



**Adult Education  
Coordination and Planning**

**State and Local Coordination and  
Planning to Strengthen Adult Basic  
Education Services**

# **AECAP Guide for State Leaders**

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Prepared by:  
Judith A. Alamprese  
Margaret K. Gwaltney  
Abt Associates Inc.  
Bethesda, MD



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# Preface

The AECAP Guide for State Adult Education Staff was developed as one product from the Adult Basic Education State Delivery System Strategic Planning and Service Provision Demonstration Project, also known as the Adult Education Coordination and Planning project—AECAP. Abt Associates Inc. conducted the AECAP project under funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Contract Number ED-01-CO-0093, Task Order No. 0003 during 2003-2008. The other product from AECAP is the project’s final report.<sup>1</sup>

The AECAP project tested processes for state and local planning and interagency coordination as a way to facilitate the expansion and quality of adult education and workforce development services. State adult education staff, state partner agency staff, and local adult education service providers and their partners from two cities in each of the following six states participated in the project—Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, and Washington. The lessons from AECAP participants’ activities in developing partnerships, planning and implementing state initiatives, and carrying out local demonstrations are discussed in this guide.

The preparation of the guide would not have been possible without the cooperation and gracious support from the state officials and local program providers who were involved in the AECAP project. Their time and effort to participate in AECAP’s training and technical assistance activities, implement their demonstration activities, and provide information to the AECAP team about their experiences and outcomes from the project is greatly appreciated.

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<sup>1</sup> J. A. Alamprese, *Shared Goals, Common Ground: State and Local Coordination and Planning to Strengthen Adult Basic Education Service—Final Report*, Abt Associates Inc., 2009.

Throughout AECAP, the project team benefited from the advice of Cheryl Keenan, Daniel Miller, and Trudy Turner from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Thanks are given to these individuals for their assistance and recommendations. The members of AECAP's Technical Working Group also provided valuable advice about the development of the guide. Thanks are given to David Alexander, Thomas Owens, Jane Radunzel, Suzanne Teegarden, and Mary Weaver for their contributions.

The guidance and information presented in this guide are the findings of the authors and do not reflect the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Education or of Abt Associates Inc.

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# Introduction to Guide

The AECAP guide is designed to assist state adult education staff in forming partnerships at the state level and facilitating coordination at the local level as a lever for expanding and improving the quality of adult basic education (ABE) and workforce development services. Coordination plays a critical role in the operation of the adult basic education system at the state and local levels. ABE state staff's work with state agency partners can assist in developing policy, obtaining access to resources for professional and program development, and supporting system-level change initiatives. ABE local service providers' partnerships with other agencies are a key link in their capacity to meet the varied needs of adult learners who enroll in ABE. These adults often face barriers to participating in ABE that can be addressed through their access to social services and other support programs, which provide expertise and resources which are not available in adult basic education. As ABE participants set goals for transitioning to postsecondary education, training, and employment, ABE staff must coordinate with community colleges, occupational training programs, and One-Stop Career Centers as part of the process of developing a seamless pathway of services for ABE learners.

Various conditions have prompted coordination to emerge as a linchpin in the delivery of effective adult basic education and workforce development services. Historically, the impetus for coordination at the state and local levels in adult education and workforce has come from legislative mandates. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 (Public Law 105-220) requires that agencies responsible for adult basic education and workforce development coordinate efforts to assist underemployed and unemployed adults. While coordination in the form of a One-Stop Career Center is central to WIA, there have been mixed results in the delivery of joint services to address the needs of adults that are the target population for

the legislation. While some local ABE and One-Stop Centers have developed client cross-referral services and worked together to provide comprehensive assistance to clients, ABE and One-Stop coordination has been affected by funding issues, competing service priorities, and other factors that have prevented ABE and One-Stop providers from working together to deliver a seamless set of services.<sup>2</sup>

Gubernatorial initiatives also can stimulate local coordination. As an example, Washington State's Comprehensive Evaluation was an initiative in which all Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) clients were assessed using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) test and a plan was developed for clients' work placement that could include an education and training component. In the Comprehensive Evaluation, local basic skills providers were able to work with their partners at Employment Services and the Department of Social and Health Services in conducting basic skills assessments. These assessment results were used to guide clients' decisions regarding the types of training and/or education services that they could access to help them prepare for employment.<sup>3</sup>

Another impetus for coordination can be a common need shared by organizations. Under WIA, the implementation of performance measures is a common requirement that has promoted local coordination. In communities where ABE and One-Stop providers recognize that their cross-referral of clients can result in positive performance outcomes for both agencies, their work together has resulted in an organizational pay-off as well as client successes. ABE programs working with postsecondary institutions to identify ABE learners' academic and learning needs to enter and succeed in postsecondary education have found that their partnership can benefit both organizations. ABE programs that have been successful in preparing learners for postsecondary work have met their learner performance goals, and postsecondary institutions have benefited from having learners with a stronger likelihood of completing their degrees. These examples point

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, N. Pindus, L. Aron, J. Cowan, H. Hatry, S. Hernandez, M. Winkler, R. Koralek, J. Trutko, and B. Barnow. *Study to Assess Funding, Accountability, and One-Stop Delivery Systems in Adult Education, Volume I: Final Synthesis Report*, The Urban Institute, prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, November 2005; B. Barnow and C. King. *The Workforce Investment Act in Eight States*, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, February 2005.

to the variety of ways in which local-level coordination in ABE can expand programs' clientele as well as facilitate clients' attainment of outcomes.

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## Findings from the AECAP Project

The critical role of state and local coordination under WIA and the need to increase enrollments in adult basic education and the quality of ABE services were key factors that prompted the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education to fund the Adult Education Coordination and Planning (AECAP) project. AECAP was a demonstration program aimed at providing state adult education policymakers with skills and knowledge to expand their resources, work collaboratively with other state policymakers whose programs serve undereducated and economically disadvantaged adults, and enhance the capabilities of local adult basic education programs and their partner agencies to work together effectively. The project involved adult education state staff and partners from the six states and 12 local pilot sites. While AECAP's main emphasis was to strengthen state partnerships in support of ABE and One-Stop coordination, state participants could choose from two project foci for their demonstration activities. Four of the project's states (FL, MD, MO, and WA) chose coordination between adult education programs and One-Stop Career Centers, and two states (AZ and GA) concentrated on the overall improvement of ABE services. Abt Associates Inc.'s AECAP project team provided training and technical assistance to the state and local project participants including state and local workshops and telephone assistance that was tailored to the activities of each state's demonstration activities. The project team also collected client outcome data from the pilot sites and documented their activities during site visits.

Through the project's technical assistance activities, AECAP participants were directed in the use of the AIDDE© planning process,<sup>4</sup> research-based coordination strategies, and lessons

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<sup>3</sup> J. A. Alamprese, *Shared Goals, Common Ground: State and Local Coordination and Planning to Strengthen Adult Basic Education Service—Final Report*, Abt Associates Inc., 2009.

<sup>4</sup> The AIDDE© process was developed by the AECAP project's director and is derived from studies in problem-based learning, results from previous studies on

learned from previous state demonstration projects. The information from the project about state and local coordination as well as strategies for planning systems improvement, working with partners, and carrying out state demonstration activities to test new local practices were used in developing this guide. To provide a context for understanding the guide's advice, the key findings from the AECAP project are presented next.

**State-Level Coordination.** The state adult education staff and their state partners in the AECAP project used the AIDDE© planning process to analyze data and program practices to identify an area of service that could benefit from their coordinated activities. The partners worked together to support local pilot sites in their development of service models in the areas identified by the state. The outcomes from the state partners' coordination were:

- ❖ A database with data elements for reporting Workforce Investment Act, Title I outcomes and selected data elements for WIA, Title II, which ABE programs and One-Stop providers could use to track clients' referral to each others' services and clients' use of these services.
- ❖ An ESOL curriculum in Customer Service Training that can be used nationally in ABE programs and One-Stop centers and that serves as a model in the state for other curricula that integrate ESOL and occupational training.
- ❖ A statewide professional development system for program improvement for ABE that was adapted from the K-12 system. As a result of the intra-agency coordination, the ABE partner has a refined professional development system that can be used in all ABE programs, and the K-12 partner has increased the number of participants using its professional development system.

**Local Pilot Site Activities.** The AECAP pilot sites also used the AIDDE© process to analyze their local data and current practices to identify new or expanded practices that they could develop and test. Nine of the 12 local pilot sites in the AECAP project involved adult education staff working with their partners to develop coordinated service models, which are the following:

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interagency coordination of federal funding streams, and literature on organizational exchange theory in sociology.

- ❖ Cross-referral of clients between ABE programs and One-Stop centers (three sites).
- ❖ Targeted instructional services for specific ABE populations (three sites).
- ❖ Provision of integrated ABE/ESL and occupational courses as a pathway to employment or postsecondary technical training (three sites).

The pilot sites developed processes and materials in their demonstration activities and conducted an initial test of these processes by collecting outcome data from clients. Of the two pilot sites that conducted client pre-post assessments, both sites' gains were statistically significant.

Three of the AECAP sites used the AIDDE© process to identify areas of their programs' services that they could improve. One of the pilot sites implemented a reading program, and the gains achieved by clients participating in this program were statistically significant. The other two pilot sites conducted extensive data collection and analysis to identify the types of improvements that were needed in their programs' services. These sites prepared program improvement plans as their products from the AECAP project.

