

Appendix C

To be handed out on Day One of the Study Circle

CONTENTS:

- *List of Readings to be Read for Days Two and Three* (Handout #4)
- *Sample Ground Rules* by the Study Circle Resource Center (Handout #5)
- National Institute for Literacy's Policy Update "Workforce Investment Act Offers Opportunities for Adult and Family Literacy" (Reading #2)

List of Readings to be Read for Day Two and Day Three

To be read before Day Two:

In *Contested Ground: Performance Accountability in Adult Basic Education*,

- Read pages 26-39
- Skim pages 39-46
- Read pages 46-55.

To be read before Day Three:

In [Contested Ground: Performance Accountability in Adult Basic Education](#)

Read pages 56-78.

Sample ground rules

- Everyone gets a fair hearing.
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- Share "air time."
- If you are offended, say so; and say why.
- You can disagree, but don't personalize it; stick to the issue. No name-calling or stereotyping.
- Speak for yourself, not for others.
- One person speaks at a time.
- What is said in the group stays here, unless everyone agrees to change that.

Reading #2

National Institute for Literacy*Policy Update****Workforce Investment Act Offers Opportunities
for Adult and Family Literacy***

--September 23, 1998--

Last month, the President signed the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998* into law. The new law consolidates over 50 employment, training, and literacy programs -- including the *National Literacy Act*, *Adult Education Act*, and *Job Training Partnership Act* -- into three block grants to states: one for adult education and family literacy, one for disadvantaged youth, and one for adult employment and training. Title II of the new law replaces the *Adult Education Act* and continues the federal investment in adult education and family literacy for five more years.

Many elements of the new law will have an impact on the adult education and family literacy system. For example, in order to maximize the integration of services for individuals, the law creates a collaborative planning process at the state level. While the planning process includes employment and training as well as adult education and literacy, the actual administration, operation, funding, and reporting of adult education and literacy remain separate.

This *Policy Update* focuses on Title II of the new law, the *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*.

Goals

While the old *Adult Education Act* allowed states to use federal funds for family literacy services, the new law puts family literacy on equal footing with adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) services.

The new law sets three goals for adult education and literacy:

1. Assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency.
2. Assist adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.
3. Assist adults in completing high school or the equivalent.

Grant to States

Like the old *Adult Education Act*, the *Workforce Investment Act* authorizes the federal government to spend federal funds on adult education and literacy. Most of this federal investment is through the Adult Education State Grant program, which now totals \$345 million annually. States each received from \$668,054 (Alaska) to \$38,209,485 (California) through this grant program this year. (*See Allotment Table for the amount your State receives--OVAE*)
Formula Change

The new law changes the formula the federal government uses to divide the Adult Education State Grant funding among states. The old formula took into account the number of adults age 16 and older in the state without a high school diploma (or the equivalent) and not enrolled in high school. The *Workforce Investment Act* changes the formula to include only adults age 16-61. This does not mean that states cannot continue to use these funds to serve adults over the age of 61. Rather, it just changes

how state allotments are calculated. As a result of this change, states with a large population over age 61 may receive a smaller percentage of Adult Education State Grant funds next year. Despite this change, the law requires that next year each state must receive at least 90 percent of the amount it received this year.

After receiving their federal allotments based on the formula, state agencies(1) use most of the funding to award grants to local programs through a competitive process. They can also use some of the funding for state leadership activities and state administrative activities. The following chart compares how states allocated their grant money under the *Adult Education Act* with how they are supposed to allocate it under the *Workforce Investment Act*.

Percent Under the Adult Education Act	Percent Under the Workforce Investment Act	Activity
80	82.5	Grants to local programs
15	12.5	State leadership activities
5	5	State administrative activities

Grants to Local Programs

The *Workforce Investment Act* establishes specific criteria for state agencies to consider in awarding grants to local programs. These criteria -- which include the program's past effectiveness, intensity, duration, and commitment to serving individuals most in need of literacy services -- are summarized in the form of a checklist attached to this report. Local programs are required to use the funds for adult education, family, workplace, ESL, and/or prison literacy services.

