricula and the associated model used for calculating proxy hours will be posted on the

Distance Learning Initiative page of the TCALL website. As of April 2010, sixteen curricula are listed (descriptions of the curricula are provided in Appendix C). Because the state assessment policy for adult education requires at least 60 hours of instruction between pre and post assessments to determine educational functioning level gains, determining the proxy hours that students spend on distance learning activities is very important. An approved distance education curriculum must use one of the following models to determine proxy hours:

- **Clock Time Model:** Assigns proxy hours based on the time that a learner is engaged in an online or software program.
- **Teacher Certification Model:** Assigns proxy hours for each activity in a distance curriculum based on teacher verification.
- **Learner Mastery Model:** Assigns proxy hours based on the successful completion of a test with a percentage of correct answers (usually 70% to 80%).

Before an adult education program offers distance learning for the first time, the staff must attend prerequisite professional development training through the GREAT Centers. “Distance Learning 101” is a class that helps teachers and administrators design distance education courses, recruit students, develop assessments, and effectively engage online learners. In the 2008-2009 school year more than 80 teachers and administrators attended Distance Learning 101 (Stevenson, 2009). As of May 2010, twenty-three agencies have reported 2,817 students with some distance education hours as recorded in the state’s adult education management information system.

### *Special Learning Needs Initiative*

Since 2008, Texas LEARNS has offered professional development training for adult education teachers that addresses how to serve adult students with physical disabilities and special learning needs. The workshops include four trainings in Houston, each consisting of three days. Texas LEARNS and TCALL pay the registration fees for the four sessions whereas the local sponsoring program pays for travel costs and per diem. During the training, participants learn about the characteristics of adults with learning disabilities and special learning needs, the self-esteem and social skill issues of adults in adult education programs, using effective instructional practices for adult education students, and how to apply screening and learning style inventories to improve practice. Participants who successfully complete the training earn a credential as a Special Learning Needs Resource Specialist. So far, 85 adult educators in Texas have received training.

### *Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative*

The Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative was created in 2004 as one of the service objectives of TCALL’s Clearinghouse Project to further professional development priorities of Texas LEARNS and the GREAT Centers. The Clearinghouse Project at TCALL collaborates with Literacy Texas through the Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative to support program and professional development for community-based literacy programs that do not currently receive federal funds for training. The support includes funding

expenses to attend conferences and other trainings such as Bridges to Practice and BEST (Basic English Skills Test) Plus training. Additional support has included funding of ProLiteracy program accreditation fees for the community-based literacy programs that were identified and recommended by Literacy Texas leadership.

## Appendix D: Distance Learning Curricula in Texas

As of April 2010, sixteen distance learning curricula are approved to be taught in Texas. These curricula are described in the State Assessment and Goal Setting/Attainment Policy for Adult Education and posted on the Distance Learning Initiative page of the TCALL website. The curricula that have been used most by adult education providers in Texas are Aztec, English for All, GED Connection, and ITTS. Table 7 lists the curricula with their target audiences, models to determine proxy hours, and brief descriptions.

**Table 7: Approved Distance Education Curricula**

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Proxy Hour Model</b>	<b>Description</b>
Aztec	ABE and GED	Clock Time	An interactive, competency-based skills development program consisting of modules containing a series of lessons that include pre and post tests, instructional content, and practice sections.
California Distance Learning Project	ESL Intermediate and ABE Reading	Teacher Certification	A series of stories that include related videos and interactive learning activities with vocabulary and writing practice.
Crossroads Café	ESL Intermediate	Mastery	A series of 26 videos featuring the daily activities of six characters. The program includes photo stories workbooks and work texts.
English Discoveries	ESL High Beginning to ESL Advanced	Clock Time	An interactive, multimedia language program featuring video clips, audio, recorded voice comparisons, and writing practice.
English for All	ESL Intermediate	Mastery	An interactive, English language skills development program that is available online. The program contains five stories with four episodes per story. Each episode includes videos and activities for vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, life, and special skills.
GED Connection	GED	Teacher Certification	A multimedia program that provides instruction for the five GED content areas with 39 lessons using videos, workbooks, and internet activities.
GED Illinois (GEDi)	GED	Mastery	An interactive, self-paced, internet-based curriculum providing 192 lessons that cover the five GED content areas. A pre-assessment is offered before each content area and suggestions about which lessons to focus are provided.
Instruction Targeted for TABE Success (ITTS)	ABE and GED	Clock Time	ITTS prepares adult learners for the Tests for Adult Basic Education (TABE), a diagnostic tool used to determine skill level and aptitude. It is online instructional, assessment, and prescription software.

**Table 7: (Continued)**

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Proxy Hour Model</b>	<b>Description</b>
Madison Heights/ Lifelines	ABE	Teacher Certification	A family literacy and basic skills program comprised of Madison Heights, a ten part dramatic series, and Lifelines, a documentary series that focuses on family issues. The series are used with workbooks to teach problem solving, critical thinking, vocabulary, reading, writing, and community interaction skills.
MHC-GED Online	GED	Clock Time	An interactive instructional software program that provides 115 lessons to prepare students for the GED. The program features diagnostics and customized instruction.
PLATO	ABE and GED	Clock Time	A self-paced, computer aided instruction program that offers approximately 2,500 hours of instruction, skills practice, and mastery testing.
Pre-GED Connection	ABE	Teacher Certification	A multimedia program for learners between the 6th and 8th grade levels who are not yet ready for GED Connection. Provides instruction for the five GED content areas with 39 lessons using videos, workbooks, and internet activities.
Sed de Saber	ESL Beginning	Mastery	This program is built on the LeapFrog LeapPad platform (interactive book). The curriculum includes six books with cartridges and a skills assessment. Content is aligned to career pathways and family literacy. Current versions include hospitality (sales and retail), construction, and family literacy.
SkillsTutor	ABE and GED	Clock Time	Online program that provides over 1,600 learning activities largely focusing on core academic skills in math, reading, writing, and science.
USA Learns	ESL	Mastery	Online program consisting of three courses that offer contextualized practice in listening, reading, writing, speaking, and life skills.
Workplace Essential Skills	ABE and GED	Teacher Certification	A multimedia program that uses videos, workbooks, and internet activities to develop employment skills such as résumé writing, job search procedures, interviewing techniques, and business-related reading, math, and communication.