**Pilot Sites' Use of the AIDDE© Planning Process.** The data analyzed in the project indicated that pilot sites were able to use the AIDDE© process in planning and carrying out activities that expanded the types of clients they served or the quality of the services they provided. One indicator of the pilot sites' use of the AIDDE© process was the extent to which their AECAP Final Plans were implemented as designed. The project team's analysis of the Final Plans submitted by the 11 pilot sites that completed the project showed that the sites had implemented their Final Plans essentially as they were designed. Some sites made adjustments to their planned activities as they obtained new information about clients or as conditions in their agencies or in the community changed that required an alteration in activities. In two pilot sites whose ABE program director changed during the early part of the pilot site demonstration, some planned activities were modified to fit with new priorities that were set in the agency in which the ABE program was located. At another pilot site, adjustments were made in the order of the activities that were undertaken. This occurred when the ABE director identified that a key

### ***Factors Affecting Planning Process***

- Extent of Prior Relationship
- Quality of Pilot Site Data
- Experience in Reviewing and Interpreting Data
- Expertise in Developing New Services

factor affecting the ABE program's capacity to coordinate with the One-Stop Center was the relationship between the ABE program and the workforce division in the community college where the ABE program was located. The ABE program needed to coordinate with the workforce division within the college in order to be able to work with the One-Stop Center.

Several factors affected pilot sites' use of the AIDDE© process. These factors were:

- ❖ **Extent of Prior Relationship.** Six of the eight local pilot sites that focused on coordination between ABE and One-Stop did not have a working relationship with their partners at the beginning of the AECAP project. For these individuals, the AECAP State and Local Partner Workshop was the first opportunity for pilot site partners to get to know each other and the services each provided. It took time for partners to build a relationship so that they could work together in reviewing data, identifying a target population for coordinated services, and developing these services.
- ❖ **Quality of Pilot Site Data:** Local pilot sites were asked to bring to their first AECAP workshop data about their clients, such as background characteristics, goals for participating in ABE program, education and employment outcomes, and other relevant data related to the issue the state had identified as the focus of the pilot sites' activities. The first workshop exercise in the AIDDE© process is to analyze client and program data, and many of the pilot sites found that their data were incomplete or incorrect as they attempted to complete the exercise. Furthermore, some sites had not brought the appropriate data and thus were not able to conduct the analysis part of the exercise. While the quality of pilot sites' data affected their ability to complete the analysis component of the AIDDE© process, this problem prompted state staff to examine their states' databases and work with sites to identify appropriate data that could be used to identify learner and program issues.
- ❖ **Experience in Reviewing and Interpreting Data.** An important part of the AIDDE© process is to identify trends in data and to interpret the implication of these trends for the types of clients that are recruited and the services that are delivered. The pilot site staff varied in their experiences in reviewing and interpreting client data. For some pilot site staff, the AECAP workshop was their first

opportunity to spend a focused time reviewing data, drawing initial conclusions about the data, and relating these conclusions to possible next steps in developing a coordinated service. Staff's familiarity with this process affected the time it took for them to complete the process and to plan coordinated activities.

- ❖ **Expertise in Developing New Services.** The component of the AIDDE© process that is the most complex is the development and delivery of services to address the problem that is identified from the analysis of data and current practices. Six of the eight pilot sites whose AECAP plan involved the development of new services had limited experience in writing curricula or designing structured processes such as referring clients from one service to another. As a result, these pilot sites developed and revised several iterations of materials and processes before the services were ready to be pilot tested.

### ***Considerations in Developing and Sustaining Partnerships***

- Conditions for Building Partnerships
- Forming Partnerships
- Structuring Coordination
- Developing Interpersonal Relationships
- Communicating
- Accessing Resources for New Services

These factors partially accounted for the elongated time it took the pilot sites to conduct their activities in the AECAP project. While one assumption guiding the project was that the local pilot sites would be able to complete the analysis and initial planning steps of the AIDDE© process during the first workshop with pilot sites, due to the factors described above, pilot sites had additional analysis and planning work to carry out after the workshop. As the sites gathered additional data, made adjustments in the data they had brought to the workshop, and determined a focus for their coordinated service, they were able to move ahead in using the AIDDE© process.

**Use of Coordination, Communication, and Persuasion Strategies.** During AECAP's workshops, state and local participants learned about principles of coordination and communication and strategies they might use to develop or strengthen their partnerships. Examples from the states and pilot sites' applications of the coordination and communication strategies are the following:

- ❖ **Conditions for Building Partnerships:** In Missouri, the state partners had worked together for many years and saw the AECAP project as an opportunity to carry out a new initiative together. The history of cooperation between the state partners enabled them to negotiate adjustments to the Division of Workforce Development's Toolbox

database to incorporate key data elements from the ABE program database, and in pilot testing the use of Toolbox at the local ABE programs and the Career Centers to facilitate the tracking of the cross-referral of clients between the ABE programs and the Career Centers.

- ❖ **Forming Partnerships:** Developing a shared vision with agreed-upon objectives and a strategy for meeting these objectives is a key element of forming a partnership. In St. Augustine, Florida, the ABE partner—First Coast Technical Institute and the One-Stop partner—St. Augustine WorkSource, were new partners who worked to develop a service that could meet both organization’s needs to increase clients’ performance outcomes. The partners examined their data and past practices and determined that a GED work readiness class that was taught by the ABE partner’s staff and held at the WorkSource location would be a reasonable pilot activity for the AECAP project. The ABE partner’s GED instructor coordinated with the WorkSource staff in carrying out the activities for the pilot and the staff from both organizations were able to have a successful implementation due, in part, to their willingness to set objectives for the pilot project and to be persistent in carrying out activities to meet these objectives.
- ❖ **Structuring Coordination.** Developing strategies to focus and foster coordination between partners is a key factor for a successful partnership. The AECAP pilot sites reported that the monthly phone conferences facilitated by the AECAP team were instrumental in keeping the pilot sites focused, and provided structure to the pilot sites’ participation in AECAP. Since implementing a pilot test that involved two organizations was a new experience for all pilot sites, the monthly telephone calls promoted ongoing communication between the partners to prepare for the calls and to follow up after the calls. The calls also encouraged many of the partners to meet in one location for the call. As the Yakima, Washington partners reported, the AECAP calls helped to keep the project on track and provided a structure for the partners’ communication.
- ❖ **Developing Interpersonal Relationships.** A number of the local pilot sites worked to ensure that the benefits of their partnership outweighed the costs of being a partner. During the telephone conferences that the AECAP team facilitated with local pilot sites, the conversation among partners illustrated their flexibility in negotiating activities to keep a balance in the partnership between the benefits

obtained from undertaking new or expanded activities and the costs associated with the time it took to conduct the activities. In Auburn, Washington, the ABE partner was able to provide assistance to the One-Stop partner in assessing TANF clients' basic skills as part of the state's Comprehensive Evaluation initiative in which all TANF clients were to be assessed and have a plan developed for their education and training. This activity provided the ABE partner with an opportunity to work with Employment Services staff and provide information about the ABE program. As a result, Employment Services began to refer clients to the ABE program.

- ❖ **Communicating.** Open and frequent communication is a key element in a successful partnership. For the local pilot sites with new partners, it took time to develop patterns of communication and a process for addressing challenges. In Liberty County, Georgia, the ABE provider worked with the Army Education Center at Fort Stewart to offer customized math classes to supplement the instruction that soldiers were receiving through the U.S. Army's Functional Academic Skills Training (FAST) programs. The ABE coordinator and the Army Education Center liaison established a process for sharing information about the soldiers' progress in the math class and readiness for taking the General Technical test. Their ongoing discussions also facilitated the referral of new soldiers into the ABE program's math class and enabled the coordinator and liaison to address issues about soldiers' participation in the classes in an efficient and effective manner.
- ❖ **Accessing Resources.** The availability of sufficient funds and materials to carry out the activities of the partnership is essential to its success. The Maryland Department of Education state partner greatly facilitated the partnership between Montgomery College—the ABE partner and Montgomery Works—the One-Stop partner by funding additional staff to work on the partners' AECAP activity in pilot testing and refining the Customer Service curriculum for ESOL adult learners. The support provided for additional staff strengthened the partnership and enabled the pilot site to complete its activities.

### ***Components of a State Demonstration***

- Application Process
- Selection of Local Pilot Sites
- Project Model and Planning Phase
- Orientation of Replacement Staff
- Provision of Technical Assistance

**Lessons about Demonstration Programs.** The AECAP project provided a number of lessons about processes for implementing a national demonstration project in adult basic education that can be used by states in implementing a

demonstration with local pilot sites. The lessons for the AECAP project are the following:

- ❖ **Application Process:** The AECAP team's identification of states for the project provided lessons about the use of an application process for selecting states for a national demonstration and for states' selection of local pilot sites for a state demonstration. One lesson is that the written application should include information related to the organizational conditions and personal characteristics that will be needed for the successful implementation of the demonstration project. For example, the AECAP project required that states have prior experience in interagency coordination and that this experience was neutral or positive. To determine states' prior experience, the application included questions about the types of state adult education staff's prior coordination with other state agencies, the results from their coordination activities, and difficulties that had been encountered. State AECAP applicants' responses to these questions helped to determine their readiness for the AECAP project. To supplement the information in a written application, sometimes a telephone interview should be conducted with the key state or local staff to gather additional information on topics that are difficult to describe in a written application. Examples of these topics are the alignment between the state's purpose for participating in the demonstration and the goal of the local demonstration project, and the willingness of the candidate site to participate in the activities that will be conducted during the demonstration project.
- ❖ **Selection of Local Pilot Sites:** National and state demonstration projects often involve local pilot sites. Criteria should be set for selecting local pilot sites, which include the staff characteristics and program characteristics that will facilitate the implementation of the pilot sites' activities. Staff at a pilot site should have: the skills and knowledge that are needed to carry out the pilot site's activities, sufficient time to conduct the activities, and the motivation and interest to participate as a pilot site. Examples of program characteristics that might be considered in pilot site selection are the quality of the program's database, the size of the programs, and the range of clients that it serves. These characteristics will vary depending on the activities that the pilot site is to undertake.