Organizations Eligible for Funding

The organizations listed below are eligible to apply to their state agency for federal funds. For information on how to apply in your state, contact your state director of adult education(2).

- Local education agencies
- Community-based organizations of demonstrated effectiveness
- Volunteer literacy organizations of demonstrated effectiveness
- Institutions of higher education
- Public or private nonprofit agencies
- Libraries
- Public housing authorities
- Consortia of organizations listed above
- Other nonprofits that have the ability to provide literacy services

Direct and Equitable Access

Like the *Adult Education Act*, the *Workforce Investment Act* requires state agencies to give all of the eligible providers listed above an equal (i.e. "direct and equitable") opportunity to apply for the funds. The law goes on to require state agencies to ensure that the same grant/contract announcement and application processes are used for all eligible providers. It also requires state agencies to describe what steps they will take to ensure that the direct and equitable access provisions are carried out in the plans they submit to the Secretary of Education.

Literacy for Prisoners

The *Workforce Investment Act* repeals the prison literacy program, which in recent years has received \$4.7 million annually. Under the *Adult Education Act*, states were required to use a minimum of 10

percent of their Adult Education State Grant for corrections education. The Workforce Investment Act allows states to use a maximum of 10 percent for this purpose.

State Leadership Activities

In addition to the grants to local providers, the law allows state agencies to use 12.5 percent of federal Adult Education State Grant funding to build local program capacity. States are encouraged to collaborate when possible, and can use funds for one or more of the following activities:

- Professional development programs that improve the quality of instruction
- Evaluating the quality of services
- Technical assistance to adult education and literacy programs
- Technology assistance, including staff training in use of technology
- Supporting state or regional literacy resource centers
- Incentives for program coordination, integration, and for performance
- Developing and disseminating curricula
- Coordinating with support services, such as child care and transportation
- Integrating literacy instruction and occupational training, including promoting linkage with employers
- Establishing linkages with postsecondary educational institutions, including community colleges
- Other statewide activities that support adult education and literacy

New Accountability System

One of the most important features of the *Workforce Investment Act* is the new comprehensive performance accountability system that it establishes. This new accountability system is designed to assess states' effectiveness in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities funded by the federal government. The law lists specific performance measures by which states will be assessed. These include the following:

1. Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking in the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition and other literacy skills.
2. Placement, retention, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment, or career advancement.
3. Receipt of a high school diploma or its equivalent.
4. Other objective, quantifiable measures, as identified by the state agency. (Local providers can have input into the process of identifying other performance measures.)

Each state agency will negotiate with the Secretary of Education in setting expected levels of performance, and is required to submit an annual report on its progress. The Secretary of Education, in turn, will make the report available to the public and distribute it to Congress. Congress is likely to use this information in future funding decisions.

State Plan

Each state agency that applies for federal funds through this law is required to submit a 5-year plan for improving adult education and family literacy activities in the state. As they develop the plan, state agencies are expected to consult with literacy providers in the state. Plans are due to the Secretary of Education by April 1, 1999. In many states, planning is already underway under the leadership of the state director of adult education.

Each 5-year plan is required to include specific goals for the next three years, and will be evaluated on how well it meets these goals. In developing the plan, the state must include a description of the process that will be used for public participation and comment. The state agency must submit the plan to the Governor for review and comment before submitting it to the Secretary of Education.

The plan must include an objective assessment of the literacy needs of individuals in the state. In addition, it must include a description of each of the following:

- The adult education and family literacy activities that will be carried out with federal funds.
- How the state agency will evaluate the effectiveness of adult education and literacy activities (based on the performance measures).
- How the performance measures will ensure the improvement of adult education and literacy activities in the state.
- The process that will be used for public participation and comment on the plan.
- How the state agency will develop strategies to better serve low-income students, individuals with disabilities, single parents, displaced homemakers, individuals with multiple barriers to educational enhancement (including those with limited English proficiency).
- How adult education and literacy activities will be integrated with career development, employment and training, and other activities.
- Steps the state will take to ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access through every step of the grant application process.

