Using Data to Guide Program Management and Improvement

**National Adult Education
Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC)**

Center for Literacy, Education & Employment

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Activities

Activity 1: What Do Stakeholders Want to Know About My Program?

Jot down one or two things that each of these groups would want to know about the program.

Instructors:

Administrators:

Funders:

Activity 2: Taking a Quick Surface Dive

A Look at Pre/Post Test Data Over Time

Surface Diving: Is my program improving its pre-post test completion rate?

- Refer to Tables 4 and 4B for the three program years.
- Refer to #4 in the "Collecting Your Data" chart on page 39. Calculate your percentages and complete the chart.
- What do you know from your data?
- What other questions would you ask?

Activity 3: Using the EFL Gain Tracker

- Refer to EFL Gain Tracker on your computer.
- Refer to the Student Information sheet in your packet.
- Practice inserting the data.
- How might this help some of your instructors?

Activity 3: Student Information Sheet

Student ID	First Name	Last Name	Test Form/Level	Component Code	Test Date	Scale Score
1	Maria	Davidson	TABE 9M	Reading	7/5/2010	451
			TABE 10M	Reading	9/5/2010	520
2	Jose	Catawba	TABE 9M	Math	8/19/2010	320
			TABE 10M	Math	10/15/2010	510
3	Milagro	Gaston	TABE 9D	Reading	8/26/2010	518
			TABE 10D	Reading	10/15/2010	545
4	Freddy	Durham	TABE 9D	Reading	8/12/2010	565
			TABE 10D	Reading	9/30/2010	580
5	Ana	Cape	TABE 9M	Math	7/22/2010	329
			TABE 10M	Math	9/30/2010	438
6	Maria	Mitchell	TABE 9M	Math	7/20/2010	506
			TABE 10M	Math	10/04/2010	520

Activity 4: Analyzing Your Own Data

1. Select one of the questions from the "Collecting Your Data" charts.
    1. Use your NRS tables to complete the chart.
    2. If you brought a laptop with the LEA Data Tool spreadsheet loaded on it, graph your data.
    3. If you did not bring a laptop, graph your data manually.
2. Time permitting, address additional questions and create more graphs.
3. Then complete the handout on "My Program's Story."

My Program's Story

Observations of my data:

Our Strengths:

Areas for Improvement:

Probing Questions I Want to Explore:

Activity 5: Pulling It All Together:

Looking at Your Own Data

- Refer to your "Program Story."
- Identify any Red Flags in your story.
- Identify two-three questions from the Red Flag chart that would assist you in:
    - Isolating the cause of the problem and
    - Identifying strategies for program improvement.

Identified Red Flags

My Sample Probing Questions

Handouts

The Trident

Three Starting Points for Program Improvement

Stakeholder Assessments	Research and Professional Wisdom	Data
1. Select and administer a stakeholder assessment(s)	1. Access the findings.	1. Identify, collect, and analyze the data.
2. Engage the workgroup to review the results and clarify and prioritize the needs.	2. Engage the workgroup to understand the focus, questions, and implications.	2. Engage the workgroup to review the results and clarify and prioritize the needs.
3. Set the vision and goals for your program improvement initiative.	3. Select promising practices. Set the vision and goals for your program improvement initiative.	3. Set the vision and goals for your program improvement initiative.

4. Develop a pilot test.

5. Select and prepare pilot sites

6. Conduct the pilot, measure the impact, and fine-tune PD, policy, and resources.

7. Document and evaluate the results; make necessary adjustments.

8. Integrate program-wide (in waves as necessary).

9. Monitor impact, make necessary adjustments, and provide recommendations for next assessment process.

10. Celebrate your success.

National Certification Timeline

Certified Manager in Program Improvement

Year Two

Final Webinar
Workshop 5: Instructor Orientation
Completion of Culminating Project
Follow-Up Webinar
Interim Activity D
Online Leadership Approach Course
Follow-Up Webinar
Interim Activity C
Workshop 4: Student Persistence

Year One

Part 1 of Culminating Project Begins
Follow-Up Webinar
Workshop 3: Using Data
Online Intro to Using Data Course
Follow-Up Webinar
Interim Activity B
Workshop 2: Integrating Research
Follow-Up Webinar
Interim Activity A
Workshop 1: Using Stakeholder Assessments
Online Intro to Program Improvement Course
Online Orientation to LEA Course

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMIES

From NRS Diving Deep for Data Training

Questions: Attendance

Attendance and Retention	Sample Question	Further Questions
Data collection and quality	Who enters attendance data at each site? How often is attendance data entered?	Who checks the data? How often?
Students	How does attendance differ by student type (ESL vs. ABE)?	When in the term do students tend to drop/stop-out most? Is this the same across sites?
Teachers	Which classes have very high (or low) attendance?	Do teachers with high attendance have greater educational gains?
Instruction	Does attendance vary by instructional content (e.g. GED, workplace) or level?	How many hours does it take to achieve a goal, on average?
Program	What is the average attendance for my program?	Are my program's attendance hours similar to other programs?
Program policy	Are my managed enrollment classes more successful than open classes?	Does managed enrollment result in higher ed gains or greater goal achievement?