- ❖ **Project Model and Planning Phase:** The use of a specific model or process will help guide demonstration activities and allow for a comparison across sites. Training will be needed to prepare demonstration sites for using a model or process. After the training, sufficient time should be allocated for the state site and local pilot sites to develop a draft and final plan for the activities that they will conduct in the demonstration. While technical assistance will likely be needed by pilot sites to prepare their plans, the final plan should be written independently by the sites. This process will promote sites' commitment to carrying out the plan, and the plan can be used as a baseline for assessing the activities and outcomes from the demonstration.
- ❖ **Orientation of Replacement Staff.** Key state and local staff often change during a demonstration project, and sometimes these changes can influence the success of a project. New key staff should be oriented to the demonstration as soon as feasible so that the continuity of the demonstration's activities is not disrupted. These staff also will need time to determine how the demonstration can fit into their vision of services and what the benefits are of participating in the demonstration.
- ❖ **Provision of Technical Assistance.** The technical assistance provided to a demonstration project should be multifaceted, ongoing, and focus on the aspects of the demonstration that are the most difficult to implement. For example, when demonstration sites are implementing new activities they do not usually conduct, such as planning and coordination, it is likely that technical assistance will be needed to guide these activities. Telephone conferences can be an effective method for providing assistance when an agenda is set prior to the call; the topics, issues, and decisions discussed during the call are documented and sent to the sites after the call; and the expectations for the activities that will be conducted prior to the next call are discussed. The documentation of the telephone discussion also can serve as implementation data. Site visits can be the occasion to provide technical assistance when face-to-face discussions are needed to address critical issues or to determine the activities that can be implemented in the demonstration.

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# Overview of AECAP Guide

## **AECAP Guide**

- Using Processes for Planning and Partnership Development
- Developing and Supporting a State Initiative
- Planning Coordinated Local Services

This guide presents the lessons learned from the AECAP project's activities in three key areas:

- ❖ Using Processes for Planning and Partnership Development
- ❖ Developing and Supporting a State Initiative in Local Coordination
- ❖ Planning Coordinated Local Services

The processes discussed in this guide are intended to assist state adult education staff in establishing new or expanding existing state partnerships to address issues of common concern, particularly those related to the coordination of services supported under WIA Title I and Title II. Planning is a critical step in developing coordinated adult education services. The first section of the guide presents the steps in the AIDDE© planning process, which can be used by ABE state staff in working with state partners to address a common need or issue, such as increasing client outcomes. This section also highlights key strategies for partners to use in strengthening and sustaining their relationships. Worksheets are provided in Appendix A for state partners to use in planning their activities.

Implementing a state initiative is one strategy that state adult education staff may consider to focus attention on a critical issue in a state and to test the development of new services to address this issue. The next section of the guide describes the key steps that state adult education staff can use alone or with state partners to implement a state initiative.

The final section of the guide provides steps for planning coordinated local services as part of a state initiative or pilot test. The AIDDE© process can be used by ABE state and local staff working together to identify and plan the activities that local staff will carry out as part of the pilot test. A worksheet is provided in Appendix B for use in this process. Also discussed are examples of the coordinated services that were developed by the AECAP pilot sites. These examples are illustrative of the types of services that ABE state and local

program staff may consider to address goals such as increasing the number of ABE clients who transition to postsecondary education, training, and work and promoting the delivery of quality ABE services.



# Planning Process for State Coordination

The AIDDE© process is a planning model that ABE state staff can use in working with state partners to address a need or goal that benefits both partners. The steps in the process are intended to guide state adult education staff in selecting a state partner, assessing their common need and the extent to which their partnership can be beneficial to each partner in addressing their common need, planning the activities that they will undertake, documenting their activities, and evaluating the outcomes from their activities. The steps in the AIDDE© process for state-level coordination are shown in Exhibit 1.

**Exhibit 1**  
**AIDDE© Process Model for State-Level Interagency Coordination**



### **AIDDE© Planning Process**

- Analyze partnerships, needs, and resources
- Identify common goals, needs
- Develop plan to work with partners
- Document coordination activities
- Analyze implementation and outcomes from state coordination

State partners can use the AIDDE© process to:

- ❖ **Analyze** potential new or current partnerships between adult education state staff and staff from other divisions within their state agency or between adult education state staff and staff from other state agencies:
  - Using client and program data as well as other information, identify partners' potential common needs or goals concerning targets for clients, services to clients, professional development, state policy or other areas of need that are relevant to both partners.
  - Assess the capacity of each state partner to address the other agency's need, the expertise that the state partners have to work together on a common need, the political environment and other factors that may influence partners' capacity to develop or expand their relationship.
  - Identify the funding and other resources that partners could bring to address a common need.
- ❖ **Identify** a need or goal that adult education state staff and their partner have in common and are willing to work together to address. Identify the partners' approach to working together, including the activities that they will undertake, the resources that are available to support the activities, and their expected outcomes.
- ❖ **Develop** a plan to specify the activities the partners will undertake in working together:
  - Agree on the vision, goals, and strategies for achieving goals.
  - Specify the activities that will be undertaken, the timeline for the activities, and the resources that will be shared or exchanged.
  - Identify the expertise that will be needed to carry out the activities.
  - Develop a formal or informal agreement regarding the partnership's activities and expected outcomes.
  - Create ongoing communication processes and methods for monitoring the progress of the partnership.
- ❖ **Document** partners' activities and coordination processes and identify preliminary outcomes from the coordination

activities. As part of the documentation process, partners may:

- Record their activities.
- Specify the personnel, materials, and resources used.
- Record barriers encountered and methods used to solve problems.
- Record progress in their activities.
- ❖ **Evaluate** the implementation and outcomes from these activities. Partners may:
  - Describe the planned partnership activities that were implemented and not implemented.
  - Assess what worked and didn't work.
  - Describe and assess the results from the partnership, including the outcomes that were achieved in meeting the partners' common need or goals.

An example of the state of Missouri's use of the AIDDE© process in their work in the AECAP project is described below.

Prior to the AECAP project, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's adult basic education staff had a long-standing working relationship with staff in the Missouri Division of Workforce Department. The AECAP project presented the agencies with an opportunity to enhance their partnership with a new focus. The Division of Workforce Development had designed a Toolbox database that their career centers used to track clients and was interested in expanding the capacity of Toolbox. The state adult education staff were considering upgrading their adult basic education database. At the local level, while ABE programs and career centers were referring clients to each others' services, there was no process for tracking the number of referrals between ABE programs and the career centers, the types of services received from the clients who were referred to ABE or the career centers, or the client outcomes from these services. The lack of client outcome data at the local level meant that the state agencies were likely under reporting the performance outcomes for these clients.

The expansion of Toolbox for use in tracking the cross-referral between ABE and career centers was identified as a focus for the state agencies' coordination that could result in an increased number of clients served by both agencies and could facilitate the coordination of ABE programs and career centers in their cross-referral activities. State staff developed a plan for their activities that included a pilot test in two cities involving the ABE programs and career centers in those cities. State staff provided technical assistance to the ABE programs and career centers in the use of the enhanced Toolbox that had key data elements from the adult basic education reporting system, and encouraged the pilot sites to use Toolbox in referring and following up with clients. Evaluation data were collected about the number of cross-referrals between the ABE programs and career centers in the pilot test and the client outcomes that resulted from the cross-referral of clients

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## Tool for Using the AIDDE© Process

State adult education staff may find it helpful to plan their state coordination activities using the State Adult Education and Partner Planning worksheets in Appendix A. Worksheet #1 is designed for state adult education staff to use in identifying their needs, goals, and focus for state coordination.

Worksheet #2 can be used by state adult education staff and their partners to clarify their common goals or needs, identify their expected short- and long-term outcomes from working together, and specify the main activity that they will conduct to achieve their goals. On Worksheet #3, state adult education staff and their partners can delineate the specific activities that each partner will undertake. Worksheet #4 can be used to note the responsible agency or organization for each activity and the expected completion date for the activities.

A sample set of State Adult Education and Partner Planning Worksheets is contained in Appendix A. The sample activities are from the state of Connecticut's work in the early implementation of WIA to identify a statewide assessment that local Workforce Boards could use to determine the academic skills of out-of-school youth.<sup>5</sup>

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## Applying the AIDDE© Process to Varied Types of State Coordination

The AIDDE© process can be used by state adult education staff and their partners in planning and carrying out varied types of coordinated state activities. State partners may work together on an issue in which one state agency makes a new policy or changes an existing policy that benefits both agencies. An example is a state adult education agency's

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<sup>5</sup> The sample worksheets were developed with the assistance of Roberta Pawloski and J. Ronald Harrison, former state officials in the Connecticut State Department of Education.

coordination with the state's higher education authority to facilitate the transition of ABE clients to postsecondary education and to increase the number of students enrolled in postsecondary education. A barrier that ABE clients encounter is the requirement that they must enroll as full-time postsecondary students in order to receive financial aid. A state higher education authority's change in policy to allow part-time students to receive financial aid benefits the adult education state system and the higher education authority. Adult education and higher education state staff can monitor the implementation of the new policy and collect data to evaluate whether the new policy results in increased numbers of ABE learners enrolling in postsecondary courses.

Another form of coordination is state adult education staff's work with their partners to coordinate their policies in response to a federal mandate. For example, WIA requires states to assess the academic skills of out-of-school-youth. State adult education staff have assisted state workforce development staff in selecting a basic skills assessment instrument for out-of-school-youth, which often is the same instrument used by adult education. The use of a common assessment instrument has facilitated the cross-referral of out-of-school youth between ABE programs and One-Stop Centers.

Sometimes state agency coordination involves the development of new practices or processes for local service providers to address the needs or goals identified by the state agencies. In the AECAP project, some state partners identified the development of new basic skills curricula as a way to facilitate the transition of ABE learners to postsecondary training and employment. Other state partners promoted new processes for the cross-referral of clients between ABE and One-Stop Centers. These efforts were activities that involved substantial coordination between ABE programs and local partners and resulted in multiple changes in local services.

When the use of new practices or processes requires a significant amount of change for local providers, state agencies often develop state initiatives to pilot test and evaluate the new practices or policies before implementing the practices statewide. The AECAP project's lessons learned from the development of state initiatives and from the testing of new services at the local level can be helpful to state adult

education staff and partners in expanding and improving local services through coordinated activities.

