



Public Participation and Comment

7.1 Description of Activities

When the West Virginia Department of Education determined that a new State Plan was going to be written, it immediately asked that representatives of literacy providers meet in a variety of small focus groups to provide preliminary information regarding selected topics to be submitted. The range of individuals attending the sessions ranged from approximately six to more than 130. The topic of core indicators of performance and performance measures were discussed in focus groups at the Adult Basic Education section of the West Virginia Technical and Adult Education Conference in Charleston on August 6, 1998. More than 130 ABE staff registered for the conference.

The outcome of the August 6 session indicated that ABE practitioners desired a greater number of core indicators of performance and a corresponding greater number of performance levels. The Act requires three core indicators of performance be addressed and the ABE and literacy practitioners agreed upon seven indicators of program quality. The State agency will adopt additional State performance indicators which will improve adult education and literacy activities within the state.

ABE State and regional staff traveled to selected geographic areas to coordinate ten



selected adult education forums for adult education practitioners. Among the topics discussed were teacher training, the WV Works program, distance education, workplace education, the GED Program, needs assessment, student retention, the ABE application and application process, ABE funding of programs and a management information system. The forums were conducted through July, August and September.

As a result of the forums the ABE practitioners gained first hand knowledge as to how a management information system could help them better monitor and evaluate their individual programs. Teachers continued to state that teacher training was a vital component of the legislation, and teacher training should continue to provide training in technology, learning disabilities, and implementation of the new ABE curriculum. With the need for long-range planning for multi-year grants and additional areas to be addressed, it is clear that intense technical assistance will be necessary to assist local providers in the application process.

Another forum outcome indicated that there were additional distance education needs within the State. The Distance Education Coordinator will initiate and supervise the presentation of new material on the Public Broadcasting System. Beginning in the fall of 1998 a thirty-nine week *Skills for the Workplace* will be broadcast on PBS. This series will prepare students for the world of work, finding employment, success on the job, career changes, and sole proprietorship. It targets displaced workers and other adults requiring assistance in locating, landing or upgrading



jobs. An additional television series, *English Works*, will be broadcast for limited English proficient students. This series uses a series of twenty minute sessions to cover everyday topics such as “small talk,” “reading forms,” “dealing with mistakes,” etc. In addition, the Televised ABE program will continue to offer adults a chance to obtain their GED.

Forum outcomes indicated that ABE practitioners want the Workplace Education Program and the General Educational Development Program to continue their quality programs to adults within and outside the workforce.

Input into the proposed State Plan was sought from the Governor’s Council on Literacy. This distinguished organization is composed of representatives from the following adult education and literacy partners: Literacy Volunteers of America-WV, the West Virginia Department of Education, the Governor’s Cabinet on Children and Families, several representatives from the business sector, the West Virginia Library Commission, the West Virginia Bureau of Employment Programs, Head Start, State Agency-Corrections, a labor representative, the West Virginia Development Office, West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, higher education, public television, and West Virginia Laubach Literacy. The organization meets on a quarterly basis and since August one of the topics for discussion has been the new legislation and the proposed new State Plan. As an outcome of the meetings, the Council has proposed questions and concerns which have been addressed in the proposed State Plan. Members of the



Council also attended the West Virginia Adult Education Association conference in November and heard Mr. Andy Hartman, National Literacy Institute, address the literacy community on adult education and the new legislation. The Council will also be given the opportunity to respond to the State Plan during the public comment period.

Continued dissemination of the new Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and gathering of ideas for the new Five-Year State Plan were obtained at the West Virginia Adult Education Association Conference at Barboursville, W. Va. on November 11-12-13, 1998. More than 600 radio and television stations, newspapers, education groups, legislators and other interested groups and citizens received an invitation to attend the hearing.

Individuals at the hearing voiced comments on a variety of topics. One individual stated that he believed the new legislation is emphasizing the achievements of adults in grade levels 9-12 at the expense of lower academic level adults. Another individual questioned how her program could track the success of ABE participants if the participants obtained their GED or obtained a job after the program ended on June 30. Volunteer literacy groups voiced concerns regarding their programs since the three core indicators of performance seemed to heavily emphasize some end-results not associated with their programs. A series of printed comment forms were available for individuals to submit their individual written comments. The ABE program will also participate in a West Virginia legislative "Joint Standing Committee on Finance Block Grant



Hearing” on January 15, 1999. This hearing will enable the public and private sector to add any additional comments, suggestions and recommendations to the State Plan.

After the first draft of the Five-Year State Plan was written it was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education. After gaining the board’s approval, the document was circulated throughout the state for a 30-day comment period. Groups that received the Plan for comment are the following: businesses, industry, labor unions, public educational agencies and institutions, private and public educational agencies and institutions, voluntary organizations, community organizations, state employment and training agencies, health and human resource organization, libraries, correctional institutions, all Regional Education Service Agencies (RESA ’s), and all boards of education in the State. The Governor of the State of West Virginia will receive a copy of the Plan for his comments and suggestions. In addition, the proposed State Plan was made available on the ABE webpage for public review and comment.

The West Virginia Department of Education will be holding regular meetings with the West Virginia Human Resource Investment Council (HRIC) Executive Director, Mr. Dennis Davis, regarding any comments, suggestions and comments to implement within the State Plan. The final draft of the State Plan will be submitted to HRIC for additional comments.

All suggestions and comments were considered and changes in the plan were made where appropriate (see pg.6A). After all suggestions were incorporated into the State Plan, it was



presented to the West Virginia Board of Education in March 1999 for its final approval.

7.2 Governor's Comments

The proposed State Plan was submitted to the Governor and any comments regarding the State Plan are submitted to the Secretary of Education (see 6B).



Section 7.0
State West Virginia

Comments: West Virginia Adult Basic Education Five-Year State Plan. Comment Period 1-14-99/2-13-99			
Plan/Sections	Individual/ Organization	Comments	Action N = No response NA = Not accepted A = Accepted
Section 3.0	Sally Adkins/ Governor's Council on Literacy	Insert "in consultation with business" in 3.1.2.B, goal 1.	Accepted
		Add "WV Roundtable, WV Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Alliance" to 3.1.2.B, goal 2, objective 1.	Accepted
Section 4.0 Performance Measures	Judy Seaman/ Randolph County Schools	The teacher and the Regional Adult Education Coordinator rather than the State should be able to set the performance measures in regard to student enrollment and student contact hours.	NA - The performance measures have been used in past years and have been accepted by the statewide staff. Programs in rural areas are provided additional leeway in meeting the performance guidelines.



Section 7.0
State West Virginia

<p>Section 8.0 Strategies for Providing Services to Targeted Populations</p>	<p>Robert Klein/ Monongalia County Schools</p>	<p>Better identification of English As A Second Language (ESL) needs in the Morgantown area.</p>	<p>Accepted- The West Virginia Department of Education will provide technical assistance to Monongalia County so it can conduct an ESL needs assessment.</p>
<p>Section 10. Description of Steps to Ensure Direct and Equitable Access to Funding</p>	<p>Robert Klein/ Monongalia County Schools</p>	<p>Funding should be provided to purchase materials in ESL programs</p>	<p>NA-Funding is provided on a county-wide basis rather than each specific program within the county. Designation of purchases is left to the county's discretion. The WVDOE will provide technical assistance to Monongalia County in regard to purchasing material for ESL.</p>