

Practitioner Standards:

If you would ask a room full of accountants what their major was in college, the response would probably be 'accounting.' If you ask a room full of adult educators the same question, the response would be everything from home economics to political science. As we have said before, most of us came into this business sideways. Few of us had any idea when we were in undergraduate school that we would one day be working in adult education. This is true as well for the majority of your local practitioners. That is what makes practitioner standards so valuable.

Practitioner standards can help your local providers better understand the expectations of their jobs by defining what adult educators need to know and be able to do. Practitioner standards serve multiple purposes. They:

- Clearly articulate shared expectations for effective instructional delivery and program management.
- Help to professionalize the adult education program and recognize it as a bona fide field of study.
- Show best practices in instruction and management.
- Facilitate communication through a common language.

Practitioner standards serve as a roadmap for professional growth as adult educators continually assess their strengths in relationship to the standards and identify areas needing improvement. Programs can use the standards to more closely align appropriate professional development to staff needs. The standards can also be used to inform job descriptions and the hiring process.

As states have begun the development of practitioner standards, they have used a collaborative process to ensure that local providers have direct input into their development and their intended use. While several states have developed teacher standards, some have also developed professional standards for local managers and support staff. If you would like to view examples of practitioner standards that states have developed, click [here](#).