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## Factors that Support Partnerships

A number of factors were identified in the AECAP project that can assist state staff in developing and sustaining partnerships. As state partners use the AIDDE© process in planning their coordinated activities, the following should be considered:

- ❖ **Forming Partnerships.** Set goals and objectives that are concrete and attainable. Develop a shared vision with agree-upon objectives and a strategy for meeting these objectives.
- ❖ **Communicating.** Establish formal communication links, such as meetings and telephone conferences, to keep partners apprised of the progress of joint activities and to identify barriers to accomplishing these activities. Open and frequent communication will help to engage partners and facilitate the resolution of issues that arise.
- ❖ **Developing Interpersonal Relationships.** Carry out activities that can promote the development of mutual respect, understanding, and trust among partners. In discussing joint activities and their outcomes, ensure that the benefits of participating in a partnership outweigh the costs. Monitor the cost-benefit ratio through frequent communication. Be willing to compromise and be flexible to sustain the partnership.
- ❖ **Accessing Resources.** In planning partnership activities, ensure that the key resources needed for success are available. Skilled leadership, sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time to carry out activities often are critical resources required for partnerships to thrive.

# Developing and Supporting a State Initiative

## *Developing and Supporting a State Initiative*

- Final Selection of Initiative Focus
- Selection of Pilot Sites
- Integration of New Practices into Pilot Sites

A state initiative is an organized process in which local pilot sites can test new or refine existing practices aimed at addressing a need identified both by the state adult education agency and the local site. The steps described below can be used by state adult education staff alone in designing and implementing a state initiative or in coordination with a partner.

## Final Selection of Initiative Focus

After state adult education staff and their partners use the AIDDE© process to determine an initial focus to address their need or goals, there are other factors they must consider in making a final selection of the local need that the initiative will address. These factors are:

- ❖ The desired amount and levels of change in ABE programs, and the partners that will be required at the local level.
- ❖ The types of practices, processes, and tools that will be used to support the new or enhanced program practices.
- ❖ The availability of expertise to provide professional development and technical assistance in the development or implementation of new program practices.

**Amount and Levels of Change at the Local Level.** The types of changes that ABE programs will need to make in their services will affect the expertise and resources that will be

required by local pilot sites and the amount of time that may be needed for the change to be implemented. The characteristics of the type of local changes that should be considered are:

- ❖ Change in ABE services is the primary focus.
- ❖ Change involves ABE services and other entities within a local institution.
- ❖ Change involves ABE services and external agencies or institutions.
- ❖ Change in ABE or partner staffs' skills, knowledge, and attitude will be required.
- ❖ Change involves certain types of state interagency activities to facilitate enhancements in local ABE program.

Change that involves primarily ABE services will require a different level of support and amount of time than change involving coordination between ABE and partners within their own institutions or with partners from other agencies. Generally, the more local partners that are involved in the pilot site, the longer it will take to organize and begin a new practice. If the new practice for the initiative requires local ABE staffs' development of skills or knowledge, then state ABE staff may need to arrange for internal or external experts to provide professional development that can assist local ABE staff in acquiring new knowledge or skills, or in implementing the new practice. If an initiative requires state partners to work together in supporting local pilot sites, the amount of time it will take for state partners to coordinate their local support so that the local partners are receiving consistent messages about their activities needs to be taken into account when planning the initiative.

Florida's focus in the AECAP project was to strengthen the relationship between ABE programs and the state's One-Stop provider, WorkSource, to increase the number of ABE learners who transitioned to employment and the number of WorkSource clients who were referred to ABE services. The Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ) and Jacksonville WorkSource were the local service providers for the Jacksonville pilot test. The pilot test built on the existing work at FCCJ's Polytechnic Academy to increase ABE clients' work readiness skills through the use of the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) curriculum and involved changes in the organizational activities of both partners and in the skills of the partners' staff. At FCCJ, ABE staff had to learn to use the adapted JAG curriculum and to institute new processes for referring ABE learners to a WorkSource satellite center at the college. The WorkSource staff at FCCJ had to develop strategies for placing FCCJ's ABE clients, who tended to be younger than the clients at WorkSource's main center, into jobs.

The staff at WorkSource's main center also had to develop strategies for referring clients to FCCJ's ABE program. The approach that the Jacksonville pilot site partners took was to work on these processes in stages over a period of several months. The first step was for the Polytechnic Academy staff to determine the point at which ABE clients should be referred to the WorkSource staff at the college. As more ABE clients were referred, the WorkSource staff developed skills in working with ABE instructors to identify the readiness of ABE clients for job placement and appropriate placements for the clients. Once this process was underway, the WorkSource staff at the main center initiated efforts to develop criteria for case managers to use to identify clients who could benefit from ABE services. Throughout these activities, the staff partners conferred with FCCJ and WorkSource about their coordination efforts.

**Types of Practices for an Initiative.** Initiatives usually involve the testing of new practices in local services. Local pilot site staff may need to:

- ❖ Develop new practices themselves.
- ❖ Be trained to adopt practices that have been developed and tested with other programs and which have evidence of effectiveness.
- ❖ Be trained to use or adapt practices that have been developed and tested with other programs and which may have existing evidence or that are developing evidence.

Initiatives in which staff are to develop their own practices will require that staff have the expertise and experience in designing practices or products. The amount of expertise required will vary with the complexity of the practice. For example, creating a process for referring clients to a One-Stop Career Center requires different expertise than writing a new basic skills curriculum. ABE state staff considering the option of having local staff develop their own practices should first determine the expertise and experience of staff at the ABE programs that are candidates for pilot sites. If local program staff have limited experience, it may be necessary to provide external consultants or experts from other ABE programs to assist in the development process.

If the plan is to have local pilot sites test existing practices, it is helpful to collect information about the results of the existing practices prior to making a decision about using a practice in the pilot test. The data about a potential practice that might be reviewed are the:

- ❖ Characteristics of individuals who have participated in the test of the practice.
- ❖ Staff expertise and resources that will be needed to adopt or adapt the new practice.
- ❖ Learners' outcomes from participating in the practice.

If feasible, it is preferable to conduct a pilot test with practices for which at least preliminary data have been collected about the practice's effectiveness.

The AECAP project's pilot site staff used practices that they developed or that they adopted or adapted from others. The St. Augustine, Florida pilot site partners—First Coast Technical Institute and St. Augustine WorkSource—developed a new Fast Track GED course for WorkSource clients who were preparing to take the General Educational Development (GED) test and be placed in a job. To facilitate ABE clients' job placement, the WorkSource staff developed work readiness lessons that were integrated into the Fast Track GED class. Both instructors made revisions to their instructional materials after they completed the first test of the classes.

In Savannah, Georgia, the Liberty County ABE satellite site staff designed customized math classes for soldiers from Ft. Stewart who needed to enhance their skills to become eligible for promotion. The instructors developed a 36-hour class that was focused on enhancing their math skills so that they could improve their scores on the General Technical (GT) test of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

The Savannah, Georgia ABE pilot site adopted the Adult Fluency and Vocabulary (AFV) program that had evaluation data from its use with at-risk youth. Since the majority of the Savannah ABE clients were under the age of 25 years, the AFV program was a good match for them.

Maryland's ABE pilot site—Montgomery College—adapted the ESOL customer service curriculum that had been developed by the National Retail Federation. The college had experienced curriculum designers who integrated the state's ESOL curriculum standards into the curriculum and used a standardized format in revising the lessons.

**Expertise for Professional Development and Technical Assistance.** Initiatives involving the implementation of new practices generally will require some level of professional development and technical assistance to support the use of the new practices. Factors to consider in planning professional development and technical assistance are:

- ❖ Knowledge and time available for state staff to provide technical assistance.
- ❖ Capacity of the state's ABE professional development provider to offer technical assistance.

- ❖ Availability and affordability of hiring external consultants to provide technical assistance.

The selection of the entity to provide professional development should be based on the skills and knowledge needed to implement the new practices. Practices involving a special set of skills or expertise may require the use of an external consultant. Sometimes technical assistance can be provided by someone other than the individual who conducted the professional development, depending on the purpose of the technical assistance. If the technical assistance is intended to reinforce the professional development that was offered about the use of the practice, then the individual who developed the practice may be best prepared to provide the technical assistance. If the objective of the technical assistance is to support local pilot sites' motivation for the implementation and to track the use and progress of the new product, then staff other than the developer may be appropriate for carrying out these activities.

In the AECAP project, Georgia focused on the improvement of its ABE services. After analyzing both state and local program data on ABE learner performance, the state partners and the Savannah pilot site staff determined that the pilot site would work to improve the reading skills of intermediate-level ABE learners. To attain this goal, ABE instructors would need to receive professional development in reading and integrate new reading instructional strategies into their practice. With the assistance of the AECAP staff, the state partners and ABE program director selected the Adult Fluency and Vocabulary reading program as the intervention. Dr. Mary Beth Curtis, the program's developer, and Dr. John Strucker served as the external experts for the pilot test and trained the ABE reading instructors to use the program. Dr. Strucker also provided follow-up technical assistance that involved observing and meeting with instructors to discuss their use of the reading program. This process was implemented over a period of several months. The ABE instructors were able to learn the new reading instructional strategies and document the reading gains of the learners who participated in instruction based on the Adult Fluency and Vocabulary program.

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## Selection of Pilot Sites

The selection of local pilot sites is a critical step in a state initiative. Research on demonstration projects as well as the findings from the AECAP project suggests that four factors are

important to consider in selecting local pilot sites for a state initiative:

- ❖ The motivation and interest of programs to participate as a pilot site.
- ❖ The extent of staff's prior experience in developing or implementing new practices.
- ❖ The amount of time staff have available to participate in the pilot test.
- ❖ The capacity of local staff to assess and document new practices as part of the pre-dissemination process in a pilot test.

