



Implementing Integrated Education and Training (IET) in Rural Settings

Responses to Questions Posed in the Webinar Chat Box

Responses from Linda Allen, Regional Program Manager, SW Regional Adult Education, VA

Q: How many students are there in each cohort? What is the time frame for this program?

A: Cohorts have ranged in size from 8 to 22 students. The health care and advanced manufacturing cohorts have had the largest enrollment.

Q: Was the 150 dollars provided for each participant given by the state program or by the industry partners?

A: The \$150.00 clothing allowance is provided through local funds.

Q: Are you using ACT Work Keys in all your programs as the Career Readiness Certificate?

A: Yes.

Responses from Pat Thomas, Director of Adult Education at SW ABE/Marshall, MN

Q: What services are each of the providers providing to meet the IET needs of English Language Learners?

A: In Marshall, for individuals with lower literacy skills we are using what we call “Learning Thru Sharing” to better meet their needs. This program is supported in part with a Civics grant we received and the idea came from our Welfare to Work Workforce partner. It is program in which ABE and Workforce join forces with their expertise and knowledge to better prepare ESL students for the world of work. Four days a week we provide ESL classes that focus on sharing workforce language and skills. Opportunities are given to these ESL students each week to go into the community to participate in volunteer opportunities that allow students to experience different career fields. Activities vary from working at the library, working with food prep at the Senior Center, working at a Thrift shop, working in a community garden. We have seen students gaining greater confidence to obtain a job plus having a better understanding of the type of work they want to have in this country. More information can be found describing this program at: <http://www.southwestabe.org/learning-thru-sharing-1>

Q: Healthcare bridge - What are TABE/CASAS/reading/language levels and required digital literacy skills of learners? How many who enroll do in fact have the self-mgt, digital and literacy skills to succeed in the online tool?

A: We have found that CASAS 230-235 is needed in reading to be successful in the CNA class. We use the North Star digital literacy assessment to assess this skill. This tool can be found at <https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/> Assignments are given in Learner Web (a purchased program) to address weakness or a student can work with our computer instructor for personal/hands on help. All who have met the Reading “cut score,” if they have a lack of digital literacy skills, receive staff help to gain the skills to be successful using these digital tools. We find that the majority of individuals having a reading CASAS of 230 or better have sufficient digital skills or with staff help can gain those skills quickly to use these tools.

Q: Is the funding student-based? For example, does the funding for the program originate with whichever program the student is eligible for or do all the programs join to fund the program together?

A: In MN we have a forward funded State ABE financial system. We are very blessed in this State as our legislature has decided that investing in Adult Education is a wise move to keep our economy going. When I say forward funded I mean that in the summer of this year I knew what my state funding was for this year of 7/1/16 through 6/30/2017. This funding is determined through 4 different categories: 1. how many student contact hours our program created the previous year, 2. population aide for the region we serve 3. how many ESL students are in the K12 system in the area we serve and 4. the number of individuals over the age of 25 without a high school diploma in our region.

In our Career Pathway work our three major partners are ABE, Workforce, and the Community College. We together seek grants to do our work and have been very successful in that endeavor. When we have students ready to do a training, each of us looks first at any funding we have access to through our system to pay for the training costs. If none are found, then grant funds are used. I have used my general ABE program funds to pay for trainings for an individual that is not eligible for any other sources of revenue.

Q: How are students who are not able to access computers and the internet served?

A: Students can come to our computer lab while we are open. Our library has our website bookmarked to allow students easy access to our Digital tools, plus they waive the one-hour time limit when working on school material, and when our public school made more technology equipment available to their students, parents of these students may use their child's equipment.

Q: Is Learner Web a subscription/purchased product or is it like BlackBoard where teachers develop the curriculum?

A: Learner Web is a purchased program. You can find out more about this tool at <http://www.learnerweb.org/infosite/> In our State we can count proxy hours that are generated through Distance Learning programs that have been State approved. Learner Web is one such program. Being rural we know that distance and ABE class schedules make attending class a challenge so we have tried as much as possible to find Distance Learning programs that will complement instruction students receive in the classroom. Financially for us it is a wise decision as Proxy hours created through these tools pay for the cost of the tool quickly. In 2014-2015 over 10% of our student contact hours came from Distance Learning tools.

Responses from Lyn Michaud Smith, Academic Coord. at Eastern Aroostook RSU #39, ME

Q: How do you get enough students to run separate math and other classes for each specific career interest area?

A: We do not run separate math classes, we have differentiated and contextualized classes. Our instruction is centered around the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education and it is easy to bring in trade-specific content to work on standards instead of multiple stand-alone courses. We may have some students working on the same standards and material at a level C for introduction and others at a level D or E.