Questions: Educational Gain

Educational Gain	Sample Question	Further Questions
Data collection and quality	What is the range of pre/post test scores in my program/site?	Are all the test scores within the correct range for the test and class levels?
Students	Which students are most likely to complete a level (student characteristics)?	Do students with higher contact hours have greater completion rates?
Teachers	What teacher characteristics are most related to level completion?	How high is teacher turnover at each site? Which sites retain teachers longest/best?
Instruction	Which instructional approaches have the greatest impact on gain?	Do assessments match course content?
Program	How many hours of PD do our teachers participate in?	Which PD have the greatest impact on student learning?
Program policy	Do placement policies differ among sites?	Which placement policies have an impact on educational gains?

Questions: Transition Outcomes

Attendance and Retention	Sample Question	Further Questions
Data collection and quality	How are data collected, e.g., who administers the survey or oversees the match?	How do response rates or matches differ by site? Who verifies the data?
Students	Which types of students have which goals?	Which student variables are related to the goals set, e.g., postsecondary placement?
Teachers	How do goals set compare across similar classes (i.e., ESL to ESL)?	Does goal achievement differ by class?
Instruction	Do college transition classes show greater goal achievement for post-secondary?	How do college transition classes' course content differ from other ASE classes?
Program	How do sites compare with each other and the program average on goal achievement?	For sites with high goal achievement, are there programmatic differences?
Program policy	What linkages exist between the program and colleges/businesses?	Do sites/classes with linkages show different outcomes than those without linkages?

Determining Critical Success Factors

Critical Questions	Sample Critical Success Factors
Are students coming?	• Classes are full. • Enrollment reflects the community. • Our cost per student reflects the state's average for similar programs. • Program meets or exceeds annual enrollment goal.
Are they staying?	• At least 85% of students are staying for at least 12 hours. • Average contact hours exceed state average for similar programs.. • Our cost per hour reflects the state's average for similar programs.
Are they learning?	• Program meets or exceeds state benchmarks.. • Students are making statistically significant learning gains. • Program exceeds the required post-test rate.
Are they transitioning?	• Program meets or exceeds state benchmarks. • At least 50% of ASE students are able to bypass developmental courses.

NRS Data Elements

Student Contact Information	
• Name • Mailing address	• Phone number • E-mail address

Student Demographics	

• Date of birth
• Gender
• Ethnicity
• Environment
    ♦ Family literacy
    ♦ Workplace literacy
    ♦ Homeless
    ♦ Work-based project learner (WBPL)
    ♦ Correctional
	• Secondary status measures
	    ♦ Low income
	    ♦ Displaced homemaker
	    ♦ Single parent
	    ♦ Displaced worker
	    ♦ Learning disabled
	• Disability information
	• Employment status
	• Public assistance
	• Community type
	    ♦ Rural
	    ♦ Urban

Student Goals and Achievements	

• Attendance goals
• Core achievements
    ♦ Entered employment
    ♦ Retained employment
    ♦ Obtained GED
    ♦ Entered postsecondary education
	• Secondary achievements
	    ♦ Achieved WBPL goal
	    ♦ Left public assistance
	    ♦ Achieved citizenship goals
	    ♦ Increased involvement in child's education
	    ♦ Increased involvement in child's literacy activities
	    ♦ Voted or registered to vote
	    ♦ Increased involvement in community affairs

Student Enrollment Information

• Program Type
    ♦ ABE (Adult Basic Education)
    ♦ ASE (Adult Secondary Education)
    ♦ ESL (English -as-a-Second Language)
• Enrollment date
• Separation date

Student Assessment Information
• Test scores and dates • Functioning levels

Student Attendance
• Contact hours and dates

Staff Information	

• Function
    ♦ Teacher
    ♦ Counselor
    ♦ Paraprofessional
    ♦ Local administrator
    ♦ State-level administrator
	• Status
	    ♦ Full time
	    ♦ Part time
	    ♦ Volunteer

Learning to be an NRS Data Detective: The Five Sides of the NRS
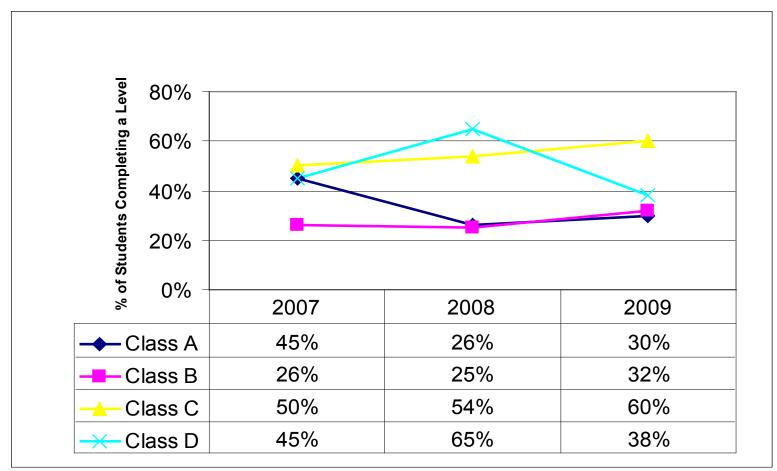
Learning to be an NRS Data Detective: The Five Sides of the NRS

Virginia Sample Monitoring Sheet

When do I call for help?

Monthly Monitoring

Intensity

    a.   ___ Maximum Class Hours

    b.   ___ Optimum class hours (80%)

        ____# ____% of students with maximum

        ____#____% of students with optimum class hours

        ____#____% of students below optimum class hours

Quarterly Monitoring: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th

Early Dropouts (Red Flag: more than 15%)

    a.   ___ Number of new enrollees

    b.   ___ Number of new enrollees who did not stay 12 hours

    c.   ___ Early Dropout rate (b/a)

Student hours/teacher hour (Red Flag: less than10/1)

    a.   ___ Total Student Hours

    b.   ___ Total Teacher Hours

    c.   ___ Student hours/teacher hours (b/a)

Post Test (Red Flag: less than 100%)

    a.   ___ Total number of students who reached 60 hours during this quarter

    b.   ___ Total number of those students who were post tested

    c.   ___ % post tested (b/a)

Notes and strategies

Sample NRS Graph: How Do Level Completion Rates Compare Across My Classes?

	2007	2008	2009
Class A	45%	26%	30%
Class B	26%	25%	32%
Class C	50%	54%	60%
Class D	45%	65%	38%

Y-axis: % of Students Completing a Level (0% to 80%)

Red Flag Chart

Red Flag: Enrollment or hours/student does not increase over three years.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**

1a. Enrollment Trend:
 	
• **Recent stagnant or decreasing funding can limit increased enrollment.**
• **If your enrollment is declining, this could be a result of:**
    o **Students attending longer making classes full and unavailable to the 'revolving door syndrome' (That's a good thing!)**
    o **Your recruitment and marketing efforts may not be reaching your target population.**
    o **The scheduling and/or location of your classes may not reflect the needs of the target population.**
 	
1b. Hours Per Student Trend: With our focus on continuous improvement, you should see a steady increase in the hours each student participates. If not,
	Enrollment Trend
	
	• Is the decrease in enrollment program-wide, or is it limited to certain classes or locations?
	• Has your budget allowed you to increase enrollment?
	• Has your cost per student remained the same?
	• What does the census data tell you about your primary target populations (e.g., ESL, working poor, older adults)? Do your recruitment strategies and promotional materials particularly target these individuals? Do your instructional offerings target these individuals?
	• What percent of your target population is currently employed? If it is a significant number, are you offering workplace education classes at local worksites?
	• Does your program have a productive relationship with several potential referral agencies (e.g., social services, health services, One Stop Centers, etc.)?
	• How did the majority of your current students learn about the program? Are you still using that recruitment technique?
	• If your enrollment is declining but hours/student are increasing:
	    o Have you improved services or management procedures to foster increased intensity and duration? (A good thing!)
	    o Are classes filled to capacity as a result of improved
		Enrollment Trends
		
		• If enrollment has significantly decreased and you need to recruit additional students, here are some possible strategies:
		    o Go to the US Census and produce thematic maps of your service area showing pockets of undereducated adults and adults with limited English proficiency. Target recruitment and class locations there.
		    o Conduct staff training sessions with social service case workers, public health nurses, and other agency staff that serve the same population.
		    o Invite community based and ethnic organizations to co-sponsor classes and/or arrange referrals.
		    o Take a more targeted approach to your recruitment efforts. Don't try to be "all

- **The interview and intake process may not clarify expectations for new learners.**
- **Strategies are not in place to help students deal with barriers to participation.**
- **Instruction is not geared to student goals**
- **Students do not see progress toward their goals.**

delivery?

o Have the demographics of your target population changed over the three-year period?

Hours Per Student Trend

- Is the decrease in hours/student program-wide, or is it limited to certain classes or locations?
- To what would your staff attribute a downward trend?
- If enrollment is steady but hours per student is declining:
  o Do you have an established 'stop out' procedure for keeping students engaged and connected to the program during temporary exits?
  o If your "stop out" strategies are sound, are teachers trained in using them and actually following them?
  o Do you have a system for contacting students after they have missed two-three consecutive classes?
  o Are teachers building a sense of community within the classroom that keeps students engaged in the learning process and eager to participate?
  o Is instruction student-centered in which students are actively involved in planning and evaluating their own learning?
  o Is instruction contextualized to the students' goals so they see the relevance of what they are learning?
  o Do teachers regularly engage students in a variety of informal assessments so they can see ongoing progress?
  o If enrollment and hours/student are both declining:
  o Examine all of the probing questions above.

things to all people." Customize your recruitment materials to specific target populations so they don't get 'lost' in all of the information.