The selection of pilot sites whose staff are enthusiastic about participating in the pilot test and interested in testing the types of practices that are planned for the pilot test will help to ensure the successful implementation of the pilot test. If the development of new practices will be required, it is important that pilot site staff have prior experience in designing or in implementing new practices. Another critical factor is the availability of pilot site staff to participate in the activities that will be conducted during the pilot test. ABE programs that have other special projects underway may not have key staff available to participate in the pilot test of new practices. Since the implementation of a pilot test requires additional management of activities and staff, it is advisable to select local program in which key administrative staff as well as experienced instructional staff have time to participate. The pilot site also will need to have staff who can document the new practices that are being developed as part of the anticipated dissemination of the practices once the pilot test has been completed.

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## Integration of New Practices into Pilot Sites

Once the pilot sites are selected, site staff must consider certain factors that may affect the integration of the new practices into the program's current operations. These factors are:

- ❖ The “timing” of new practices that will be implemented in the pilot site.
- ❖ Staff’s “buy in” for the new practices.
- ❖ Clients’ expectations for the new practices.

Most ABE programs operate their services according to a timeframe, and this timeframe can affect the quality of the pilot test of new practices. For example, if a new curriculum is scheduled to be tested in a pilot site, staff must consider the schedule for beginning the testing of the curriculum and how this schedule coincides with the operation of related program activities. In the AECAP pilot sites that used new curricula, the classes were scheduled to begin at the key enrollment periods for the programs—preferably fall or winter.

It is important for the program staff that are leading a pilot site’s activities to involve other staff in the program whose support for the pilot test will be central to its success. These staff will vary by program and the type of new practice that is being tested, but may include the program coordinator, key instructors, or other staff who may be instrumental to the operation of the new practice. Without their “buy in” for the pilot test, key activities of the intervention may not be implemented.

A third factor that should be considered is clients’ expectations for the services that they will receive. When new practices are to be tested on clients who are expecting existing services, clients will need to be prepared for the new services that will be delivered. For example, in pilot testing ABE transition to postsecondary education and training services with learners who expect to participate in a GED preparation course, ABE staff will need to discuss with clients their need for further education and the benefits of instruction that goes beyond GED test preparation. This step of recalibrating clients’ expectations will help to ensure that an adequate test of the new services is conducted.

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## Conclusion

The steps outlined for developing and supporting a state initiative in the list below will help state adult education staff in making optimal choices for the pilot sites that will be involved in a state initiative. These steps will help prepare local pilot sites for the activities that they will need to conduct during the pilot test, avoid difficulties that have occurred in other pilot tests, and maximize the conditions under which new practices can be tested.

## Steps in Developing and Supporting a State Initiative

### Select Initiative Focus

#### Determine Amount and Levels of Change at Local Level

- ❖ Change in ABE services is the primary focus.
- ❖ Change involves ABE services and other entities within a local institution.
- ❖ Change involves ABE services and external agencies or institutions.
- ❖ Change in ABE or partner staffs' skills, knowledge, and attitude will be required.
- ❖ Change involves certain types of state interagency activities to facilitate enhancements in local ABE program.

#### Select Type of Practices for an Initiative

- ❖ Develop new practices themselves.
- ❖ Adopt practices that have been developed and tested with other programs and which have evidence of effectiveness.
- ❖ Adapt practices that have been developed and tested with other programs and which may have existing evidence or that are developing evidence.

#### Determine Expertise Needed for Professional Development and Technical Assistance

- ❖ Knowledge and time available for state staff to provide technical assistance.
- ❖ Capacity of the state's ABE professional development provider to offer technical assistance.
- ❖ Availability and affordability of hiring external consultants to provide technical assistance.

#### Select Pilot Sites

- ❖ The motivation and interest of programs to participate as a pilot site.
- ❖ The extent of staff's prior experience in developing or implementing new practices.
- ❖ The amount of time staff have available to participate in the pilot test.
- ❖ The capacity of local staff to assess and document new practices as part of the pre-dissemination process in a pilot test.

#### Integrate New Practices into Pilot Sites

- ❖ The "timing" of new practices that will be implemented in the pilot site.
- ❖ Staff's "buy in" for the new practices.
- ❖ Clients' expectations for the new practices.



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# Planning Coordinated Local Services

Once pilot sites have been selected, state adult education staff will need to assist ABE pilot sites in planning the activities that they will implement with their partners as part of the pilot site. Similar to the process used by state partners to decide on a pilot initiative, the AIDDE© planning process can be used to:

- ❖ Analyze client data, current services for clients, and partnerships with local partners; and set their priorities for the pilot test based on the results of these analyses.
- ❖ Identify local partners' common goals and activities, and the approaches that ABE staff and their partners will take in developing and implementing new services.
- ❖ Develop a plan for ABE staff and their partners to use in working together.
- ❖ Document the activities that the ABE staff and their partners carry out as part of the pilot test.
- ❖ Evaluate the results of the new services that were pilot tested.

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## Tool for Planning Coordinated Local Services

State adult education staff and their state partners can facilitate local pilot sites' application of the AIDDE© process by using the Adult Basic Education and Local Partner Planning

Form (see Appendix B). This form can be used in a workshop to guide pilot site staff through each step of the AIDDE© process. The product from using this process is a delineation of the activities that the local partners will conduct for the pilot test, the staff that will be responsible for the activities, the timeline for the activities, and the types of evaluation data that should be collected to assess pilot sites' outcomes from their activities.

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## Models of Local Service Coordination

### ***Models from AECAP Project***

- Cross-referral of Clients
- Targeted Instructional Services
- Integrated ABE/ESL and Occupational Courses

Three models of local services involving ABE staff and partners that address issues of current concern in the delivery of ABE services were tested in the state initiatives that were conducted in the AECAP project. These models are:

- ❖ Cross-referral of clients between ABE programs and One-Stop Career Centers.
- ❖ Targeted instructional services for specific ABE populations.
- ❖ Provision of integrated ABE/ESL and occupational courses as a pathway to employment or postsecondary technical training.

### **Cross-referral of Clients**

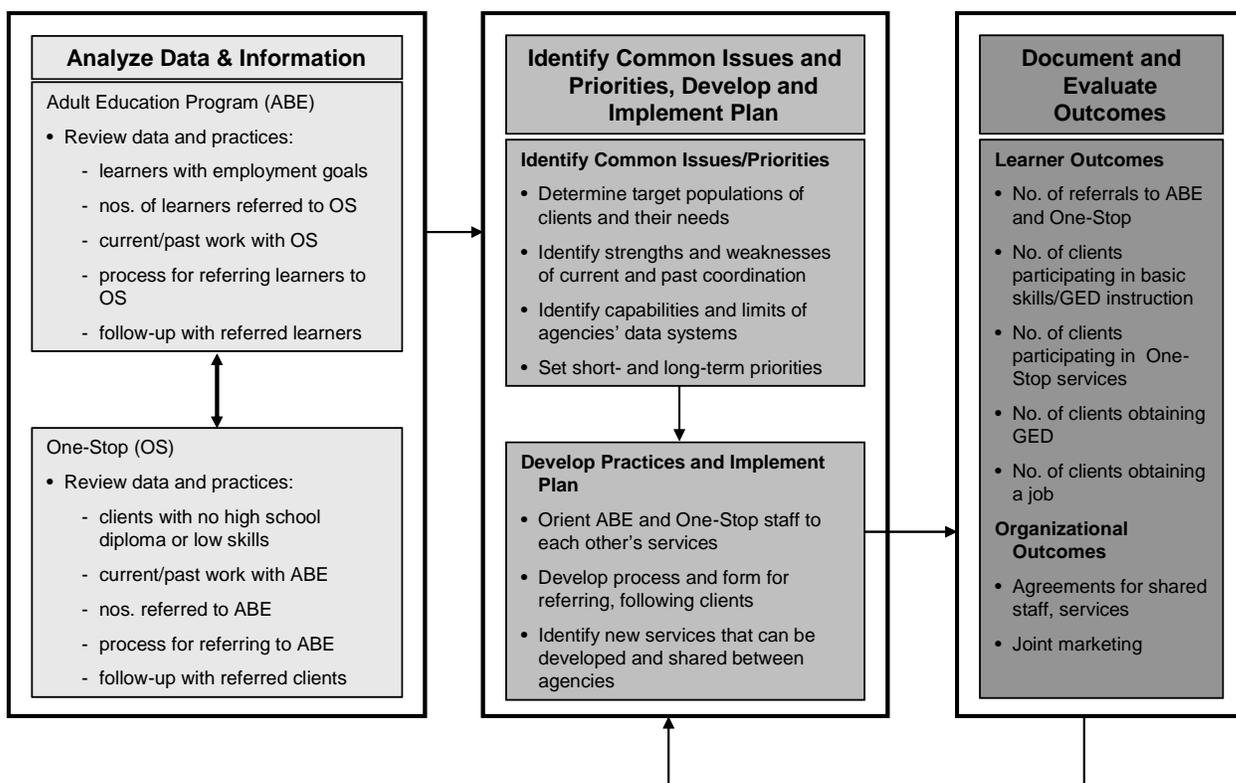
The cross-referral of clients between ABE and One-Stop Career Centers is one strategy for increasing the number of clients served by both local providers. The need for cross-referral of clients is motivated by a number of conditions. Often clients come to ABE programs with the goal of obtaining employment after they have enhanced their basic skills. Sometimes ABE clients also need a job to support themselves while they participate in ABE services. From the perspective of a One-Stop Center, clients seeking employment may not have the skills or credentials necessary to obtain a job and could benefit from participating in ABE services. Promoting coordination between ABE programs and One-Stop Centers in developing systematic processes for cross-referral of clients is

a key activity that state adult education staff and workforce partners should consider.