Table Notes: The Clock Time Model assigns proxy hours based on the time that a learner is engaged in an online or software program, the Teacher Certification Model assigns proxy hours for each activity in a distance curriculum based on teacher verification, and the Learner Mastery Model assigns proxy hours based on the successful completion of a test. The five GED content areas are language arts-reading, language arts-writing, social studies, science, and mathematics.

## Appendix E: Matrix of Adult Education Providers' Responses

Type	No.	Co-op	Affiliate	Services Offered				Students Served 2009	Enrollment			Progression			AVG Hours per Week			Delivery Method			Instructional Development		
				ABL	ABE	ASE	ESL		ABE	ASE	ESL	ABE	ASE	ESL	ABE	ASE	ESL	ABE	ASE	ESL	ABE	ASE	ESL
Providers Receiving Funding From TEA																							
Community College	CC1	X			X	X	X	2200	O	O	O	P	P	P	3-32	3-32	16-30	C, SG	C, SG	C, SG	TD	TD	TD
	CC2	X			X	X	X	1500	O	O	O	P	P	P	NR	NR	NR	C, I	C, I	C	TD	TD	TD
	CC3	X			X	X	X	1000	O	O	O	P	P	P	12	12	12	C, I, SG	C, I, SG	I, SG	TD	TD	TD
	CC4	X			X	X	X	550	EP	EP	EP	P	P	Co	7	7	5	C, I	C, I	C	PE	PE	TD
	CC5		X		X	X	X	300	EP	EP	EP	P	Co	P	10	12	6	C, I, SG	C, SG	C, SG	PE	PE	PE
Local Education Agency	LEA1	X			X	X	X	2000	EP	EP	EP	Co	Co	Co	6-9	6-9	6-9	C	C, SG	C	TD	TD	TD
	LEA2	X			X	X	X	1875	O	O	O	Co	Co	Co	NR	NR	NR	C	C	C	TD	TD	TD
	LEA3	X			X	X	X	700	O	EP	O	P	Co	P	12	14	14	C, SG	C, SG	C, SG	TD	TD	TD
	LEA4	X			X	X	X	1100	EP	EP	EP	P	P	P	NR	12	7	C, SG	C, SG	C, SG	TD	TD	TD
	LEA5	X			X	X	X	1300	O	EP	O	P	P	P	18	18	15	I, SG	C, I	C, SG	TD	TD	TD
	LEA6	X			X	X	X	1000	EP	EP	O	P	P	P	9-20	9-20	9-20	C, SG	C, SG	C, I	B	B	TD
Volunteer / Nonprofit	VNP1		X	X			67	EP			P			6			I, SG			B			
	VNP2		X		X	X	2312	O	O	O	P	Co	Co	3	6	6	I	C, SG	C	TD	TD	PE	
	VNP3		X	X		X	450	O		O	P		P	5		5	I, SG		C, I	TD		TD	
	VNP4		X		X	X	20000	EP	EP	EP	P	P	P	22	22	22	C, SG	C, I, SG	C	B	B	TD	
	VNP5		X			X	55		O			P			3			SG, I				TD	
Providers Not Receiving Funding From TEA																							
LEA	LEA7					X	178			EP			Co			6			C, SG			PE	
Volunteer / Nonprofit	VNP6				X	X	X	680	O	O	O	P	P	P	3-4	3	4	I	C, SG, I	C, I	PE	PE	TD
	VNP7			X		X	X	350	O	O	O	P	P	P	3	3	3	I	I	C, I, SG	TD	TD	TD
	VNP8				X		X	1700	O		O	P		P	3-4		3-4	I		SG	TD		TD
	VNP9			X		X	X	200	EP	EP	EP	P	P	P	NR	NR	NR	I, SG	Com	SG	PE	PE	PE
	VNP10			X		X	X	689	O	O	EP	P	P	Co	4	4	4	I, SG	I, SG	C	PE	PE	B
	VNP11			X		X	X	600	O	EP	O	P	Co	P	6	12	6	I, SG	C, I	I, SG	PE	PE	PE
	VNP12						X	240			EP			P			1.5			C, SG			PE
VNP13						X	600			O			P			4			C, I			TD	
Other	O1					X	256			Oth									C				
	O2				X	X	150	EP	EP		P	P		14-40	14-40				C, SG	C, SG		PE	PE

### Table Key

#### Enrollment

O = Ongoing

EP = During Periods

Oth = Other

#### Progression

P = Student's Pace

Co = Cohort

#### AVG Hours

NR = No Response

#### Delivery Method

C = Class

SG = Small Group

I = Individual

Com = Computer Only

#### Instructional Dev.

TD = Teacher

PE = Preestablished

B = Both

### Table Notes

Providers have been coded to preserve anonymity. Starting with the Enrollment column, ABL information is illustrated as ABE.