Hours Per Student Trend

- Examine the critical success factors and matching strategies throughout this report to pinpoint specific program components that need attention. Pay particular attention to #2, #3, and #4 related to student retention.

Red Flag: Retention: Program has a significant percentage of students exiting the program with less than 12 hours of attendance.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**

2a. **Your student orientation and intake process (e.g., orientation to the program, developing a supportive climate, linking with community support services/potential barrier resolution, standardized testing) is not supporting continuation.**
 	
2b. **Students are not at the 'readiness' level to pursue instruction due to unrealistic expectations, too many barriers, and other factors.**
	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide, or is it occurring in a few classes?
	• Does your orientation and intake process inform and motivate students to participate, or does it consist primarily of filling out forms and taking pre-tests?
	• Does your orientation and intake process focus on student strengths and the knowledge/experiences they bring to the program, or does it focus primarily on identifying their weaknesses?
	• Are potential barriers to participation being identified and resolved during the orientation and intake process?
	• If your orientation and intake procedures are sound, are the individuals in charge of conducting those procedures thoroughly trained in adult learning theory?
	• Is student orientation and intake being conducted on a scheduled basis to ensure a more comprehensive, deliberate approach, or is it being conducted on a 'drop-in' basis?
	• Does the student orientation and intake process include very clear expectations about student attendance?
	• Are there differences between the student intake and orientation procedures in classes with strong student retention (>12 hours) versus weak student retention?
	• Are there differences between student demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, goals) of students who leave early versus those that don't?
	• Is your data entry accurate?
		• Conduct focus groups with students to determine how they feel about intake and what suggestions they have for improving it.
		• Look at models for managed intake that are supportive of entering students and help to build a sense of community.
		• Set clear guidelines on student attendance expectations, such as no more than three unexcused absences within a semester or class cycle.
		• Use student contracts to emphasize the importance of regular attendance.
		• Convene teachers to redesign and pilot test a more supportive intake process.
		    o Train those who perform intake.
		    o Measure impact of revised strategy.

Red Flag: Retention: Program has a significant percentage of students who are not staying long enough to be post-tested.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**
3a. Quality of instruction is not holding students. **3b. Not adequately determining student's goal and using that context to plan and implement learning** **3c. Not adequately helping students manage the negative issues that interfere with participation** **3d. Not adequately helping students believe they can succeed (self efficacy)** **3e. Not taking time to let students see that what they are doing is helping them make progress toward their goal** **3f. Teachers are not aware of post-testing procedures and the impact of post-testing on program performance and funding** **3g. Students are not aware of the purpose of post-testing, both academically and programmatically (impact on program performance and funding).** **3h. Not post-testing students with sufficient hours and/or not entering post-test data into the data system**	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide, or is it occurring in a few classes? • Are teachers fully informed of the post-test policy and the impact of that policy on program performance? • If your post testing procedures are sound, are teachers following them? • Are students being made aware during the orientation and intake process of the purpose and use of post-test results (both academically and programmatically)? • Is there a difference between student demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, goals) of those who are post testing and those who are not? • Do you have strong student persistence strategies for 1) helping students manage the negative forces, 2) building self efficacy, 3) setting clear goals, and 4) showing progress? • To what extent are there students with sufficient hours who are <u>not</u> post-tested? • To what extent are post-tested students <u>not</u> entered into the data system? • If your program operates on an open-entry basis, would a more managed enrollment structure help to address post-test problems? • Does your program set high expectations for regular student attendance?	• If the problem is program-wide, engage the staff in developing and pilot testing a student retention plan to include any or all of the following: 1) examining post-testing procedures and training all staff, 2) developing strategies for the four key persistence support areas: a) helping students manage the negative forces, b) building self efficacy, c) setting clear goals, and d) seeing progress. • Access NCSALL's research on learner persistence including the NCSALL study circle guide at http://www.ncsall.net/?id=791 • If the issue is targeted (certain teachers or certain demographics), either (a) train the low performing teachers, (b) engage the staff in developing and pilot testing strategies (managing, self efficacy, goals, progress) to target the student demographics and/or (3) examine the classes with good post-test rates to determine what they are doing well. • Provide incentives to encourage completion of post-tests (pizza parties, return of $10 tuition for post-testers, etc.) o Set clear guidelines on student attendance expectations, such as no more than three unexcused absences within a semester or class cycle.