National Leadership Activities

The law reauthorizes both the National Institute for Literacy and the U.S. Department of Education's national leadership activities for five years.

National Institute for Literacy

The law directs the National Institute for Literacy to continue its efforts to strengthen the capacity of the literacy field through a variety of activities, including the following:

- Establishing a national electronic database (i.e. LINCS) that disseminates information to the broadest possible audience within the literacy field and includes a communication network (i.e. listservs) for literacy programs, providers, social service agencies, and students.
- Advising Congress and federal departments and agencies regarding development of policy with respect to literacy and basic skills.
- Providing policy and technical assistance to federal, state, and local entities for the improvement of policy and programs relating to literacy.
- Encouraging federal agencies to support literacy efforts.
- Helping establish a reliable and replicable literacy research agenda.

Department of Education

The law directs the Secretary of Education to ensure that the Department of Education continues to carry out its national literacy activities, including the following:

- Providing technical assistance to eligible providers in developing and using performance measures listed in this law.
- Providing technical assistance for professional development activities, and to develop, improve, identify, and disseminate the most successful methods and techniques for providing adult education and literacy services.
- Carrying out research, such as estimating the number of adults functioning at the lowest levels of literacy proficiency.
- Developing and replicating model programs, particularly those working with the learning disabled, ESL, and workplace populations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For a copy of the *Workforce Investment Act*, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> or call the House Document Room at 202-226-5200 and ask for Public Law 105-220.

For a more detailed summary of the legislation, see <http://www.naepdc.org>.

To be added to the mailing list for future *Policy Updates*, see <http://www.nifl.gov> or call 202-632-1500 and choose option #1.

Special thanks to Jim Bowling for his assistance with this Policy Update.

Checklist for Programs Seeking Federal Adult Education and Literacy Grants

The following list is designed to help programs generally assess how well they are meeting criteria that the *Workforce Investment Act* requires state agencies to consider in awarding grants. This list is not all-inclusive, and programs considering applying for these grants should contact their state director of adult education for more specific information about grant requirements. (For information on how to contact the director of adult education in your state, see the *Directory of National and State Literacy Contacts*, available at www.nifl.gov or by calling 1-800-228-8813.)

1. ____ To what degree has your program established measurable goals for participant outcomes?
2. ____ Can your program demonstrate its past effectiveness in improving the literacy skills of adults and families?
3. ____ What is the level of commitment of your program to serving individuals most in need of literacy services?
4. ____ Is your program of sufficient intensity and duration for participants to achieve substantial learning gains?
5. ____ Are educational activities built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice?
6. ____ Do activities use computers and other advances in technology, as appropriate?
7. ____ Do students in your program have an opportunity to learn in "real life" contexts?
8. ____ Is your program staffed by well-trained instructors, administrators, and counselors?
9. ____ Does your program offer flexible schedules and support services (such as child care and transportation)?
10. ____ Does your program coordinate its activities with other available resources in the community, including postsecondary schools, elementary and secondary schools, one-stop centers, job training programs, and social service agencies?

Footnotes

1. The Workforce Investment Act defines the entity that receives and distributes the money--referred to in this Policy Update as the "state agency"--as the entity in the state that is responsible for administering and supervising adult education and literacy policy. In most states, it is either the state department of education or the community college system. (for information on the eligible agency in your state, see the Directory of National and State Literacy Contacts, available at www.nifl.gov or by calling 1-800-228-8813.)
2. For Information on how to contact the director of adult education in your state, see the Directory of National and State Literacy Contacts, available at www.nifl.gov or by calling 1-800-228-8813.

For more information, contact Alice Johnson at 202-632-1500, extension 31.