The first step in the AIDDE© planning process at the local level is for ABE programs and One-Stop providers to examine data that may signal the need for cross-referral of clients. ABE staff can review the number of clients that have specified employment as a primary or secondary goal or talk with clients during the program's intake process to identify whether clients' lack of employment is a barrier to their participation in the ABE program. At One-Stop Centers, staff can determine clients' need for basic skills education during enrollment when prior education is reviewed or when clients are searching for jobs and find that they cannot meet the educational or skill qualifications for the jobs they are seeking. The partners can discuss their current referral activities to determine whether there are any data about the numbers and types of clients who have been referred to the others' services, the types of services these clients have accessed, and clients' outcomes from these services.

Often ABE programs and One-Stop providers do not have existing processes for the cross-referral of clients or systems for tracking these activities. Based on their current cross-referral activities, ABE program staff and One-Stop providers may need to develop new systems for referring clients to the other's services as well as procedures for collecting data about the results from cross-referral activities. The components of the cross-referral process based on the AIDDE© model are presented in Exhibit 2. This exhibit illustrates the activities that were undertaken by the AECAP pilot sites that developed cross-referral processes. The activities that Missouri's two pilot sites conducted in developing cross-referral processes are discussed in the box below Exhibit 2.

## Exhibit 2 AIDDE Framework for Adult Education – One-Stop Coordination



In Missouri's pilot sites, the ABE program and career center directors organized meetings for staff from the two organizations to learn about each others' clients and services. Staff discussed strategies that they could use to identify clients who should be referred to the other service, the staff who would have responsibility for identifying candidate clients for referral, the appropriate point in a client's participation at which to discuss referral to the other services, and the types of "persuasion" points that could be used in talking with clients. The pilot site staff learned to use the Toolbox database that was developed by the State's Division of Workforce Development and had been enhanced to include key data elements from the adult basic education reporting system. They conducted an initial test of the cross-referral process in working with clients and in using Toolbox, and refined their activities based on their initial test. Both sites increased the number of clients who were referred to the other's services during AECAP.

## Targeted Instructional Services

Another area that state adult education staff may consider as the focus for a state initiative is expanding the populations of adults served by ABE providers. As ABE programs strive to serve the range of adults in their communities who could benefit from ABE services, they often must develop targeted services to meet the particular needs of a population of clients. ABE programs may have an opportunity to provide basic skills services to a client population that is not reaching its goals under another service, such as the One-Stop center. Sometimes employers in a community have a need for more skilled employees, or other agencies in a community may have an influx of clients who could benefit from developing their basic skills or English-language skills. These conditions can prompt ABE state staff and local providers to be aware of local conditions that may indicate a need for new or specialized services.

The First Coast Technical Institute (FCTI) and WorkSource in St. Augustine, FL worked together to address two issues: 1) FCTI—the area’s ABE provider, wanted to increase the number of clients attaining their General Educational Development (GED), and 2) WorkSource—north Florida’s One-Stop provider, wanted to increase the number of clients it was able to place in jobs. WorkSource found that the low (3%) unemployment rate of the region meant that employers were requiring job applicants to have a GED. Some clients coming to WorkSource in search of a job did not have a GED, and while they were encouraged to obtain a GED at FCTI, most did not want to attend GED instruction there because FCTI served primarily young adults.

FCTI and WorkSource worked together in developing a GED-Work Readiness Class for clients without a GED and who were unemployed or were seeking better jobs. WorkSource and FCTI both advertised the class to their clients and WorkSource reviewed past client files to identify individuals who might be candidates for the class. WorkSource staff also wrote and taught a work-readiness component for the class. FCTI trained WorkSource staff to administer the TABE placement test, developed and taught the GED preparation component of the class, and assisted WorkSource in developing the work readiness component. WorkSource provided space for the class and worked with employers to identify jobs for clients completing their GED.

Critical steps in the success of FCTI’s and WorkSource’s coordination were:

- 1) specifying the appropriate client population for the GED-Work Readiness class based on the TABE score and employment goal;
- 2) customizing the instruction to address clients’ needs for GED preparation coursework and work readiness information; and
- 3) working together to plan activities, address challenges, recruit clients, and engage clients while they waited for their GED results.

ABE staff can identify these potential clients and service needs when they analyze a variety of data about client populations regarding individuals' work status or age. The work status of individuals may signal a possible need for ABE services, such as when employed adults have jobs that require a higher level of skills than they currently possess or when adults are seeking a job promotion that requires a new skill set. Dislocated workers or unemployed adults often need further basic skills education to obtain employment. Age is another variable that can indicate a potential target population for ABE services. As the number of older workers increases in the next 15 years, there is likely to be an increased need for worker retraining that will involve a component of basic skills instruction.

## **Integrated ABE/ESL and Occupational Courses**

Increasingly, ABE programs are considering the development of integrated ABE/ESL occupational courses as part of a strategy to assist ABE clients in transitioning to postsecondary education, training, or employment. This type of instruction is thought to be motivational and informative to clients as they learn about job tasks required for various occupations. With the increase in skills and educational requirements for jobs, ABE programs have an opportunity to provide basic skills instruction that can facilitate adults' pathways to employment or further education. As local labor markets change, ABE programs may be able to develop customized instruction. Such instruction would incorporate basic skills and occupational information to address the needs for new skills prompted by these labor market changes.

The development of integrated ABE/ESL and occupation courses is an illustrative example of an instructional practice for a state initiative. Integrated curriculum development requires coordination between local ABE program staff and postsecondary institutions as well as with the business community in identifying the levels of basic skills needed for various occupations and the types of job tasks that can be used as applications in the curriculum. Staff expertise is needed to write curriculum that incorporates current information on research-based instruction in basic skills, use methods for designing effective lesson plans, and develop assessments for measuring progress that are customized to the curriculum.

To determine the potential for developing basic skills instruction that integrates occupational information, ABE staff can review local labor market data and the types of training programs offered by postsecondary institutions. This information combined with clients' employment goals and employment status may indicate the need for new instructional services.

The AECAP project provided two examples of local coordination in the development of career pathways that incorporated the development of integrated ESL and occupational courses.

In Maryland, Montgomery College and Montgomery Works worked together to increase the number of English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) clients referred from Montgomery College to the Montgomery Works' Sales and Service Learning Center (SSLC). Montgomery Works—the local One-Stop provider, offered an ESOL Customer Service Training course in the SSLC that had been developed by the National Retail Federation and Equipped for the Future. This curriculum integrates training on customer service job skills with ESOL instruction. Montgomery College—the local ABE provider, had ESOL clients who needed employment-related services that were not provided by the college. Furthermore, the ESOL customer service classes at the SSLC were not fully subscribed, while at the same time some learners were being placed on a waiting list for ESOL classes at Montgomery College.

Montgomery College and Montgomery Works conducted a number of activities to develop an effective integrated course. After an initial pilot test of the Customer Service curriculum, the staff set entrance scores for the class, using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Reading and Listening tests, and targeted intermediate-level ESOL learners (as defined by the U.S. Department of Education's National Reporting System). They offered a series of classes at the SSLC that were eight weeks long and had a total of 100 hours of instruction. To assist clients in using the One-Stop services and preparing for job interviews, staff developed a component to the class, called "Support for Education and Employment" (SEE). Job fairs were conducted at the SSLC and several clients were placed in jobs after completing the Customer Service class. The Montgomery College and Montgomery Works staff revised the Customer Service Curriculum to increase the ESOL content in the context of sales and service applications to meet Maryland's ESOL standards, incorporated job readiness content, and developed a Teacher's Guide. The curriculum is now available through Maryland's Adult Literacy Resource Website, [www.gogedgo.org](http://www.gogedgo.org).

In Washington State, Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC) worked with the South Central Workforce Council, the Sunnyside Community Services Office, and the Sunnyside Employment Security Division to develop employment pathways for clients through their participation in education. As part of the implementation of the governor's Comprehensive Evaluation, TANF clients were assessed

using the CASAS system. Based on their performance on CASAS and their interest in the allied health professions, clients had the opportunity to participate in a Nurses' Assistant Certification (NAC) training programs that was conducted by YVCC. The NAC program had three components: 1) classroom instruction, 2) clinical instruction, and a certification test. Of the 16 clients who participated in the NAC pilot test, 81 percent of the clients who enrolled in the NAC course completed the course; 85 percent of those who completed the course also completed clinical instruction and passed the NAC test; and 73 percent of clients who completed all requirements obtained employment.



## Conclusion

State adult education staff have a critical opportunity to lead their state systems in initiating coordinated activities with partners at the state level and facilitating ABE programs' development of coordinated services with their local partners. The goals of ABE system expansion and improved quality of services will continue to be key priorities for state adult education leaders. As the emphasis on adult basic education as a linchpin to low-skilled adults' postsecondary education, training, and employment increases, state adult education staff's capacity to use the planning and coordination processes discussed in this guide will be important for their success in establishing and maintaining productive partnerships. The lessons from the AECAP project provided tested strategies and rich examples of ways in which adult basic education state staff and state partners can leverage their partnerships to enhance adult basic education and workforce development services.