Red Flag: Retention: Program's average student contact hours are below the state average.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**
4a. **Quality of instruction is not holding students.** 4b. **Not adequately determining student's goal and using that context to plan and implement learning** 4c. **Not adequately helping students manage the negative issues that interfere with participation** 4d. **Not adequately helping students believe they can succeed (self efficacy)** 4e. **Not taking time to let students see that what they are doing is helping them make progress toward their goal** 4f. **No self-study options for those needing to 'stop out' for a while** 4g. **No discussion with students about the likelihood of having to "stop out," staying engaged when they do, and how easy it is to re-enter when they want to come back.** 4h. **Inadequate strategies for accommodating learning disabilities and other special learning needs**	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide or is it occurring in a few classes? • Do you have an established 'stop out' procedure for keeping students engaged and connected to the program during temporary exits? • If your "stop out" strategies are sound, are teachers trained in using them and actually following them? • Do you have a system for contacting students after they have missed two-three consecutive classes? • Are teachers building a sense of community within the classroom that keeps students engaged in the learning process and eager to participate? • Is instruction student-centered in which students are actively involved in planning and evaluating their own learning? • Is instruction contextualized to the students' goals so they see the relevance of what they are learning? • Do teachers regularly engage students in a variety of informal assessments to see ongoing progress? • Is there a difference between student demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, goals) among students who persist and those who do not? • Do you have strong student persistence strategies for a) helping students manage the negative forces, b) building self efficacy, c) setting clear goals, and d) seeing progress? • Are teachers equipped to identify and accommodate learning disabilities and other special learning needs?	• If the problem is program-wide, engage the staff in developing and pilot testing a student retention plan to include any or all of the following: 1) examining post-testing procedures and training all staff, 2) developing strategies for the four key persistence support areas: a) helping students manage the negative forces, b) building self efficacy, c) setting clear goals, and d) seeing progress. • Access NCSALL's research on learner persistence including the NCSALL study circle guide at http://www.ncsall.net/?id=791 • If the issue is targeted (certain teachers or certain demographics), either train the low performing teachers or engage the staff in developing and pilot testing strategies (managing, self efficacy, goals, progress) to target the student demographics. • Conduct intensive training in LD identification and accommodation. ○ Check these resources at https://lincs.ed.gov/programs/learningtoachieve/materials.html

Red Flag: Educational Gain: Program is not meeting performance benchmarks for educational gain.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies** General strategies are listed below. Strategies specific to EFLs are listed on the following chart/s.
5a A small number of students in any given EFL that can affect success **5b. Lack of appropriate instructional strategies to address various learning styles** **5c. Inadequate strategies for accommodating learning disabilities** **5d. Inadequate post-testing to verify gains** **5e. Student retention problems** **5g. Open-entry structure making retention and consistent teaching and learning more difficult** **5h. Lack of alignment between assessment and curriculum and instruction** **5i. Teachers' lack of content knowledge in areas being taught** **5j. Lack of appropriate instructional resources**	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide or is it occurring in a few classes? • Is there a relationship between average hours of attendance and % completing an EFL? • Is a thorough process being used for realistic student goal identification? • Is the individual learning plan, instructional materials, and skills linked to the student's goal? • Are there significant barriers to attendance that can be overcome through collaboration with community services? • Should the program conduct a program self assessment to determine what parts of the program are working well and which are not? • Do the teachers know how to scope and sequence the skills using the context of the learner's goal? • Do the teachers provide frequent opportunities for students to practice and apply learning? • Is the curriculum aligned to the standardized assessment tool? • Do teachers create and integrate learning activities that require students to model negotiation, decision-making, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills? • Do teachers include group activities to teacher higher	• Conduct a thorough data analysis to identify commonalities and differences between high performing and low performing classes in relation to completion of EFLs • Develop a classroom observation tool that includes critical characteristics of effective instruction • Ensure that teachers complete an annual self-assessment and develop and implement appropriate professional development plans • Provide frequent opportunities for teachers with high-performing classes to share strategies and techniques with their colleagues • Explore the feasibility and options for implementing more managed enrollment classes o (See individual EFL strategies in charts below)

	order thinking skills while creating a sense of community in their classes? • Is there a relationship between completion of EFLs and instructional setting (e.g., learning lab, classroom, tutorial, distance)? • Is there a relationship between completion of EFLs and class structure (e.g., managed entry versus open entry)? • Is there a relationship between years of teacher experience or professional development completed and completion of EFLs? • Is there a relationship between part-time and full-time teachers with completion of EFLs? • Have the teachers participated in training on serving adults with special learning needs, and are they making appropriate instructional accommodations?	

Possible Strategies for Specific Educational Functioning Levels

Possible Strategies for ABE Beginning, Beginning Basic, Low Intermediate, and High Intermediate EFLs

- Have teachers read about the *Adult Reading Component Study* and complete the online *Adult Reading Component Mini-Course* and use the reading component assessments provided to identify skill levels on the reading sub-skills (word recognition, spelling, word meaning (vocabulary), silent reading comprehension, and oral reading rate. https://lincs.ed.gov/readingprofiles/
  - Have teachers complete the *Reading Research Self Assessment* and plan and complete a professional development plan to fill gaps in knowledge. (Under development by Mary Zeigler, University of Tennessee)
- Access the *Learning to Achieve* materials online at https://lincs.ed.gov/programs/learningtoachieve/materials.html to help teachers work effectively with students with special learning needs.
- Access NCSALL's publications:
  - *Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom* (April 2003)
    - http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/jacobson.pdf
  - *Understanding What Reading Is All About* (July 2005)
    - http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/uwriaa.pdf
- Form a study group of teachers using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Research Based Adult Reading Instruction*
  - http://www.ncsall.net/?id=892
- Form a study group of teachers using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Adult Development*
  - http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=893
- Form a study group using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Adult Multiple Intelligences*
  - http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=895
- Form a study group using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Teaching and Learning in Authentic Contexts*
  - http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=897
- Encourage teachers to read and share articles from the multiple issues of *Focus on Basics,* a publication that connects adult education research to instructional practice. (See Section III for specific titles)
  - http://www.ncsall.net/?id=31

Possible Strategies for ASE

- Encourage teachers to complete the free GED® online trainings: *http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/2014-guide*
- Encourage teachers to read NCSALL's *Focus on Basics* edition that focuses on GED instruction.
    o http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=158
- Explore curriculum and delivery models for *Fast Track GED®* or HSE classes that offer intensive GED® or HSE preparation instruction over a shortened period of time.
- Explore the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* https://www.vrae.org/images/customer-files/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf
- Make sure that your GED®/HSE teachers can successfully pass the practice test(s) for your state's HSE exams before you hire them!
- Allow team teaching or job shadowing for teachers who need to build their content knowledge in certain GED test areas.
- Form a study group of teachers using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Adult Development*
    o http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=893
- Form a study group using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Adult Multiple Intelligences*
    o http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=895
- Form a study group using NCSALL's study circle guide on *Teaching and Learning in Authentic Contexts*
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- Encourage teachers to read and share articles from the multiple issues of *Focus on Basics,* a publication that connects adult education research to instructional practice. (See Section III for titles.)
    o http://www.ncsall.net/?id=31

LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMIES

Possible Strategies for ESL EFL

For those teachers and program managers who need help with:

- **The basics of teaching ESL, add the Virginia ESL Starter Kit to their professional development plan**
  - http://www.valrc.org/resources/buildingbasics/index.html
- **Creating lesson plans, add the following to their professional development plan:**
  - **OTAN lesson plan builder** http://www.adultedlessons.org/login.cfm?fuseaction=login
- **ESL Program Standards,**
  - https://www.tesol.org/advance-the-field/standards/standards-for-adult-education from TESOL
  - https://www.dllr.state.md.us/gedmd/eslstandards.pdf from Maryland Division of Adult Education
- **ESL Curriculum, look at**
  - **Massachusetts** http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/esol.pdf
  - **Tennessee** http://resources.clee.utk.edu/print/esol.pdf
  - **Arlington, Virginia's REEP program (ONE OF THE BEST)** http://www.apsva.us/cms/lib2/VA01000586/Centricity/Domain/74/reepcurriculum/index.html
- **Teaching Techniques**
  - **California's adult education Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN) and click on <Teaching Tools, and Resources>**
    - http://www.otan.us/
  - **Adult English Language Learner product search from the LINCS Resource Collection**
    - http://lincs.ed.gov/professional-development/resource-collection/search-resources?keys=&field_rcis_topic_areas_value%5B%5D=Adult+English+Language+Learners
- **Research on teaching ESL**
  - **The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has an excellent publication on ESL instruction and research**
    - www.cal.org
  - **Adult English Language Learner product search from the LINCS Resource Collection**
    - http://lincs.ed.gov/professional-development/resource-collection/search-resources?keys=&field_rcis_resource_type_value%5B%5D=Research&field_rcis_topic_areas_value%5B%5D=Adult+English+Language+Learners&=Search
  - **The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) ESL special collection**
    - http://literacynet.org/esl/tt-b.html

Red Flag: Goal Attainment: Program is not meeting performance benchmark for high school/GED completion.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**
6a. **Improper goal setting for possible accomplishments within the program year due to 1) student not ready for that level work, or 2) student does not have enough time before the end of the program year to accomplish the goal** 6b. **Undiagnosed learning disabilities that could benefit from test accommodations** 6c. **Lack of effective instruction and aligned curriculum** 6d. **Lack of teachers' content knowledge needed to relay the information effectively**	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide or is it occurring in a few classes? • What criteria are being used when setting GED completion goals? Are they realistic for the program year? • Are all staff thoroughly trained on proper NRS goal setting? • How accurate is the process we are using to document completion of GEDs? • Are the data being entered correctly? • Are you using an effective curriculum aligned with GED test objectives? • Do teachers possess appropriate content knowledge and instructional delivery skills for the five components of the GED test? • On which of the GED sub-tests are students not achieving passing scores? On which sub-tests do they score the highest? What could account for the differences? • How do the entry EFLs differ among students with high school/GED completion goals who actually earn and don't earn a credential? • On average, how many contact hours do students with the same EFL who earn a high school credential attend? How does that compare with students who do not earn a credential? • Can your teachers identify what is not working (i.e., assessment, placement, instruction, materials, data input, special learning needs)?	• Conduct a thorough data analysis to examine: • Differences in student demographics between those who complete and those who do not • Appropriateness of goal setting based on entry EFLs • GED sub-tests with the highest and lowest pass rate • Differences in contact hours for completers versus non-completers • Examine the differences between classes with high pass/completion rates and those with low pass/completion rates. • Ensure that teachers can possess necessary content knowledge by having them pass the Official GED Practice Test before hiring • Encourage teachers to read NCSALL's *Focus on Basics* edition that focuses on GED instruction. http://www.ncsall.net/index.php?id=158

Red Flag: Goal Attainment: Program is not meeting performance benchmark for enrollment in postsecondary education/job training.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**
7a. **Improper goal setting for possible accomplishments within the program year due to 1) student not ready for that level work, or 2) student does not have enough time before the end of the program year to accomplish the goal.** 7c. **Lack of effective instruction and aligned curriculum for college transitions** 7c. **Lack of collaborative relationships for postsecondary/job training programs to assist transitioning students** 7d. **Inadequate follow-up procedures to verify enrollment**	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide or is it occurring in a few classes? • What criteria are being used when setting postsecondary education goals? Are they realistic for the program year? • Are teachers thoroughly trained in appropriate goal setting? • What transitional services are being provided to assist students with the college enrollment process? • Do students have available information about financial aid? • Can your teachers identify what is not working (i.e., goal setting, transition strategies, follow-up data, instruction matched to goal)? • Are you using an effective curriculum to prepare transitioning students? • Do you provide opportunities for students to visit area colleges and/or invite guest speakers to talk about available training opportunities (e.g., job fairs)?	○ Utilize the resources on the National College Transition Network (CTN), including curriculum resources, program planning, promising practices, and research. http://www.collegetransition.org/ • Build collaborative partnerships with colleges and job training programs and work with representatives from Financial Aid, Admissions, Student Support, and Developmental Studies Departments to secure additional support. • Develop a specialized College Transition Class that provides sufficient duration, intensity, and curriculum to help students transition directly into credit-bearing classes. (CTN recommends a minimum of 14 weeks of instruction at 6 hours/week of direct instruction in addition 12 hours for personal computing skills and approximately 60 hours for college academic skills.) ○ Introduce students to CTN's college transition student web page designed to help them understand the transition process and become familiar with the college resources. http://www.collegeforadults.org/ • Offer college survival skills classes or integrate the content of those classes into existing GED classes.

Red Flag: Goal Attainment: Program is not meeting performance benchmark for obtaining employment.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**

8a. **Improper goal setting for possible accomplishments within the program year due to 1) student not being ready for employment, or 2) student does not have enough time before the end of the program year to accomplish the goal.**
 	
8b. **Lack of available employment to match students' skills**
 	
8c. **Difficult follow-up with students who move from area/state**
 	
8d. **Lack of employment transition services (or failure to use what is available)**
	• How pervasive is this issue? Is it program-wide or is it occurring in a few classes?
	• What criteria are being used when setting employment goals? Are they realistic for the program year?
	• Are teachers thoroughly trained in appropriate goal setting?
	• What transitional services are being provided to assist students with the job search process including linkage with the WIA One Stop?
	• Can your teachers identify what is not working (i.e., goal setting, transition strategies, follow-up data, instruction matched to goal)? If so, engage them in examining and adapting other models.
	• Does the program have a pre-employment curriculum that can assist students with job search information?
	• Does the program have a strong relationship with the local One Stop or employment center?
	• What characteristics do students who achieve this goal have in common?
		• Conduct a thorough data analysis to determine:
		  o Common characteristics of goal achievers and
		  o Common characteristics of students who do not achieve the employment goal.
		  o Use the results to begin your planning process.
		• Offer specialized classes that focus on integrating employment skills with contextualized basic skills.
		  o West Virginia's Hit the Ground Running Program http://wvabe.org/ground.htm
		  o Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/i-best/
		• Develop a close working relationship with your local One Stop Center or employment agency and seek their support in transitioning your students to employment.

Red Flag: Goal Attainment: Program is not meeting performance benchmark for job retention.		
Possible Causes	**Probing Questions**	**Possible Strategies**

9a. **Improper goal setting for students with an initial goal of job retention**
9b. **Difficulty in NRS timing issues with job retention follow-up**
9c. **Difficult follow-up with students who move from area/state**
9d. **Lack of appropriate contextualized curriculum to assist students with job retention**
9e. **Students with weak employment histories or job motivation**
	• What criteria are being used when setting employment retention goals? Are they realistic for the program year?
	• What services are being provided to assist students with retaining employment?
	• Can your teachers identify what is not working (i.e., goal setting, job retention strategies, follow-up data, instruction matched to goal)? If so, engage them in examining and adapting other models.
	• Is passage of an employment exam required for job retention? If so, how can you contextualize instruction to match the testing objectives?
	• Does the program have a strong relationship with the local One Stop or employment center?
	• What characteristics do students who achieve this goal have in common?
		• Conduct a thorough data analysis to determine:
		  o Common characteristics of goal achievers and
		  o Common characteristics of students who do not achieve the job retention goal.
		  o Use the results to begin your planning process.
		• Offer specialized classes that focus on integrating employment skills with contextualized academics.
		  o West Virginia's Hit the Ground Running Program http://wvabe.org/ground.htm
		  o Washington's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST) https://www.sbctc.edu/colleges-staff/programs-services/i-best/
		• Develop a close working relationship with your local One Stop Center or employment agency and seek their support in helping with job retention services.

50 Questions to Begin Your Data Exploration

Directions:

Review the following questions and, in the space to the left of each question, place a:

✓ for questions you regularly answer (from data you collect)

? for questions you would like to know the answers to and can get from the data you currently collect, but you have not asked of your data

! for questions you would like to know the answers to but do not currently collect data for

0 for questions you aren't interested in knowing answers to

Enrollment over the past three years

1.___ Is the trend related to the proportion of male/female enrollees upward, downward, or the same?

2.___ Is the trend related to the proportion of young adult/older adult enrollees upward, downward, or the same?

3.___ Is the trend related to the proportion of Latino/African American/Caucasian enrollees, etc., upward, downward, or the same?

4.___ Is the trend of enrollees receiving public assistance upward, downward, or the same?

5.___ Is the trend on employed enrollees upward, downward, or the same?

6.___ Is the trend of enrollees at rural sites/urban sites upward, downward, or the same?

7.___ What is the average (mean) of hours of instruction offered in your program? What is the median? What is the mode? What is the range? How has this changed over the past three years?

8.___ What is the proportion of various instructional settings (lab/learning center versus classroom versus one-to-one tutoring versus distance learning)? How has this changed over the past three years?

9.___ What are your enrollment trends by program component (ABE, ESL, ASE, EL Civics)?

Retention (this year? over the past three years?)

10.___ What is your retention rate by gender?

11.___ What is your retention rate by age?

12.___ What is your retention rate by ethnicity?

13.___ What is your retention rate by employment status (employed versus unemployed)?

14.___ What is your retention rate for urban sites versus rural sites?

15.___ What is your retention rate by program component (ABE, ESL, ASE, EL Civics)?

16.___ What is your retention rate by funded program (e.g., county program or local site)?

17.___ What is your retention rate by teacher?

18.___ What is your retention rate by hours of instruction offered?

19.___ What is your retention rate by instructional setting (learning center versus classroom versus one-to-one tutoring versus distance learning)?

Learning Gain/Student Achievement (this year? over the past three years?)

20.___ What is the average learning gain by gender?

21.___ What is the average learning gain by age?

22.___ What is the average learning gain by ethnicity?

23.___ What is the average learning gain by employment status?

24.___ What is the average learning gain by urban versus rural site?

25.___ What is the average learning gain by program component (ABE, ESL, ASE, EL Civics)?

26.___ What is the average learning gain by funded program (e.g., county program or local site)?

27.___ What is the average learning gain by teacher?

28.___ What is the average learning gain by hours of instruction offered?

29.___ What is the average learning gain by instructional setting (learning center versus classroom versus one-to-one tutoring versus distance learning)?

30.___ What is the proportion of various assessment instruments used (TABE, CASAS, BEST, ABLE, etc.)?

31.___ What are the average learning gains by assessment instrument?

32.___ What is the percentage of students who have advanced an instructional level over the past year?

33.___ What is the percentage of students who have met their instructional goals over the past year?

34.___ What is the percentage of students who have earned a GED credential over the past year?

35.___ What is the percentage of students who have entered postsecondary educational or training programs over the past year?

36.___ What is the percentage of students who have moved off public assistance over the past year?

37.___ What is the percentage of students who have obtained employment over the past year?

38.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and instructional setting?

39.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and program component (ABE, ESL, ASE, EL Civics)?

40.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and intensity (hours) of instruction?

41.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and funded program?

Teacher Characteristics

42.___ What are the demographics of your teachers (age, gender, ethnicity)?
43.___ What is the average educational background of your teachers?
44.___ What is the percentage of your teachers who are credentialed?
45.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and teacher demographics (age, gender, ethnicity)?
46.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and teacher educational background?
47.___ What is the relationship between student achievement and credentialed teacher?
48.___ What is the effect of enrollment by student demographics by teacher demographics?
49.___ What is the effect of retention by student demographics by teacher demographics?
50.___ What is the effect of student achievement by student demographics by teacher demographics?

Now review all the questions for which you placed a [?] or a [!] and prioritize these by importance (i.e., degree of impact that the answers will have on program improvement). Which are the your top two questions under each category (enrollment, retention, learning gains, teacher characteristics)?

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