

Program Administrative Handbook for Local Directors
Adult Education
Wyoming
Chapter 7: The AE Instructor & Professional Development

I. Quality Staffing

WIOA Section 231 (e) (9) indicates that grants awarded for AEFLA activities must consider the ability of each provider to employ well-trained instructors who possess the skills necessary to successfully delivery instruction to qualified learners and have access to high quality provisional development, including through electronic means. State efforts to meet this mandate are discussed in subsequent sections below.

A. Staff Qualifications

Local programs are encouraged to employ instructors and directors with known competencies. These may be demonstrated through college transcripts, successful completion of local testing, or teacher certification whether currently active or inactive.

B. New Instructors



Forms

As part of the competitive grant competition, local providers are required to submit a completed **Instructor Information** form for each instructor employed by the program. Thereafter, new instructors are required to complete the form as well. All completed forms must be submitted to the State with hard copies being maintained locally as these are submitted for the State monitoring process. The form is available in both Chapter 13 as well as on the Commission's [website](#).

A secondary required form that must be completed by new instructors and any other staff who will be accessing the LACES database, is the **Confidentiality Agreement**. The signed original must be retained locally and is to be submitted to the State once completed. The form is available in both Chapter 13 as well as on the Commission's [website](#).

New Instructor Checklist

During a new instructor's ninth week of employment, the State recommends that the instructor complete the New Instructor Checklist. This will help the local director identify gaps in the new instructor's training that need to be addressed. The form is available in both Chapter 13 as well as on the Commission's [website](#).

New Instructor Checklist

Adapted from LEA

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMY

Name of Instructor: _____ Program: _____

Recommendations: Self-assessment is to be completed during the 9th week of employment. Pre-requisites: Pre-service training, mentoring support, and the completion of New Teacher Training modules available on the Commission's website.

Directions: All of us come into adult education sideways. All of us have a lot to learn about teaching adults regardless of how much experience we have. As a new instructor, don't feel overwhelmed as you review this checklist. You are NOT expected to know how to do everything on this list. The purpose of this self-review is to identify and prioritize those items that you would like to learn more about during the next eight months. We will do our best to provide you with the support you need to do so.

Component	Skill Knowledge As a new adult education instructor, I.....	Feel OK with this:	Need Additional Training
Introduction to the Adult Learner	1. Understand the demographics and characteristics of adult students.		
	2. Understand the fundamentals of adult learning theory and its impact on teaching adult learners.		
	3. Understand the instructor's role in effectively serving adult students.		
My Adult Education Program	1. Am aware of the philosophy and mission of my local adult education program.		
	2. Understand the organizational structure of my local adult education program and the types of services available to students.		
	3. Have an introductory understanding of the federal and state legislation that supports the adult education program.		
	4. Have a working knowledge of the requirements of the National Reporting System (NRS).		
Recruitment, Intake, and the Career Services Course	1. Understand my role in student recruitment.		
	2. Understand how intake, the career services course, and the registration of new students takes place.		
	3. Understand how cultural differences impact social and educational intake procedures.		
	4. Know which forms must be present in the student and/or instructor folder.		
	5. Understand the state's pre-post testing requirements.		
	6. Understand the state's system for the age waiver process.		
	7. Understand how to keep all standardized tests, answer keys, and instructor's manuals secure at all times.		
	8. Am able to administer required standardized tests according to the test publisher's protocol (if applicable).		
	9. Have completed TABE 11/12 training and have earned my certificate.		
	10. Understand the system for identifying students who need to be post-tested.		
	11. Know how to use standardized test results to assign an educational functioning level and how it applies to classroom placement.		
	12. Understand how to provide career counseling when applicable to students.		
	13. Understand the state's referral process to ensure complete wrap-around services are provided to students.		

Component	Skill Knowledge As a new adult education instructor, I.....	Feel OK with this:	Need Additional Training
Planning, Delivering, and Re-planning Instruction	1. Know how to utilize a student's individual career goals to contextualize instruction.		
	2. Understand different learning styles and activities appropriate for each learning preference.		
	3. Know how to use standardized test results to select appropriate curriculum materials.		
	4. Know what an individual learning plan/individual learning map looks like and how to develop it with student input.		
	5. Understand the basic components of an effective lesson plan.		
	6. Can identify good teaching strategies to use with specific adult populations?		
	7. Understand the difference between instructor-centered and student-centered instruction.		
	8. Understand the importance and use of multi-sensory approaches and teaching methods.		
	9. Understand the system for identifying and serving special needs students, including students from multi-lingual and multi-cultural backgrounds.		
	10. Understand effective classroom management strategies including handling of multi-levelled multi-subject classrooms.		
	11. Know how to use formal and informal assessment data to monitor learner progress.		
	12. Have a list of support services and know how to refer students.		
	13. Understand how to give students feedback and evaluation of class work in order to keep students progressing.		
	14. Have been exposed to classroom resources and instructional materials and know where to access additional resources.		
	15. Am familiar with computer software programs used as part of the program's distance learning component.		
	16. Understand factors that promote learner persistence.		
	Collecting, Documenting, and Reporting Student Achievement	17. Have a process for evaluating student data and student feedback to adapt my instructional delivery.	
1. Understand the purpose and usefulness of student data.			
2. Understand the importance and impact of helping students set realistic short-term and NRS related goals.			
3. Know how to use formal and informal assessment data to document learner progress.			
4. Can identify each reporting form and explain its purpose.			
5. Can accurately complete and submit forms/data required by my program.			
Understanding Policies & Procedures	6. Understand my responsibilities in the follow-up of students for post-exit outcome measures.		
	1. Understand student confidentiality issues, including: a. Completion of the release of information on the intake form b. Handling of incoming calls to students and/or visits to class by friends or relatives and c. The type of information that is public record		
	2. Understand the student code of conduct.		
	3. Can locate, understand, complete, and submit required forms and paperwork.		
	4. Understand relevant state and local policies and procedures.		
5. Can identify the five parts of the HSEC examination and the procedures surrounding these exams for accommodations, registration, and collective assessment results.			

New Staff Training Modules

The State has three types of training modules available on the [website](#).



New instructors/directors are expected to complete the appropriate State supported training modules along with any local program trainings within the first six months of employment.

Every part-time and full-time teacher/instructor/tutor who is responsible for instruction to AE students must attend the locally sponsored New Teacher Training for Adult Education (AE) within 6 months of hire. This training must include an Overview of ABE, NRS Accountability, Orientation procedure, Enrollment/Intake process, Assessment training (TABE), Career Explorations/Career Planning/Career Assessments/Career Counseling (when applicable), Data Collection, Learning Disabilities, Lesson Planning, High School Equivalency Examination information, Civics education (where applicable) and Resources for AE.

ESL New Teacher Training for instructors must include TABE CLAS-E for those who will be giving these assessments if that is part of the instructor's responsibility.

II. Teacher Training for Reading, Math and Writing Instruction

Every part-time and full-time teacher/instructor/tutor is encouraged to attend reading, math, and writing training whenever possible. These subject areas may be covered in locally supported workshops, conferences, or classes. They must take into consideration adult learning principles. The reading training is to include the Essential Components of Reading which focuses on alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension for adults. Math must be research-based or evidence-based approaches for adults learning basic math skills. And writing must include strategies for writing in the environment the students goals describe i.e. for work, digital literacy, post secondary education, and daily living.

III. Dissemination of Best Practices



WIOA Section 242 (C) requires that local programs develop, replicate and disseminate information on best practices and innovations such as:

- 1) The identification of effective strategies for working with adults with learning disabilities and with adults who are English language learners
- 2) Integrated education and training programs
- 3) Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- 4) Postsecondary education and training programs

Because of this local instructors are expected to share promising practices at conferences (state, regional or national), through publications or other means. During monthly director's meetings, local directors are also afforded the opportunity to share promising practices that are occurring in their site.

A. DWS/AE 'Meet and Greet' Meetings

Once per quarter all local directors and workforce managers throughout the State meet virtually in what is called a 'Meet and Greet' to share promising practices that are occurring in the region.

Local programs need to plan and track on LACES each time a staff member participates in one of these activities.

IV. Professional Development

A. Introduction



Teaching and learning that meets the expectations of college- and career-ready standards is challenging, intellectually-demanding work. High-quality instructional materials are one essential resource for bringing the standards to life. In order to make this happen, teacher professional learning is **essential** to success—for planning instruction that translates the learning expectations into rich learning experiences for students, and for using student learning data to continuously improve practice.

The state office of Adult Education (AE) places a significant emphasis on staff development to enable each adult education staff member to meet the needs of their students. The state office also funds a statewide training on initiatives to guide staff development activities locally.

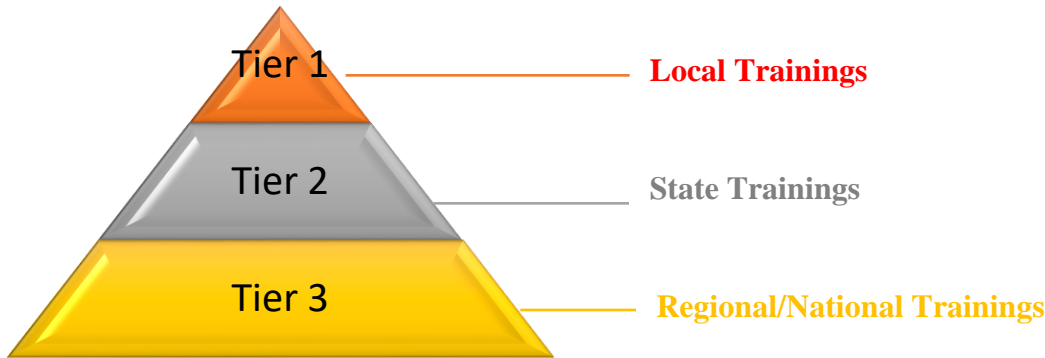
It is recommended that each staff member develop a professional development plan at the time of submitting the program's professional development proposals for the budget.

B. Identifying Instructor Professional Development Needs

Local programs are required to have a system in place to identify instructor’s professional development needs. The State does not have a uniform system for this as each provider is free to utilize local college, correctional, or other governing body protocols for the identification of PD needs. However, the State has provided sample Instructor Self-Evaluations which can be used for this purpose. These are available on the Commission’s website or in Chapter 13. Once PD needs are identified, the local director must plan and budget for this.

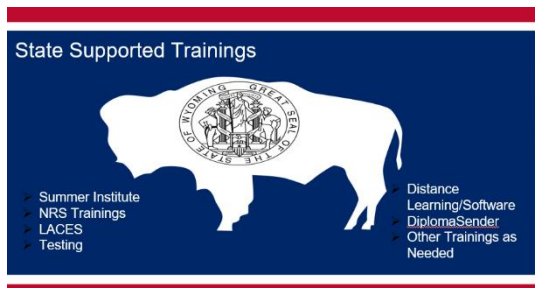
C. Three-Tier System for Professional Development

Wyoming utilizes a three-tiered system for planning and addressing programmatic professional development needs.



Local Trainings

Local trainings can include in-service, meetings with staff, etc. on topics related to program improvement, program performance or any other topic of relevance to the local program. The costs associated with these trainings are the responsibility of the local program and any costs related to such activity should be covered by the local budget unless other arrangements have been made in advance. A list of local in-service topics offered will be sent to the state office with the year-end report.



State Trainings

State sponsored trainings include the State institute, LACES trainings, and any other specialized trainings deemed necessary by the State.

Wyoming’s AE programs utilize LACES as the database for collecting data and for reporting purposes. It is the responsibility of the local program to train staff on how to enter and access relevant information from this database. The State provides local programs with multiple LACES trainings throughout the year at no cost to the program. These trainings include at least one face-to-face meeting and multiple mini-webinars. In addition, at the end of the year each local provider receives a one-on-one review with the LACES trainer to review end of year program data for accuracy and validity. In addition, should a local program need specialized LACES training, this is also available but the cost of this type of training is the responsibility of the local program.

Attendance at Annual Conference/Summer Institute

1. Eighty percent (80%) attendance at the annual Adult Education Institute is expected. Institute attendance is expected of all instructional staff. Volunteers who are currently helping in the program and need in-service are also welcome.
2. Attendance costs related to the Institute are an allowable budget cost unless these costs are reimbursed by other sources.
3. Attendance for each instructional support staff (volunteer) is recorded in the AE instructor portfolio/file and must be recorded in LACES.
4. Mileage, lodging, and additional meals are the responsibility of the local programs.

State Sponsored In-service Meetings

1. If the state AE office sponsors an in-service/meeting, it will be the responsibility of the state office to reimburse the cost unless the costs are covered by local budgets or other sources.
2. Attendance for in-services is recorded by a sign-in sheet.
3. From time to time the state will ask programs to suggest or volunteer instructors for special training opportunities. The out-of-state travel and lodging is covered by leadership funds the state has set aside for this purpose. Generally there is a requirement for those sponsored to come back to the state and disseminate what they have learned. These arrangements should be determined ahead of any training/meeting.

Regional/National Trainings

Regional and national trainings can include participation/enrollment in LINCS courses, COABE, MPAEA conferences, NRS trainings, and/or any other trainings that a staff member may be interested in pursuing. Planning for all three levels must occur and is part of the budgetary process described in the fiscal chapter.

Through the LINCS Community of Practice, self-paced ONLINE courses, and searchable resources, adult education practitioners nationwide, harness the power of collaboration and sharing to improve educational outcomes.



The [LINCS network](#), supported by OCTAE, is a free resource available to all AE instructors. As courses are completed, instructors are required to submit copies of earned certificates to the program director who must retain a copy in the local instructors' file. These are subject to audit by the State. Once a certificate is completed the information must also be entered into LACES.



[COABE](#) is a national coalition for Adult Education that promotes, advocates, and conducts literacy and lifelong education efforts. Throughout the year, COABE sponsors webinars and trainings on various topics that are considered free resource to all individuals with a membership. Resources available from COABE include lesson plans, videos, apps, conference presentations, and various other professional development resources. The COABE yearly conference is one that many Adult Education staff look forward to as it presents opportunities to connect with other Adult Education staff throughout the country while learning about promising practices taking place in other AE programs. Participation in this conference is typically grant or institutionally funded and is planned for through the 3-tier planning tool that directors use for budgeting purposes.

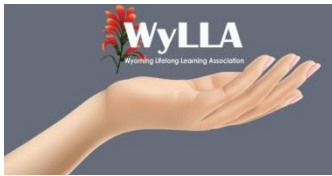


The [Mountain Plains Adult Education Association](#) serves members in a nine-state region. The original charter and founding policies were developed in 1945. The four original states were Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. In 1961, Arizona, Idaho and Nevada joined. Montana became the eighth state in 1988. North Dakota became the ninth state in 2014.

The Mission of the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association (MPAEA) is to support and promote lifelong learning in the Mountain Plains Region (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and beyond). In order to achieve its mission, the association:

- Promotes and provides professional development opportunities for adult educators,
- Publishes and distributes relevant information about lifelong learning
- Supports and strengthens member associations within the states of the region

Like COABE, MPAEA sponsors a yearly conference that is well attended by Wyoming's AE professionals. Participation in this conference is typically grant funded and is planned for through the 3-tier planning tool that directors use for budgeting purposes. Membership in MPAEA is either paid directly by the staff member or through grant funds awarded to the local program.



The [Wyoming Lifelong Learning Association](#) is the one organization in the state for those involved in lifelong learning. The association brings together a diverse array of people which enables one to be exposed to a variety of resources via the networking process among the membership. This networking is important in a state such as Wyoming where many in the field of lifelong learning are somewhat isolated and feel they are "all alone out there".

The Association provides an annual conference for the sharing of ideas and new trends in the field. There is also a newsletter published four times per year to assist you to keep the membership up to date with what is going on in Wyoming regarding lifelong learning.

The Association's annual conference focuses on new trends and in-service education. It also provides a forum to promote networking within a social setting.

In order to achieve these goals, WyLLA promotes and develops lifelong learning in the State of Wyoming by affording opportunities for professional and non-professional adult educators to enhance their competencies. The Association gathers and then disseminates pertinent information about lifelong learning at the annual conference and through the publishing of the WyLLA newsletter four times a year. The www.wylla.org website is updated regularly and provides a way to pose questions, exchange ideas, and provide information to members.

Each AE center in the State has representatives who sit on the WyLLA board as WyLLA is the professional development 'arm' for Adult Education programs in Wyoming. WyLLA membership is typically budgeted for by the local AE program through grant or institutionally funded dollars.

D. Membership/Fees/Dues

Membership dues in professional organizations relating to adult education may be an allowable cost if there is a local agency policy to that effect. When funding provides, the State pays for all Wyoming staff member COABE membership. Local programs are responsible for maintaining membership fees/dues for each staff member for the Wyoming Lifelong Learning Association, which is the professional development arm of the Adult Education programs in Wyoming.



E. Tracking PD in LACES

Beginning in FY 21/22, all AE programs are required to track the completion of professional development units in LACES. This is done under the 'Staff' tab. Once you've opened the staff tab you will see a list of active teachers. Select the teacher that you wish to add a professional development unit to. Click on the tab entitled 'Professional Development'. This will open up a screen that looks like the screenshot shown below.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Fiscal Year	Date Attended	Name/Type of Professional Development	Hours	Creation Date		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2020-2021	01/28/2021	I-DEA 101	25.00	02/01/2021		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2020-2021	01/05/2021	Canvas Google training	8.00	01/07/2021		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2020-2021	08/24/2020	Alive Safety in School Training	8.00	09/02/2020		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2019-2020	04/30/2020	COVID19 PD	15.00	05/27/2020		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2019-2020	08/01/2019	State training	24.00	05/27/2020		
<input type="checkbox"/>	2018-2019	08/07/2018	State Training	17.00	08/21/2018		

From here you would click the 'add' button and simply enter the appropriate information

LACES also provides the ability to run a report on professional development. This is done through the Staff tab>Reports>Staff Professional Development Hours. This will bring up a screen that allows you to enter the date parameters for which you want to run the report. Once you've entered these dates, select the type of report you want run (ie. PDF or Excel). This will produce a report similar to the one shown to the right.

Staff Workshop Adhoc Hours		
Description: Provides the names, dates and hours for workshops staff attended.		
6/24/2021 4:58:13	Between 7/1/2020	- 6/30/2021
AGENCY: Uinta BOCES#1 Education Center		Page: 1 of 2
60580 Bourland, Carol		
07/21/2020	A game recertification	4.00 Hours
07/28/2020	Essential Ed	2.00 Hours
08/03/2020	COABE How to Beat Test Stress	1.00 Hours
10/06/2020	Diplomasender 101	1.00 Hours
10/26/2020	TABE 11/12 Training	1.00 Hours
11/18/2020	LERN	10.00 Hours
12/14/2020	Sexual harassment	1.00 Hours
04/27/2021	WyLLA Spring Training	16.00 Hours
05/24/2021	Weasel training	3.00 Hours
05/30/2021	New Prealgebra teaching	20.00 Hours
06/07/2021	IET Staff Training	3.00 Hours
		62.00 Hours
60639 Day, David		
08/24/2020	Alice Safety in School Training	8.00 Hours
01/05/2021	Canvas Google training	8.00 Hours
01/28/2021	I-DEA 101	25.00 Hours
		41.00 Hours
60920 McGuire, Sheila		
09/02/2020	TABE CLAS E	3.00 Hours
10/06/2020	Diplomasender 101	1.00 Hours
10/28/2020	LACES training	1.50 Hours
12/15/2020	Tabe 11/12 Training	2.00 Hours
03/24/2021	Teaching Skills That Matter	45.00 Hours
03/24/2021	TABE for Essential Ed	1.00 Hours
04/27/2021	Wylla spring training	16.00 Hours
05/14/2021	Univ. Wyo. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	180.00 Hours
05/14/2021	Univ Wyo Higher Ed Finance	180.00 Hours
05/24/2021	Weasel training	3.00 Hours
06/07/2021	IET Staff Training	3.00 Hours

Featured Professional Development: Adult Numeracy Project

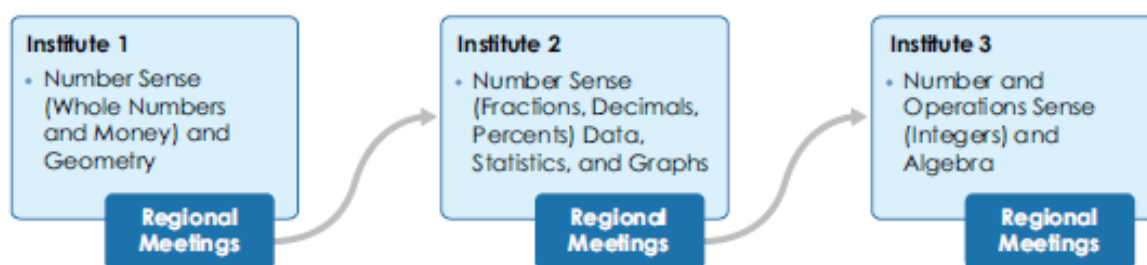
The four LINCS Regional Professional Development Centers offer the Adult Numeracy Instruction – Professional Development training (ANI-PD), an intensive evidence-based program in effective numeracy instruction for adults.

The ANI-PD model is built upon the principle that teacher preparation for adult mathematics instruction must be sufficiently intensive and focused on providing instructors with a strong base of mathematics content and pedagogical knowledge.

The training is grounded in the analysis of adult mathematical instruction outlined in the report, *Building on Foundations for Success: Guidelines for Improving Adult Mathematics Instruction*.¹

ANI-PD Goals:

- Increase math content knowledge among teachers and program administrators.
- Increase instructional skills among teachers working with ABE, pre-GED, and GED students.
- Increase knowledge and use of math content standards.
- Build local program and state capacity to support adult numeracy instruction.



The ANI-PD Model

The model of a series of three, two-day Institutes, spaced with time in between for teachers to practice their new understandings and reflect with colleagues, establishes a focus on four strategic instructional practices:

- **Connections** among mathematical ideas and recognizing and applying mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.
- **Communication** of mathematical thinking, analyzing and evaluating the thinking and strategies of others, and attending to precision.
- **Mathematical proficiency** that includes conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and a productive disposition.
- **All content strands at all levels**, which involves incorporating increasingly sophisticated concepts of number sense; geometry; data, statistics, and graphs; and algebra at each level of math instruction.

It is imperative that there is involvement by program administrators and support by state leadership. Institute participants should be teaching math so that they can apply and practice their new knowledge. Participants should be recruited in pairs or in small groups from programs. Program administrators must commit to participate in the Institutes and regional meetings to facilitate implementation.

¹ <http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/AdultNumeracyReportFinal2011.pdf>

ANI Project Background

Mathematics instruction for adults should enable adults to build their mathematics skills so that they can succeed in the workforce, advance in their careers, and participate fully as citizens. Those who teach mathematics in adult education may lack the appropriate credentials and expertise, or may be less than comfortable in offering mathematical instruction. Recognizing the paucity of research available on adult numeracy instruction, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), in collaboration with MPR Associates, Inc. and a team of adult numeracy experts from the Center for Literacy Studies at the University of Tennessee, Rutgers University, and TERC, initiated the *Strengthening America's Competitiveness Through Adult Math Instruction* project.

The project was designed to determine (1) what to teach in adult numeracy instruction, (2) how to teach it, and (3) how to teach teachers to teach it.

Guided by subject matter experts in the fields of mathematics education and mathematical cognition and learning, the team analyzed *Foundations for Success: The National Mathematics Advisory Panel Final Report* (the NMAP report), to determine its applicability to adult education. This analysis, along with a review of research on adult education, adult mathematics instruction, and numeracy education, became the foundation for the *Guidelines* report, which summarized the evidence-based principles for adult numeracy instruction.

The project applied principles in the *Guidelines* and effective professional development to establish the ANI-PD model and field test the model and materials. The demonstrated results in the text box to the right are from two states, Arkansas and Georgia, which participated in the field-testing in 2010-2011.

Establishing the Need for Adult Numeracy Instruction in Adult Education—the Data:

National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL, 2003), Scoring at lowest 2 levels (Below Basic and Basic)

- Prose Literacy: 43%
- Document Literacy: 34%
- **Quantitative Literacy: 55%**

Adult Education Program Study (2002), Scoring at lowest 2 levels (Below Basic and Basic)

- Prose Literacy: 84%
- Document Literacy: 82%
- **Numeracy: 92%**

ANI-PD: Demonstrated Results

- Increase in teachers' math content knowledge in all math strands.
- Increase in teachers' comfort with math content.
- Improvements in teachers' instructional practice.
- Changes in teachers' attitudes about instruction as well as their instructional practice.
- Increase in teachers' knowledge and use of state math content standards.

Contact your LINC'S RPDC Director to inquire about ANI-PD training. The LINC'S Project Directors will work with states to share the costs of the Institutes. As an estimate, LINC'S will cover the cost of bringing the expert trainers to the Institutes and distance coaching during regional meetings. States are requested to coordinate logistics and support material costs.

For more information: http://lincs.ed.gov/lincs/regionalresources/regional_centers.html

The Literacy Information and Communication System fact sheet was jointly developed by the LINC'S Regional Professional Development Centers (CFDA# 84-191B), Kratos (ED-VAE-11-C-0048) and the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred. This document is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission.

<http://lincs.ed.gov>

Appendix #2: Reading

A Summary of Wyoming Align & Redesign PowerPath Contributions: Demographics and Outcomes

by Margaret Becker Patterson, PhD

September 2018

The Align & Redesign¹ (A & R) initiative of 2013-14 called for a new approach in Wyoming adult education programs to instruction and service delivery (Patterson, 2017; Weisel, Patterson, Becker-Prezocki, & Fantine, 2017). Accompanying this new approach was a major change to professional learning among adult educators. The A & R team consists of Wyoming Community College Commission (Marcia Hess, state adult education director), all Wyoming adult education programs, and The TLP Group. Evaluating A & R informs ongoing professional learning and permits a review of longitudinal changes and summative results occurring among individuals from A & R baseline to the most recent academic year (Patterson, 2017).

This second 2018 evaluative summary follows up on the longitudinal analyses of LACES data (Patterson, 2018) with a report of PowerPath to Education and Employment[®] (PowerPath) screening² contributions to A & R. All analyses are quantitative and employ individual-level program data in two datasets: PowerPath screenings and LACES (NRS annual data). PowerPath screenings were administered to 1,713 adult learners (2014-15 through 2017-18) and matched to LACES outcomes data. Data represent characteristics, backgrounds, and outcomes of adult learners screened with PowerPath. Outcomes include 1) retention, as measured through attendance hours, 2) Adult Basic and Secondary Education (ABE/ASE) learning gains³, 3) high school equivalence (HSE) credentials, and 4) entering postsecondary education (PSE) for further training or education.

Key Findings

Overall Demographics and Challenges of Adult Learners Screened with PowerPath

- PowerPath screenings tend to occur early in an academic year; 7 in 10 adults screened with PowerPath in 2017-18 enter in the first or second quarter, that is, by December 2017. Screened adults range in age from 16 to 75 years (see Figure 1), and median age at intake is 21.4 years. Screened adult learners are slightly more often women (55%) than men (45%). Ethnically 9 in 10 adult learners

¹ More information on Align & Redesign (A&R) is at: <http://www.alignandredesign.com/>

² PowerPath to Education and Employment screenings analyzed were auditory function, attention challenges, and Visual Stress Syndrome (VSS) challenges. Learners self report characteristics in the screenings, may have limited awareness of challenges, and do not receive clinical diagnoses.

³ The samples of English Language Learners (ELL) screened with PowerPath and making learning gains were too small for disaggregation across years and are omitted.

are in one of the three largest groups: American Indian (7%), Hispanic/Latino (17%), or white (69%). Nearly half of adult learners are unemployed (47%). The employment rate is approximately 38%

- Overall, screened adult learners can decode words at an average tenth-grade reading level.

Visual Stress Syndrome (VSS) appears to represent more of a challenge to adult learners than attention challenges or auditory function do. Most adult learners (72%) screened with PowerPath exhibit normal auditory function⁴. Screened attention challenges impact 83% of adult learners and are moderate or severe for 29%. Nearly all screened adult learners (94%) show signs of VSS challenges. Three-fourths screen at

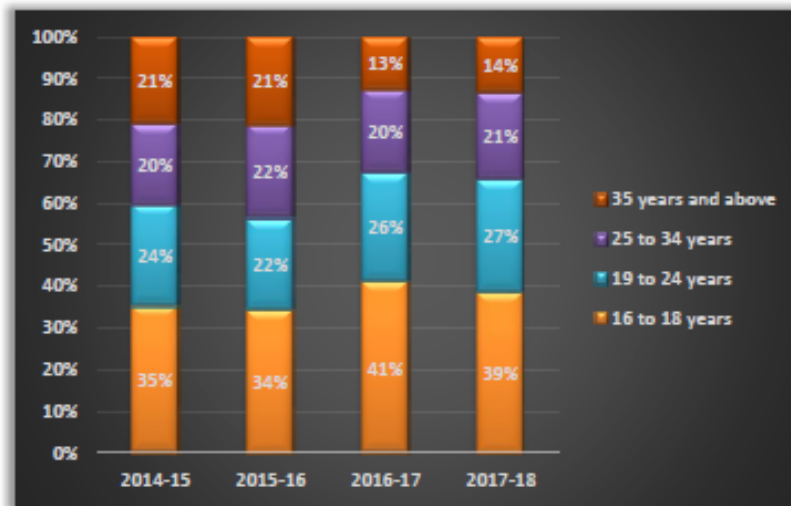


Figure 1. Annual grouped age of learners screened with PowerPath

moderate or severe levels of VSS (see Figure 2). Overlap in moderate to severe challenges is strongest for 309 learners with VSS and attention (ADD) challenges (36%), and for 247 learners with VSS and auditory (AUD) challenges (29%)

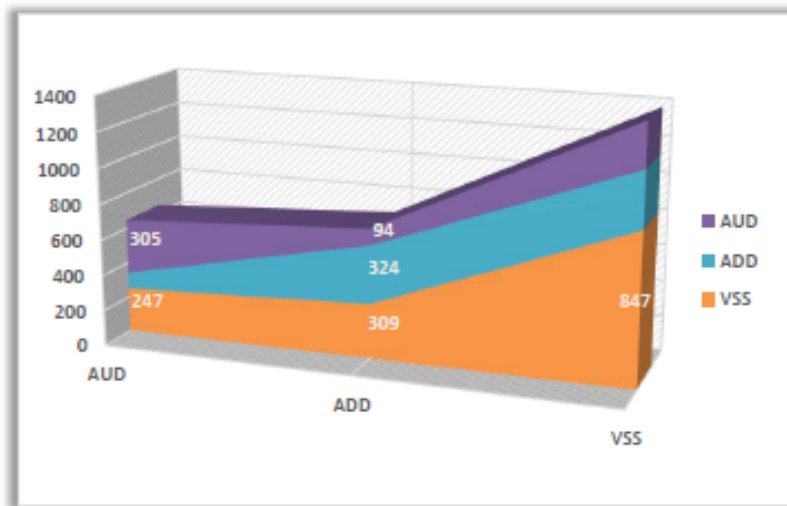


Figure 2. Overlap in moderate to severe challenges of learners screened with PowerPath

⁴ In PowerPath, a score of 6 in both right and left ears, as screened via an audiometer, indicates normal auditory function. A score from 1 to 5 in either ear indicates need for a referral to a hearing specialist. Reasons for potential hearing loss include age, use of headphones for loud music or video games, untreated ear infections, running heavy machinery without protection, or outdoor hunting.

Retention of Screened Adult Learners

- On average, adult learners screened with PowerPath are retained for 56.5 hours of instruction as of 2017-18 (see Figure 3). Median hours decreased from approximately 64 hours in 2014-15 and 2015-16 to 53 hours in 2016-17⁵. The 2016-17 decrease in median hours may be partly due to reductions in staff and funding in larger programs, which permitted them to offer fewer hours of instruction to adults. It may also reflect the 2015 closure of family literacy programs, which served many English language learners (ELLs). When more total hours are available in 2017-2018, median hours increase slightly to almost 57 hours⁶

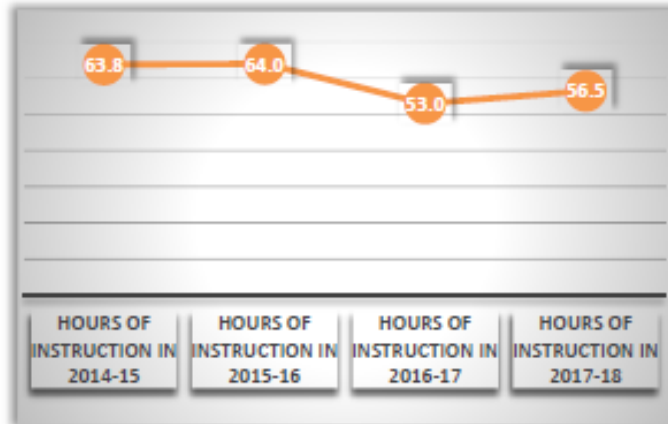


Figure 3. Median annual instructional hours of screened learners

- In 2014-15 and 2015-16, screened older adults tend to stay longer in programs than younger learners. With reductions in 2016-17, median hours remain more evenly distributed by age group through 2017-18, as shown in Figure 4

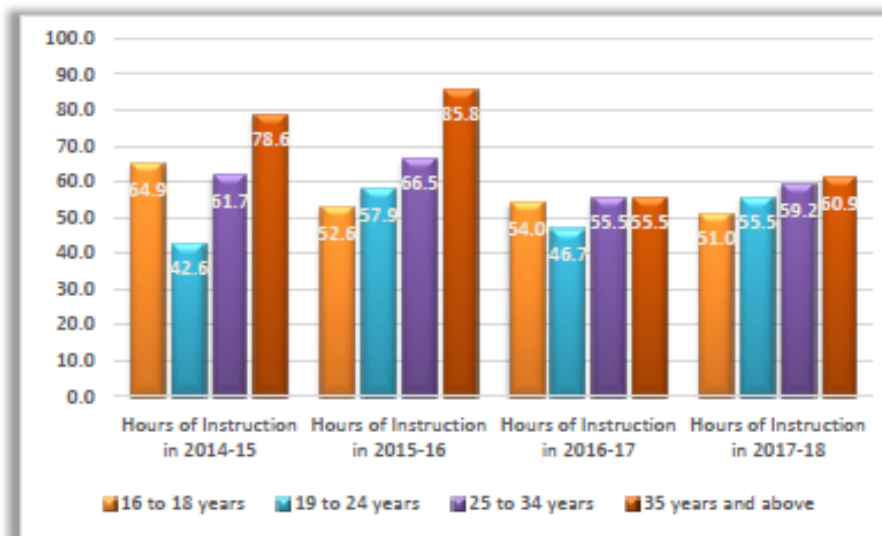


Figure 4. Median annual instructional hours of screened learners by age group

- Men screened with PowerPath put in about the same hours (median 54 hours) as women (median 59 hours) in 2017-18
- The only screened ethnic group whose median hours increase steadily across time is American Indian

⁵ Annual hours range from 12 to 347 hours.

⁶ Annual hours ranged from 12 to 505 hours.

learners, whose median hours rose from 45 hours to 57 hours between 2014-15 and 2017-18. Hispanic/Latino learners attend 61 hours on average as of 2017-18, about the same as for white learners (median 56 hours)

- Average hours do not differ across time by employment status, decoding level, or by learning challenges

Learning Gains of Screened Learners

- ABE/ASE learning gains for screened adults increased from 10% in 2014-15 to 28% in 2016-17 then leveled off to 23% in 2017-18

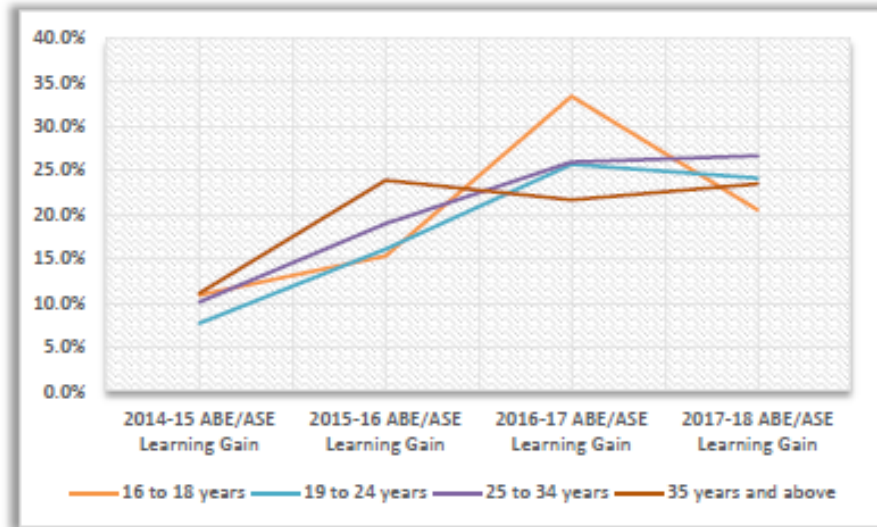


Figure 5. ABE/ASE learning gains of screened adults by age group

- The general upward trend of ABE/ASE

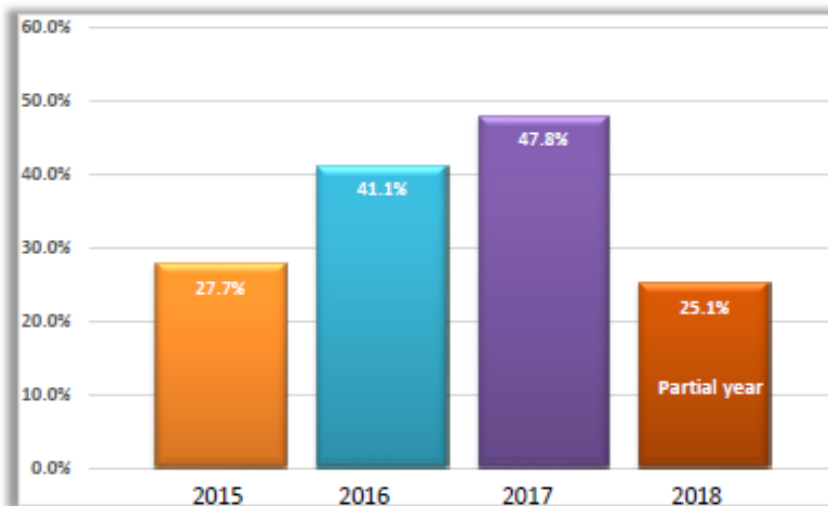


Figure 6. ABE/ASE learning gains of screened adults by employment status

ABE/ASE learning gains differ by learner employment status. From 2014-15 to 2016-17, screened adults who are not employed made more gains than those who are employed. In 2017-18, the percentage of screened unemployed adults making learning gains decreases significantly

learning gains continues by age group, except for the 16 to 18 years group (see Figure 5). Very young adult learners screened with PowerPath make proportionately fewer learning gains in 2017-18 compared with the year before

- Figure 6 displays how



- ABE/ASE learning gains do not differ by gender, ethnic group, decoding level, or by learning challenges

HSE Outcomes of Screened Adult Learners

- The percentage of screened adult

Figure 7. Annual HSE completion rates of screened adults from 2015 to 2017. The partial year percentage for 2018 is 25.0%

learners completing HSE increased from 27.7% to 47.8%

- HSE completion does not differ significantly by age, gender, ethnic group, employment status, decoding level, ADD group, or VSS group. These results indicate that screened adults in each group are just as likely to pass HSE tests regardless of year. About 7 in 10 screened HSE completers are under the age of 25, and half are women. One in 10 each of HSE completers screened with PowerPath are American Indian or Hispanic/Latino adult learners, and 7 in 10 are white adult learners. Half of screened HSE completers are unemployed, a third are employed, and the remainder are out of the labor force. One in six screened HSE completers has a pre-high school decoding level, one-fourth screened moderate or severe for attention difficulties, and three-fourths screened moderate or severe for VSS

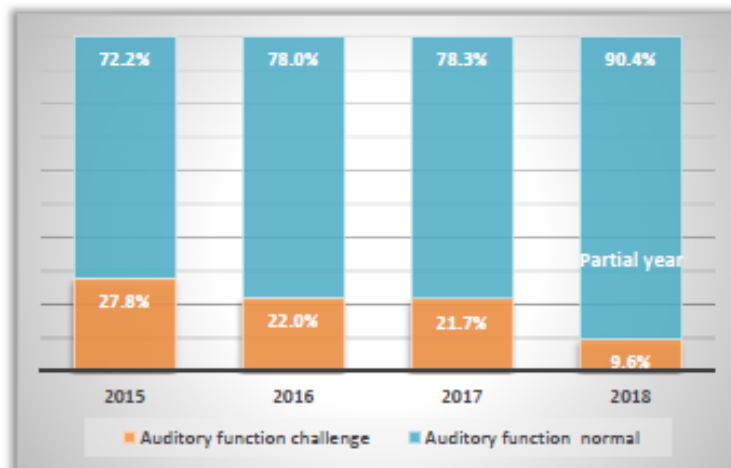


Figure 8. HSE completion of screened adults by auditory function

- Only one exception to HSE completion occurs by characteristic; that is, for adults with screened auditory challenges. As shown in Figure 8, HSE completion rates decreased significantly from 2015 to 2018 for adults identified with auditory challenges during PowerPath screening. This change in completion rate may be related to a partial year of 2018 HSE completion data (that is, learners with auditory challenges may need more time to prepare for HSE). It may also relate to proportionately fewer adult learners entering in the oldest age group in 2016-17 and 2017-18

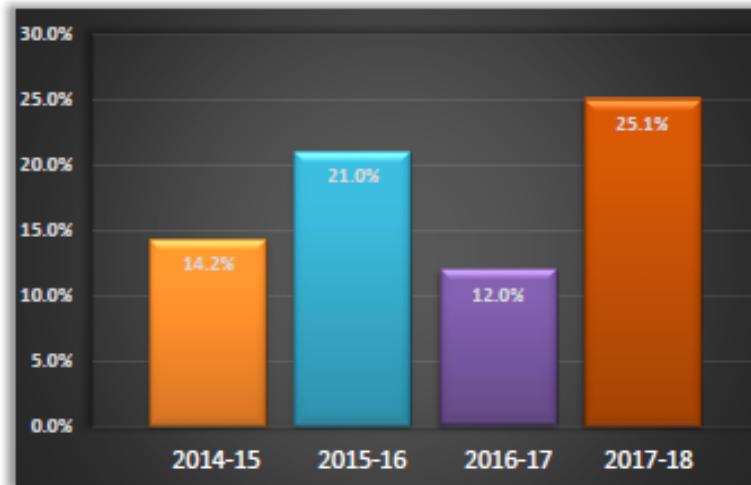


Figure 9. Annual PSE entry rates of screened adults

Postsecondary Outcomes of Screened Adult Learners

- The trend in entry into postsecondary education (PSE) is generally rising from 2014-15 to 2017-18, as shown in Figure 9, except for a fluctuation in 2016-17, which appears to reflect differences in reporting of PSE entry⁷

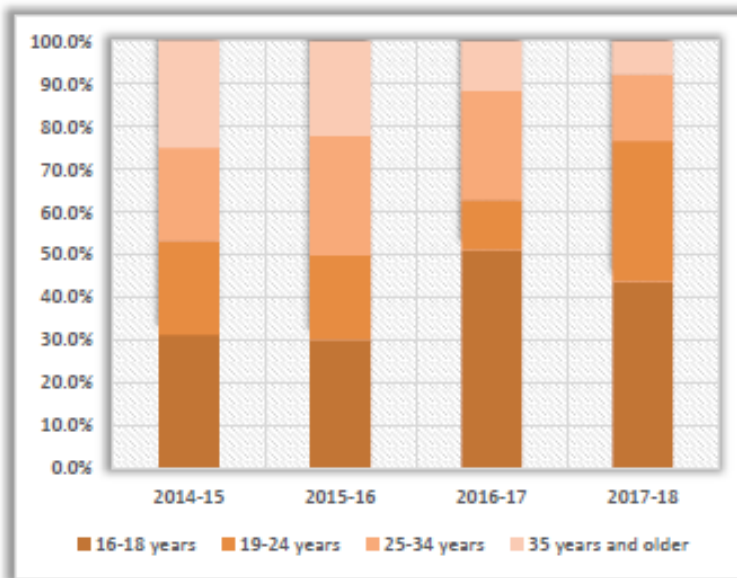


Figure 10. PSE entry rates of screened adults by age group

- Enrollment in PSE differs significantly by age and employment status for screened adult learners. As shown in Figure 10, the rate of younger adults (that is, up to age 24) entering PSE tends to increase with time while the rate of older adults entering PSE generally decreases. As displayed in Figure 11,

⁷ The method of reporting transitioned from direct community college collection to National Student Clearinghouse collection in 2016-17

proportionately more adults who are not working are entering PSE⁸

- PSE entry did not differ significantly by gender, ethnic group, decoding level, auditory function, ADD group, or VSS group. These results indicate that adults in each group were just as likely to enroll in PSE regardless of year. Approximately two-thirds of enrolling PSE students are women. One in 10 PSE enrollees screened with PowerPath are Hispanic/Latino adult learners, and 8 in 10 are white adult learners. About one-fourth of screened adults entering PSE decode at a pre-high school level. One in six PSE enrollees screened moderate or severe for attention difficulties, and three-fourths screened moderate or severe for VSS



Figure 11. PSE entry rates of screened adults by employment status

Conclusions

Demographically, adult learners recently screened with PowerPath tend to have balanced gender and be young, white, and not employed. Most adult learners are screened early in an academic year and tend to decode single words at a high-school level. As they work toward outcomes, many face critical challenges to success. Of screened learners, 28% have potential hearing difficulties, and 29% of screened adult learners show signs of moderate or severe attention challenges. The strongest challenges, however, are visual; of screened adults, 75% adults face moderate to severe VSS challenges. A strong overlap of moderate to severe attention and VSS challenges also occurs (36%).

Overall, Wyoming programs have high retention rates, despite funding reductions which limited available hours in 2016-17 and depressed median hours rates for adults screened with PowerPath. Among screened learners, older and American Indian adults tend to put in more learning time, with median hours of the latter group increasing from 47 to 57 hours across time. The rate of learning gains for screened learners increased annually through 2016-17 and leveled off in 2017-18. Learning gain decreases in 2017-18 occurred for screened 16- to 18-year-old learners and unemployed learners.

⁸ Adult learners who are “not employed” include unemployed learners and those not in the workforce.

Screened adults appear to be increasingly successful in completing HSE and entering PSE and do so at higher rates than for Wyoming adult learners overall. HSE outcomes appear to have benefitted during A&R; up to half of learners screened recently with PowerPath pass HSE tests. Three-fourths of screened HSE completers are under 25; otherwise HSE completers appear to reflect the demographics and backgrounds of screened learners overall. One noteworthy exception is learners exhibiting auditory challenges, whose HSE completion rates are decreasing with time.

In general, PSE enrollment is also on the rise, with one-fourth of screened adult learners entering PSE in 2017-18. An exception was in 2016-17, which appears to reflect differences in reporting methods. Two-thirds of those entering PSE are women. Higher rates of screened adults who are unemployed or out of the workforce are entering PSE over time, which is promising for those entering career pathways. Ethnically, however, screened American Indian and Hispanic/Latino learners are underrepresented in PSE. Proportionately fewer adults with screened moderate to severe attention challenges enter PSE although changes are not significant longitudinally.

Recommendations

1. The percentages of learning challenges among screened adult learners are high, particularly for those with visual issues. Programs typically screen learners early in the year. Programs should compare rates of program entry with rates of screening throughout the year. The advantages of continuing to screen incoming adult learners with PowerPath – and to make any needed referrals to clinicians for diagnosis – are evident. The A & R team should continue to encourage PowerPath screening, and referrals to specialists when warranted, regardless of when adult learners enter. Accommodations for visual, hearing, and attention challenges will further support learning.
2. On the surface, the generally high reading decoding skills point to adult learners with positive education backgrounds. Digging a little deeper reveals further challenges, however; frequently adults struggle with ADD and VSS challenges (as screened), which suggests reduced opportunity to make advanced outcomes. Despite these learning issues, adults in ABE with screened moderate to severe ADD and VSS issues continue to be retained and to make HSE completion outcomes. The A & R team is interviewing program staff and learners to identify and describe the ways in which these adult learners achieve these outcomes. What are programs doing differently to facilitate learning “against the odds” – and what services are programs offering that support such outcomes? Findings need to be shared with all programs as professional learning.
3. An encouraging finding is that American Indian adults experience increasing retention during A & R. Through interviews, the A & R team should determine qualitatively the experiences of these screened adults and what encourages them to put additional time into the adult education program.
4. A concern is that ABE/ASE learning gain rates for screened adults lag behind those of Wyoming ABE/ASE learners overall and that rates for screened adults leveled off in 2017-18 despite overall increases that year (Patterson, 2018). The A & R team needs to investigate the circumstances of the differences and to respond with any needed supports, especially for very young and unemployed learners.
5. Finally, screened adults appear to be most successful in completing HSE and entering PSE and do so at higher rates than for Wyoming adult learners overall. This encouraging finding may be associated with their young age as well as with getting supports for challenges identified in screening. Two important exceptions are fewer adults with auditory challenges completing HSE

and fewer adults with moderate to severe attention challenges entering PSE. It is recommended that the A & R team further evaluate the outcomes of both learner groups. This evaluation should occur both quantitatively through a deeper investigation of the available LACES and PowerPath data, and qualitatively by interviewing adult educators and learners on how they faced the learning challenges, the materials they used to adapt their learning and testing settings, and the extent to which they achieved – or did not achieve –outcomes. What is learned through this investigation should be discussed and employed to further strengthen services.

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