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# Appendices



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# Appendix A State Adult Education and Partner Planning Form

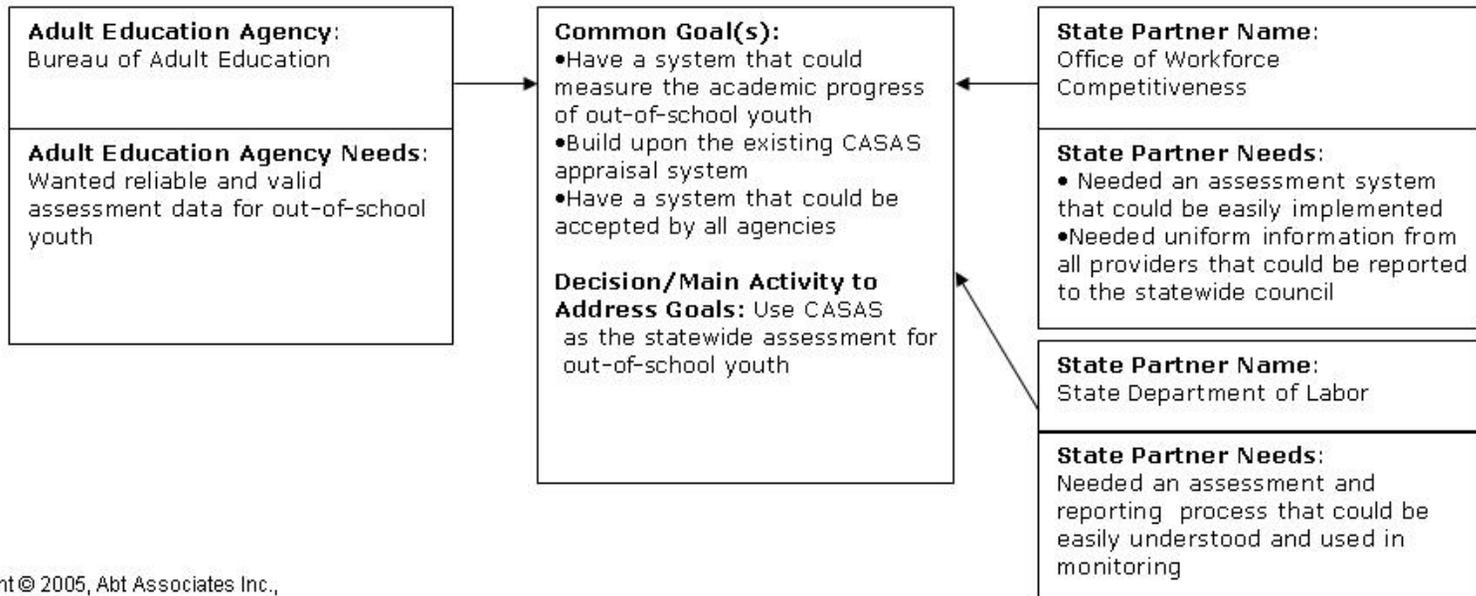


## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: Needs, Goals, and Coordination Focus Worksheet #1: Illustrative Example from Connecticut

**Instructions:** In the boxes below, identify the adult education issue(s) that you will address and the data or information that support or verify this issue. In addition, please identify the state-level agencies and organizations that will work together on the issue and the state partners' common goal(s) in addressing this issue.

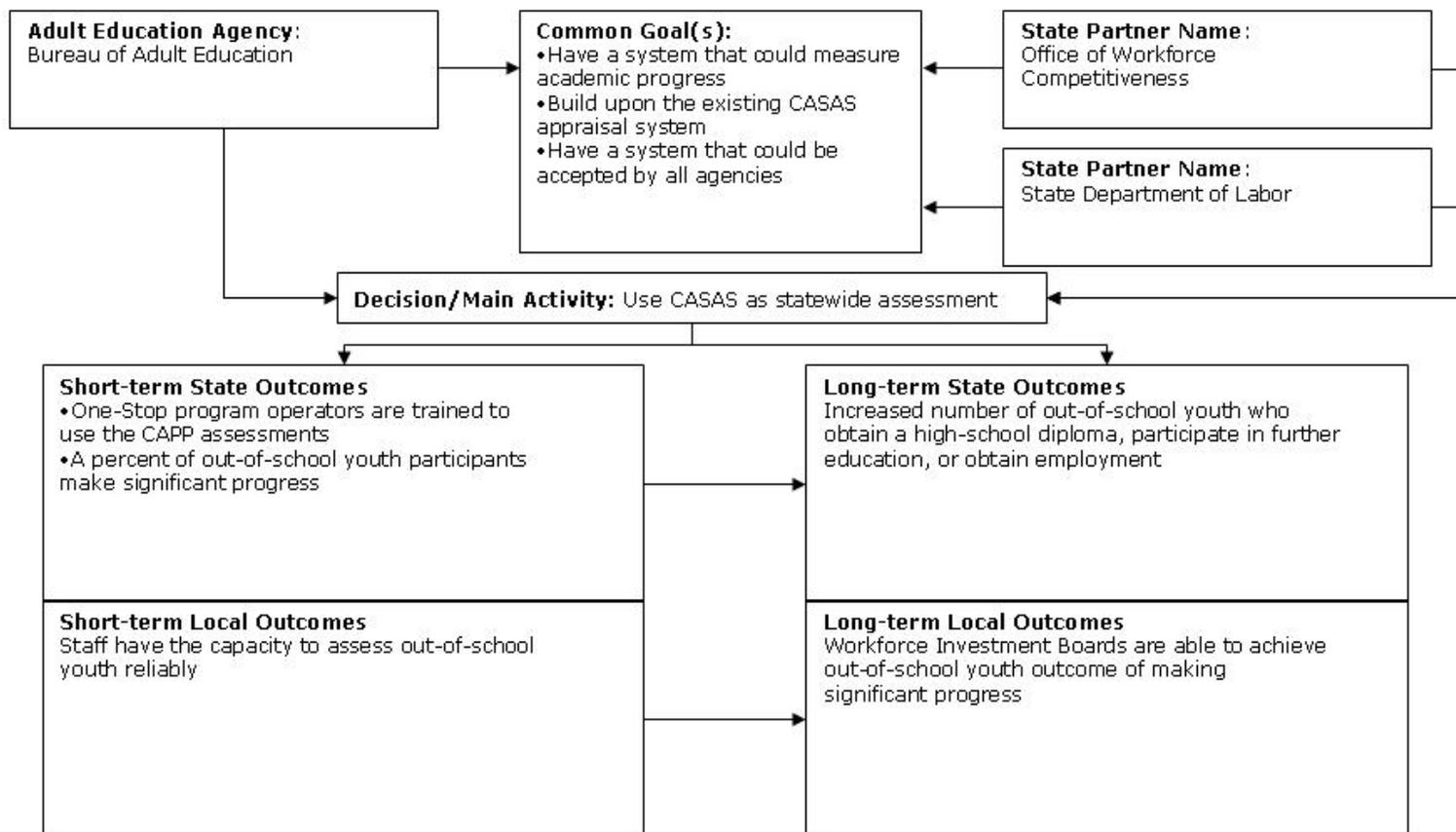
**Identified Issue(s):** As part of the early implementation of WIA, there was a need for a statewide assessment that local Workforce Boards could use to determine the academic skills of out-of-school youth, 16-21 years of age. The Workforce Boards needed data that could be reported across programs.

**Supporting Data:** 1) The state's Bureau of Adult Education had developed a statewide competency assessment system (CAPP) that included CASAS, and had used CAPP in a prior interagency initiative, Coordinated Education and Training Opportunities (CETO); 2) Through the use of CAPP, data were able to be reported across program years.



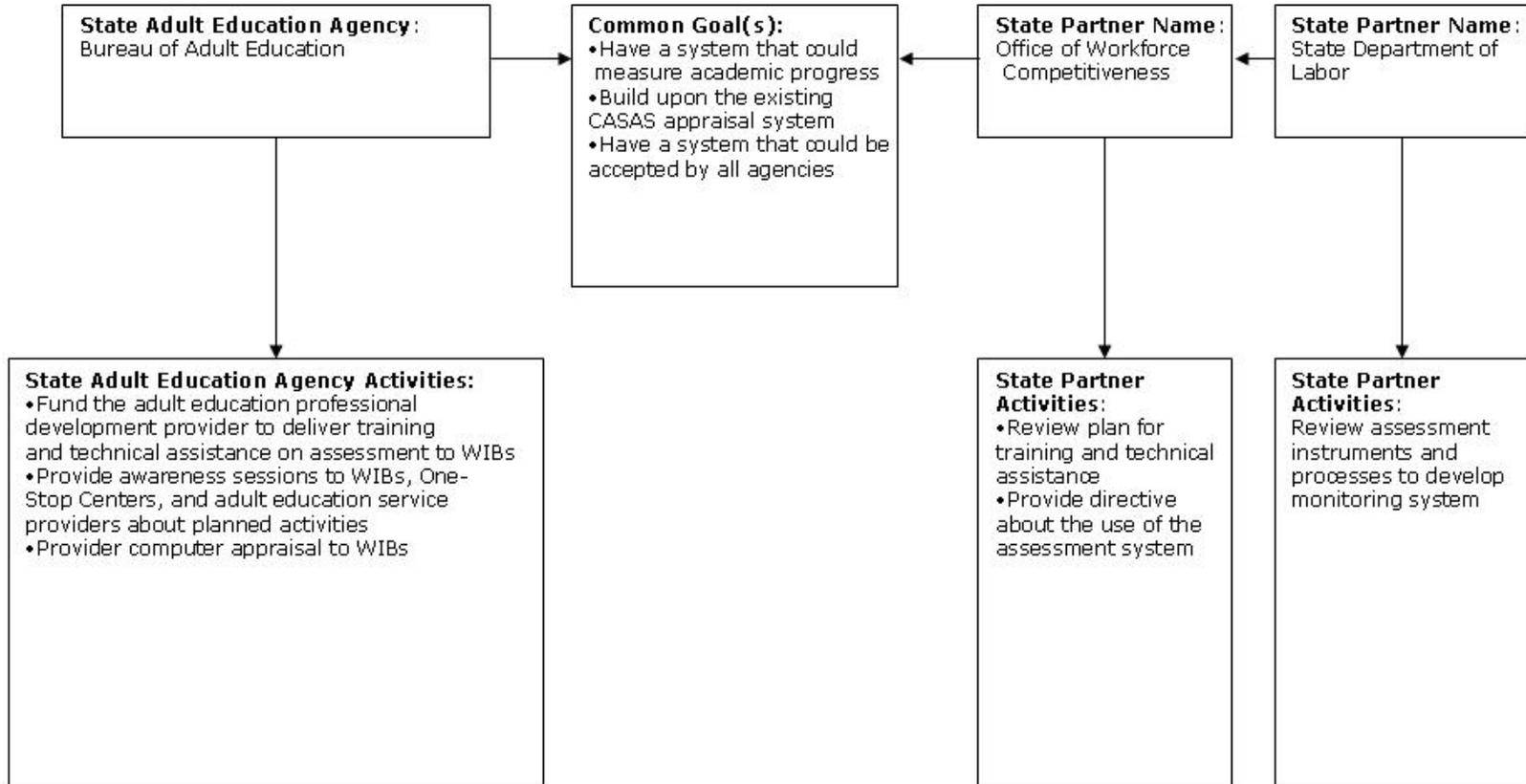
## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: Outcomes from Coordination Worksheet #2: Illustrative from Connecticut

**Instructions:** List below the names of the partner agencies/organizations and the partners' common goal(s) from Worksheet #1. In the box labeled Short-term Outcomes, list the outcomes the state partners expect to accomplish by (specify timeline), as well as the outcomes that local adult education programs and their partners might achieve. In the box labeled Long-term Outcomes, list the outcomes the state partners expect to achieve (specify timeline), as well as the outcomes that local adult education programs and their partners might achieve.



## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: State-Level Activities Worksheet #3: Illustrative Example from Connecticut

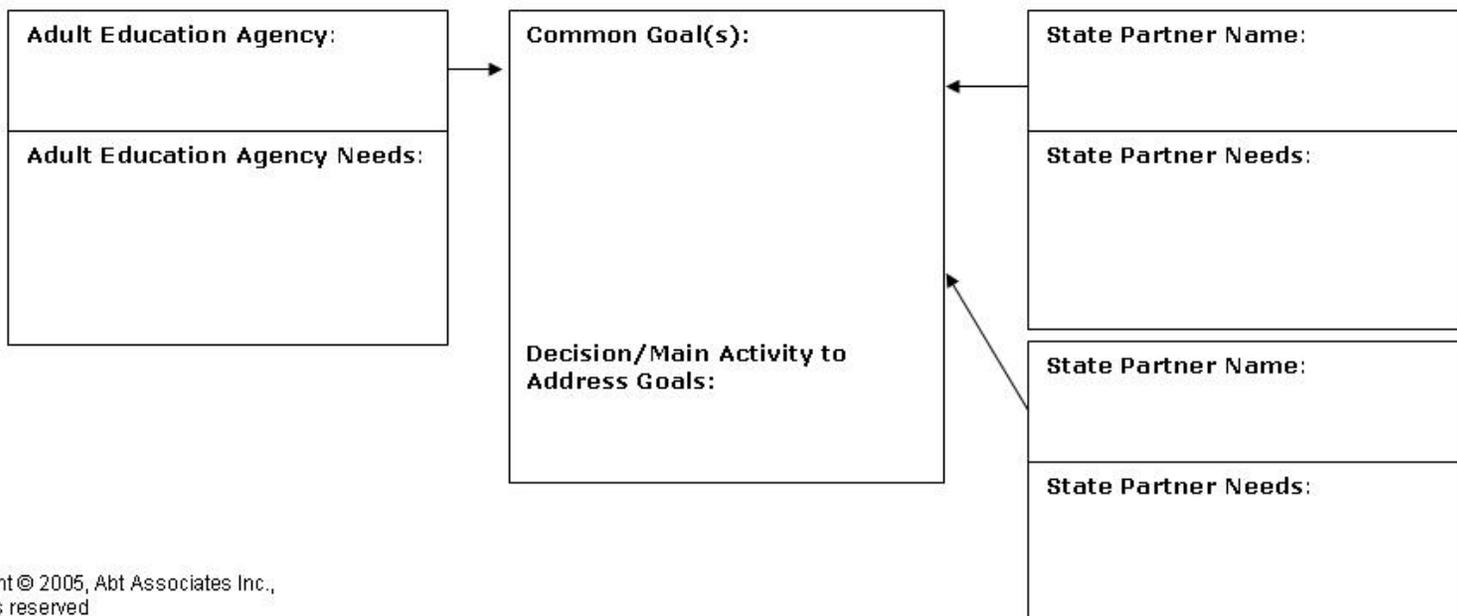
**Instructions:** List the names of the partner agencies/organizations and the partners' common goal(s) from Worksheet #1. Below that, list the activities that the state adult education agency and each of the partners will undertake during the period of planned coordination.



## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: Needs, Goals, and Coordination Focus Worksheet #1

**Instructions:** In the boxes below, identify the adult education issue(s) that you will address and the data or information that support or verify this issue. In addition, identify the state-level agencies and organizations that will work together on the issue and the state partners' common goal(s) in addressing this issue.

<b>Identified Issue(s):</b>
<b>Supporting Data:</b>



## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: Outcomes from Coordination Worksheet #2

**Instructions:** List below the names of the partner agencies/organizations and the partners' common goal(s) from Worksheet #1. In the box labeled Short-term Outcomes, list the outcomes the state partners expect to accomplish by (specify timeline), as well as the outcomes that local adult education programs and their partners might achieve. In the box labeled Long-term Outcomes, list the outcomes the state partners expect to achieve after (specify timeline), and the outcomes that local adult education programs and their partners might achieve.

```

graph TD
    A[Adult Education Agency:] --> C[Common Goal(s):]
    B1[State Partner Name:] --> C
    B2[State Partner Name:] --> C
    C --> D[Decision/Main Activity:]
    A --> D
    B1 --> D
    B2 --> D
    D --> E[Short-term State Outcomes:]
    D --> F[Long-term State Outcomes:]
    E --> G[Short-term Local Outcomes:]
    F --> H[Long-term Local Outcomes:]
  
```

## State Adult Education and Partner Planning: State-Level Activities Worksheet #3

**Instructions:** List in the boxes the names of the partner agencies/organizations and the partners' common goal(s) from Worksheet #1. Below that, list the activities that the state adult education agency and each of the partners will undertake during the period of planned coordination.

```
graph TD; Agency[State Adult Education Agency] --> Goals[Common Goal(s)]; Partner1[State Partner Name] --> Goals; Partner2[State Partner Name] --> Goals; Agency --> AgencyAct[State Adult Education Agency Activities]; Partner1 --> Partner1Act[State Partner Activities]; Partner2 --> Partner2Act[State Partner Activities];
```





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## **Appendix B    Local Adult Education and Partner Planning Form**



## Adult Basic Education Program and Partner Planning Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **Adult Education Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **Partner Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** This form is to be completed jointly by local adult basic education program staff and workforce partners in planning a coordinated activity to address a common need. For some questions, each partner may have a different response. Space is provided for both partners' responses.

1. List the area of your program's services or operations that will be the focus of your coordinated activity.

Adult Education:

Workforce:

2. List the problem or issue about this area that you are trying to address.

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 3a. List the data or other information that you reviewed about your program's services to identify the problem that you would like to address. You may have problems or issues related to adult education clients and/or issues related to adults seeking services at the One-Stop. If the adult education and workforce partners identified different problems or issues, please provide information for both.

<i>Adult Ed. Example: Problem</i>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Data/Information Reviewed</b>	<b>Conclusion about Problem</b>
30% of students drop out before they reach 12 hours of attendance	Are students ABE, ESL, and what ages?	From the database, 40% are ESL and 20% are ABE; 65% are under 25 years of age	We need to review our orientation and intake processes at the main campus and satellite sites to determine what is happening with our younger students.

**Your Problem:**

<b>Problem (Specify Adult Ed. or Workforce</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Data/Information Reviewed</b>	<b>Conclusion about Problem</b>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

- 3b. Based on the data and information that you reviewed to clarify the problem in your organization, list processes or practices in your organization that will be the focus of this plan.**

**Example:** The organization's orientation and intake processes will be the focus of this improvement plan. For the orientation, we will review how orientation is provided, the information that is distributed, and what clients are told to do after the orientation. We also will examine all of the steps in the intake process—the interview with clients, administration of the CASAS placement test, how the results are given to clients, how goals are set—to determine whether key steps are missing.

Program's Area of Focus:

New Processes or Practices:

- 4. Currently, what activities does your organization conduct to address the problem or issue that is the focus of your coordinated activity (e.g., how is intake conducted—who conducts it, what is the order of the activities—interview, testing)? If you currently are not conducting any activities to address the issue that is the focus of your coordinated activity, please indicate this**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 5a. Which group of clients (e.g., clients in age range 18-25) is the target population for the AECAP coordinated activity?**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 5b. What new practices, procedures, or materials will you use in your organization to improve services or address the problem listed above?**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 6. In what ways do you believe this new practice or procedure will improve your organization?**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 7. Which staff (name and function—e.g., instructor, counselor) will implement the new practice or procedure?**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 8. Will staff from any other part of your organization or another agency need to be involved? If yes, who are they?**

Adult Education:

Workforce:

- 9. What resources—e.g., training, materials, additional space, or other items are needed for the new activity?**

Adult Education:

Fiscal Resources:

Administrative Authority (Who needs to approve the use of the new practice?)

Training:

New Policies:

New Information:

External Expertise/Consultant:

Workforce:

Fiscal Resources:

Administrative Authority (Who needs to approve the use of the new practice?)

Training:

New Policies:

New Information:  
External Expertise/Consultant:

10. List the key steps that you will undertake in planning to use the new practice or procedure and the timeline for these steps.

<b>Steps (add your steps after the examples)</b>	<b>Beginning Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
<b>Examples</b>		
Locate and obtain materials	Oct. 15	Oct. 31
Learn how to use new practice/procedure	Nov. 1	Nov. 9
Integrate new practice into current practice	Nov. 10	Ongoing
<b>Your Steps</b>		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

11. What are the client outcomes or program outcomes (e.g. more systematic referral and follow-up process) that you expect to result from these activities? What types of data can be collected to determine whether these outcomes are achieved?

Adult Education:

Expected Outcomes:  
Data That Can Be Collected:

Workforce:

Expected Outcomes:  
Data That Can Be Collected: