Ohio Aspire eGuide

Sections

Revised July 1, 2021

Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE)

The ODHE is the coordinating board for higher education in Ohio. Responsibilities of the ODHE include developing an independent annual report on the condition of higher education in Ohio and issuing an annual performance review of the chancellor. The ODHE also is responsible for advising the chancellor on issues of statewide importance affecting higher education.

Aspire, Ohio Adult Workforce Readiness Education

ohiohighered.org/aspire

Vision

To increase the number of highly trained and educated individuals in the workforce.

Mission

To provide high-quality, basic educational services to assist students in acquiring skills for success in postsecondary education/training and employment, to earn a living wage, and to be contributing members of society.

Goals

The Ohio Aspire program has five main goals.
1. Instructional Services - Ohio Aspire will sustain an effective delivery system that provides instructional support for adult students to maintain participation and meet their educational goals.
2. Partnerships – Ohio Aspire will work collaboratively with practitioners, students, and other key stakeholders to strengthen student services and to increase awareness of the value and impact of the Aspire program.
3. Professional Development – Ohio Aspire will maintain and enhance a comprehensive professional development system that provides adult educators with the tools to support student achievement in postsecondary education/training and employment.
4. Capacity – Ohio Aspire will continue to systematically expand capacity to serve more students.
5. Accountability – Ohio Aspire will maintain and enhance an accountability system that supports and recognizes program achievement.

State Plan

ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> State Plan

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the publicly-funded workforce system agencies submit a unified state plan which coordinates programs and services.

Ohio Department of Higher Education Aspire Staff

ohiohighered.org/sites/ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/aspire/Aspire-Program-Directory.pdf

ODHE Aspire staff provide leadership, technical assistance, and oversight to local Aspire programs in order to better serve all students, including those transitioning to postsecondary education. Contact information for Aspire staff is at the front of the Directory.

Programs

ohiohighered.org/aspire/locations

ohiohighered.org/sites/ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/aspire/Aspire-Program-Directory.pdf

Professional Development (PD)

ohioaspire.org > PD Planning Toolkit

Professional development for Aspire staff is conducted by the Aspire Professional Development Network. PD is conducted in a variety of ways including in-person, online, training packages, and webinars.   The PD Planning Toolkit is intended to provide information, resources, and a process to guide you in the development of a professional development plan. Work with your administrator to help determine which activities will assist with your individual professional growth and which activities will assist with the overall program's improvement.

Overview

The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) Aspire Adult Workforce Readiness Education program oversees grant eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the state and to operate programs that provide a comprehensive service model for adult education and literacy services. This funding is made available through the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

Federal and state Aspire funds are administered by the ODHE, which approves local grants submitted by local education agencies, community and four-year colleges, community-based organizations, and other eligible agencies.

Grant Guidance

ohiohighered.org/aspire/grants

The most up-to-date grant information is on the Aspire website.

Grant Systems

The grant is comprised of two separate systems – the online grant and CCIP.

Online grant application

ohioaspire.org -> log in to the PD System

The online grant is available in the PD System to the person who is assigned Director Access. This part contains the grant narrative, plans, projections, and budgets. Both the initial application and any revisions are entered into the online grant for review and approval by the State Aspire Office.

Fund requests

Ohio Department of Education Grants Management Quick Reference Guide

Funding is requested through the Ohio Department of Education's web-based financial budgeting system, Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP).

All awarded funds will be allocated on a cost reimbursement basis. Grantees will be reimbursed for expenditures, as approved, by requesting reimbursement through CCIP. Requests for reimbursement are submitted monthly by the agency's treasurer, and all documentation must be available upon request.

CCIP Access

Ohio Department of Education Grants Management Quick Reference Guide

The local Ohio Educational Directory System (OEDS) administrator assigns staffs' roles in CCIP. The Aspire administrator should be assigned, at a minimum, the Data View Funding role which gives him/her access to look at the budget in CCIP. Another option is the Data Entry Funding role that allows the person to enter the funding data in CCIP. Staffs' roles and access to the CCIP funding application are determined at the local level. It is the responsibility of the local OEDS administrator to keep the roles current and to deactivate the staffs' access upon termination.

Budget Guidance

ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Financial Management

All Aspire programs should consult with their treasurers or fiscal officers prior to submitting budgets for grants. Programs must maintain a financial management system that provides for accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the grant funds. The financial management system records must adequately identify the source and application of funds and must contain information pertaining to authorizations, obligations, unencumbered balances, assets, outlays (i.e., expenditures), income, and interest. Budgeted expenditures will be shown by purpose and object codes.

When reviewing and creating budgets or revised budgets for programs, administrators should consider the following items as applicable to their particular situations:
- staffing (i.e., administrators, coordinators, managers, data entry personnel, instructors)
- assessment instruments, books, materials, educational software, equipment
- publishing, printing
- Utilities, rent
- professional development, including conference fees
- travel (to class sites, community partner meetings, and conferences; conference fees)
- other needs

All budget questions should be directed to your state Aspire program manager.

Budget Revisions

Programs are permitted to revise their budgets to meet unanticipated needs. The state Aspire program must approve a revision prior to any activities, such as purchase orders issued, funds encumbered or expended, goods received, or services rendered, which are affected by the revision. Revisions received in "substantially approved" form will become effective once the ODHE has approved the revisions on the date that they were "substantially approved" (Authorized Representative approved).

The budget revision is a multi-step process:
1. Consult the treasurer/fiscal officer prior to making changes
2. Submit the budget revision in the online grant system for review

3. Update the budget in CCIP and submit for approval
4. Update the budget grid and narrative in the online grant application to match the changes in
5. CCIP including updating any sections affected by the revision.

This is a two-part process that takes place in both CCIP and in the Online Grant Application.

Project Cash Requests (PCR)
Ohio Department of Education Grants Management *Quick Reference Guide*

For Aspire Instructional and IELCE grants, the Project Cash Request (PCR) needs to be submitted via the CCIP. The PCR can be found in the Funding Application in CCIP.

All payments must be requested by the districts or agencies by submitting PCRs electronically to the Ohio Department of Education. The PCR form is located both in the CCIP materials and on the ODE website.

"Substantially approved" is defined in the CCIP as "the date that the superintendent or designee has approved the grant."

Final Expenditure Reports
Ohio Department of Education Grants Management *Quick Reference Guide*

For grants in the CCIP, Final Expenditure Reports (FERs) must be submitted by the treasurer through the CCIP no later than September 30. FERs are on the Sections pages on the Funding Applications sides of CCIP grants. FERs are completed by fiscal representatives.

A separate electronic Corrections FER, on the Aspire website not in CCIP, is required to show how funds were expensed at the prison, jail, and/or community corrections sites.

Overview

- Operating an Aspire program requires the local staff to review the needs of the community and decide on what services are needed.
- Indicators of Program Quality (IPQ) — all funded Aspire instructional programs operate within a framework of program quality, a set of standards that reflect effective and efficient program performance.
- Improving an Aspire program is important to continuously better serve students.
- Collaborations require consistent effort in order to be sustained. Programs should collaborate with the stakeholders and communities they serve to develop and maintain partnerships that prove effective for all involved parties: students, adult education programs, the business community, social services, One-stops, postsecondary education institutions, the advisory committee, and others.
- The Program Improvement and Consultation Plan (PICP), Desk Review, and On-Site Reviews are designed to assist Program Managers and local programs with improving student achievement and program outcomes.

Operating and Maintaining an Aspire Program
Indicators of Program Quality (IPQ)

All funded Aspire instructional programs operate within a quality-driven framework that reflect effective and efficient program performance. Indicators of quality include:
1. Student Achievement
   - Students demonstrate progress toward attainment of literacy skills, including reading, writing, and speaking in English, and computing and solving problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family and in society.
   - Students transfer learning from the classroom to the rest of life; articulate what they know and are aspire to do in relationship to their goals; demonstrate increased proficiency in the use of multiple skills that allow them to be placed in postsecondary education or training; gain unsubsidized employment or retain employment; or earn secondary school diplomas or Ohio High School Equivalency Diplomas or HSEs.
2. Physical Environment
   - The program is housed in a safe, age-appropriate and student-friendly learning environment that is in good condition and properly maintained with adequate space and equipment. Buildings are readily identifiable as instructional sites and posted signage is present.
3. Program Planning and Administration
   - The program planning and administration process is based on a written plan, the grant(s), implemented and guided by evaluation.
   - All staff paid from Aspire funds are formally evaluated, in writing, on a yearly basis to include evidence of staff observations.
4. Curriculum and Instruction
   - The program has a written curriculum and plans instruction matching students' needs and learning styles.
   - Assessment results are used to guide development of individual learning plans.
   - All programs have a written curriculum that is adult appropriate and is built on a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice.
5. Professional Development
   - The program has an ongoing professional development process linked to a

  professional development plan that supports program and organizational goals.
  - Program determines individual and program professional development needs.
6. Support Services
  - The program provides a system for support services that promotes students' achievement of goals.
  - Program staff possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to make appropriate, informed referrals to support services offered within the program and in the community to reduce student barriers.
7. Program Promotion and Recruitment
  - The program successfully recruits from the populations in the community identified in the AEFLA, Title II of the WIOA as needing literacy services. *(Additional resources for developing a Data-Driven Recruitment plan are available in the PD system under "Other professional development options: - Supplemental and complementary courses". Data-Driven Recruitment is listed in the Program management section.)*
8. Transitions
  - The program provides Aspire transitions services that facilitate students successfully progressing to postsecondary education, training, and/or employment.
  - The program provides instruction aimed at addressing the gaps in knowledge and skills needed for success in postsecondary education and the workplace (e.g., integrated education and training (IET), algebra, advanced and writing, critical thinking).
  - The program provides support in the areas of career assessment and advising.

Policies
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies

The most current versions of policies are maintained on the State Aspire Website. An important role of the program administrator is to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable about and following Aspire policies.

Program Planning

Once an organization receives an Aspire grant, the following are suggestions to assist in starting a program. There is no specific sequence to these items. These items can overlap, and programs should revisit each as adjustments are made in program services and operations.

Needs Assessment

A needs assessment is used to determine the characteristics of the local community. Based on the data, the adult education program can determine the scope of the program, including the number and type of services and classes to offer, class locations, schedules, staffing, instructional materials, and training needs.

Programs should review the needs assessment as described in the application and determine whether a revised needs assessment of the target population is required. Methods for assessing need might include data from government reports, surveys, and public comment. Data collected from the target population should include but not be limited to the following:

- number of years of prior schooling
- educational needs (e.g., ESOL, ABE, high school equivalency, work skills development, citizenship)

- demographics, including employment status; social economic status; ethnicity and race; age; marital status; number of children; availability for instruction (i.e., days of the week, hours of the day)

Personnel

Each program should have clear expectations of its staff consistent with its philosophy, mission, goals, and standards for program quality. Guided by these expectations, the program should develop a specific staffing plan. Minimum qualifications for both instructional and non-instructional staff should be clearly outlined. The local program is required to keep personnel records, including time and effort documentation, for all paid Aspire staff in accordance with local human resource procedures and grant requirements. Records must include verification of qualifications and professional development for all staff. Programs are required to keep written job descriptions of all paid and volunteer staff, both instructional and non-instructional. Annual written evaluations to include frequent classroom observations are also required.

Sites and Class Schedules

Locations for classes should reflect the results of the needs assessment and Aspire advisory committee suggestions. Suitable sites should provide easy access to students and be in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Indicators of Program Quality (IPQ).

- Programs might consider entering into a service contract agreement with participating sites. The program and each site should meet before the beginning of classes. If the adult education program is using classroom space in a school, the teachers whose classrooms are being utilized should be included in such meetings so all parties will agree on how to share the spaces. Programs should expect to invest time on an ongoing basis with each site.
- Another consideration is that many schools and buildings have regular hours of operation. This includes janitor hours and timers on heating and air conditioning. If the adult education program is providing classes at off times, arrangements need to be made for such matters.
- It is recommended that program administrators provide representatives of their sites (e.g., principals, librarians) and partners with annual or semi-annual updates of the size and scope of the classes at that site, including student retention.
- The class schedule should reflect the results of the needs assessment and advisory committee input. The more intensive the classes (more contact hours per week), the higher the probability that students will achieve their goals. Program administrators should develop annual calendars of classes and sites with all partners in consideration of each site's hours of operation and annual calendars. Some schools close during holidays and summer months, but programs should not close longer than four consecutive weeks. The class schedule should take these fluctuations into account.

Books and Materials

The choices of instructional resources are a matter of identifying materials that best meet student needs and should be based on students' achievements on the assessment tests. The educational resources should be defined by the scores each student obtains on the standardized tests used for placement.

The variety of instructional resources that may be used in the educational process is diverse and can come in many different formats. Regardless, instructional resources should be aligned with the Ohio standards and benchmarks. Resources such as Eureka! are available through the OLRC. The Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) has additional resources.

Programs may not require students to purchase textbooks, but it is a good practice to ask students if they would like to purchase a textbook in order to write in it and keep it.

Communication and Recruitment

Programs should design communication and recruitment strategies to match the target audience so that services are attractive and accessible to those most in need. Efforts should be made to communicate the value and purpose of the program to the community and learners. Strategies that maximize personal contact with prospective students and invite participation from the adult learners generally have the most impact.

Managing an effective Aspire program is much easier when you share experiences with other providers. Programs and staff should become familiar with each other regionally and statewide. Visiting other Aspire programs may provide insight into new ways of operating the program. Other program administrators are invaluable sources of information.

Advisory Committees

While not required, it is a good practice for Aspire programs to establish and maintain advisory committees. The committee should be composed of a broad spectrum of community representatives, including former and current students. Programs are also encouraged to include WIOA partners, affiliated school districts and subcontractors. The committee should review the activities of and make recommendations for planning, implementing, and evaluating the Aspire programs.

Agendas for these meetings may include topics, such as:

- the approved grant application
- conducting a needs assessment (or discussion of the results)
- agreements between partners
- professional development
- class locations and schedules
- recruitment of students
- student and program performance
- program services

Record Keeping and Reporting

Programs must maintain accurate program, staff, and student data records, including but not limited to:

- enrollment information
- placement and progress testing
- contact hours/attendance
- retention rates
- high school equivalency completions
- exit follow-up information
- certification of teachers

- fiscal personnel

The Ohio LACES data management system stores collected student and program data. Programs have quick access to important information for each student, staff, class, and site in order to provide ongoing evaluation and make adjustments and corrections as needed.

To engage in a process of continuous program improvement, administrators should conduct regular and ongoing systematic support, observation, and evaluation of each teacher at each site. In the grant application, each program should describe how it will administer ongoing monitoring, correct deficiencies, and provide continuous improvement.

Retention

Intensity and duration of instruction affect achievement of students' goals. The type of class that is most effective depends on student needs, literacy levels, and curriculum offered. In general, classes offered for more hours in a week and more weeks per year are more effective for student goal achievement and retention. It is important that students participate long enough to ensure accuracy and reliability of posttest assessments administered to them to measure educational gain. Guidelines are available in the Aspire Assessment Policy.

Multilevel classes affect the instructional environment and student learning gains. Although teaching multilevel classes is challenging, many programs organize classes in this way due to limited resources or low enrollments at some levels or sites. Multilevel classes with a large number of low-level learners may face student advancement challenges. Instruction is difficult when students' literacy levels are too diverse within classes to be adequately addressed by staff or when programs have too many such classes. It is best to have instructors who can organize materials and instruction at several levels. Many times, all students can be exposed to a new topic. The differences lie in the depth of the presentation and expected knowledge.

Student interest affects the instructional environment and learner gains. Maintaining student interest and motivation is key to student success.

Managed enrollment

Managed enrollment affects programs that have had an open enrollment structure. However, with the emphasis on accountability and more intense instruction, managed enrollment improves registration and retention. Managed enrollment is defined as classes where a student may enter an instructional program only during specific enrollment periods, attend specific classes for the duration of class terms, continue in the same classes for subsequent terms only by re-enrolling, and miss no more than a prescribed number of class sessions within terms.

Improving an Aspire Program

Evaluation of Aspire information will assist administrators in continuously improving their Aspire programs. When needed, the state Aspire staff will work with local programs in developing program continuous improvement plans.

Ohio Aspire's Monitoring System consists of four parts:
- Program Improvement Consultation Plan (PICP)

- Data Monitoring
- Desk Review
- Risk Assessment

Program Improvement Consultation Plan (PICP)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Required Documents -> PICP

The Program Improvement Consultation Plan (PICP) is a prescriptive performance improvement tool resulting from a collaborative process designed to assist local program administrators as they examine data and select and implement strategies for program improvement.

The primary objectives of the PICP are to 1.) assist programs in analyzing data and to perform a gap analysis to identify program improvement efforts and 2.) identify strategies, resources, and tools to support successful student transitions to postsecondary enrollment

Data Monitoring

In order to ensure programs are working towards their proposed targets, Aspire Program Managers review program data monthly including, attendance, assessment, and enrollment.

Local Program Desk Review

ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Accountability -> Desk Review

Aspire programs are evaluated annually using Ohio's Aspire Desk Review process. The Desk Review should be seen as an opportunity to identify areas of strengths. Programs can then develop plans leading to the attainment of better program outcomes and continuous improvement. Depending on the outcomes and ratings on the Desk Review, Program Managers may develop an improvement plan in conjunction with the local programs.

Risk Assessment
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies -> Risk Management

Risk Management is an audit requirement for all agencies receiving federal funds (2 CFR 200.331). The purposes are: (1) Pre-Award - to determine whether an organization is managerially and financially responsible and capable to carry out the Aspire grant award, and (2) Post-Award – to determine the appropriate monitoring of the Aspire grantee.

Local Program On-site Review
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Accountability -> Program Review Instrument

Federal guidelines require the state to review Aspire- funded programs.

There are two primary benefits for conducting an on-site review:

- For state Aspire program managers, reviews provide an opportunity to visit programs and interact with students and staff while meeting federal requirements.
- For local programs, the review process is an opportunity for both professional growth and continuous program improvement.

The local Program Review Instrument consists of four content areas, which represent components of program accountability (i.e., IPQ, Local Program Data Certification Checklist):

1. Administration
2. Local Program Data Certification Verification
3. Staff Development
4. Student Experience Model

Accountability

Grant Obligations and Considerations

ohiohighered.org/aspire/grants -> Instructions and General Information

ODHE, as the state fiscal agent, is authorized to ensure grantee compliance with all federal and state requirements. One way of ensuring compliance is through formal grant obligations and considerations, which are agreed to upon application for an Aspire grant.

Sharing the grant document with all staff assists them to better understand their connection to the performance outcomes as outlined in the grant.

LACES

LACES is the database system designed to collect student, site, and program data for local, state, and federal reporting and accountability. All required information collected on the Student Registration Form, Progress Form, and Exit Form must be entered into LACES. The LACES Manual provides information to efficiently use the system.

LACES provides the data used to complete the APR and conduct state-level data matches on the federal and state Core Indicators of Performance (CIPs). It is important for all staff to be familiar with the performance targets or new Minimum Performance Levels (MPLs) each year. The first staff meeting annually is a good time to review this information.

Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)/Minimum Performance Levels (MPLs)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Accountability -> Ohio Aspire Approved Minimum CIP

Each spring, the state Aspire program negotiates with the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and establishes Ohio's performance indicator for Measurable Skill Gain.

In preparing state-proposed levels of performance for MSG and the CIPs, considerations are given to levels of completion reported for literacy levels of other states. In addition, state and local performance data on MSG and CIPs for past years are reviewed. The levels of performance in the plan establish a baseline of performance data for the state to use in promoting continuous improvement.

In the process of completing the Aspire Desk Review, a program is rated on each CIP by comparing the MPLs and the program's actual performance level. This comparison provides a rating for the local programs based on the achievement levels for the EFLs as determined by standardized assessments and the follow-up measures, such as employment, entering postsecondary education or training, obtaining an HSE. The local program Desk Review is explained in further detail on the following pages.

Required Documents and Information

Aspire Grants

Local programs are required to keep their Aspire Grants current in the online and CCIP systems. When budgetary and programmatic changes are necessary, both CCIP and the revised grant must be submitted to the regional program manager for approval.

Annual Performance Data

LACES data should be kept current throughout the program year. For federal and state reporting purposes, a snapshot of local program data is taken annually. Prior to the snapshot, programs must complete necessary data error checking in LACES.

Data Certification Checklist
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Required Documents -> Data Certification Checklist

The Data Certification Checklist provides local programs with a guide to the policies, processes, and materials that need to be in place to verify the level of implementation of the NRS data quality standards. Programs are to use this checklist to rate their implementation of the data quality standards in their data collection procedures. Programs are also to describe details of their data collection policies and procedures for some standards. The administrator of the program must certify the checklist and it must be submitted to the state Aspire program at the end of August each year.

Final Expenditure Report (FER)
Ohio Department of Education Grants Management [Quick Reference Guide](#)

The Final Expenditure Report (FER) closes each project year by reporting that funds have been expended in compliance with the approved budget. The FER is reported in the CCIP system and completed by the treasurer or chief financial officer. Programs with a corrections education component are required to submit a corresponding paper FER to the Aspire office.

Memorandum(s) of Understanding

An MOU must be filed with the Ohio Department of Higher Education state Aspire office for any agreement that involves a fiscal arrangement or purchase service contract (e.g., transfer of funds to a sub- contracted entity).

Programs may also send other non-required MOUs. An MOU establishes a clear understanding of how a partnership will function and clearly defines the role of each partner.

Personal Confidentiality Statement (PCS) Form
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Required Documents -> Personal Confidentiality Form

Aspire program administrators are responsible for keeping confidential student information secured and inaccessible to those not approved. One of the requirements to ensure confidentiality of student- identified information is to have current, signed Personal Confidentiality Statements on file with the state Aspire office. The statements constitute an agreement between the local Aspire program and the state Aspire office of the conditions surrounding the use of data and receipt of data match records provided by the state office.

Schedule A Budget Narrative and In-kind Maintenance of Effort (MOE)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Required Documents -> Schedule A

For Ohio Aspire programs to achieve and maintain the necessary non-federal expenditure of funds on an equitable and annual basis, the state must document all non-federal expenditures and in-kind contributions that support the delivery of Aspire services.

Overview

- The Student Experience Model (SEM) promotes systematic processes to ensure consistent student services and increase student retention.
- Orientation is designed to assist students in determining their goals for enrollment in the program. All students receive an orientation that takes place at a time other than during instructional time.
- The Aspire Portfolio System is a purposeful collection of student work and administrative information based on student goals and standards-based education.
- Instruction brings adult students' real-world knowledge and needs (e.g., home, work, community) together with academic skills (e.g., reading, writing, math, critical thinking, listening, speaking).
- Student follow up supports students in successfully achieving their goals
- In the delivery of services to meet the program's goals, the program must provide instruction that:
  - integrates the Indicators of Program Quality (IPQs)
  - is based on research principles of adult learning
  - uses student-centered, holistic approaches to teaching

Additionally, programs must strive to provide professional development opportunities for their staff that meet both the programmatic and individual needs for professional growth.
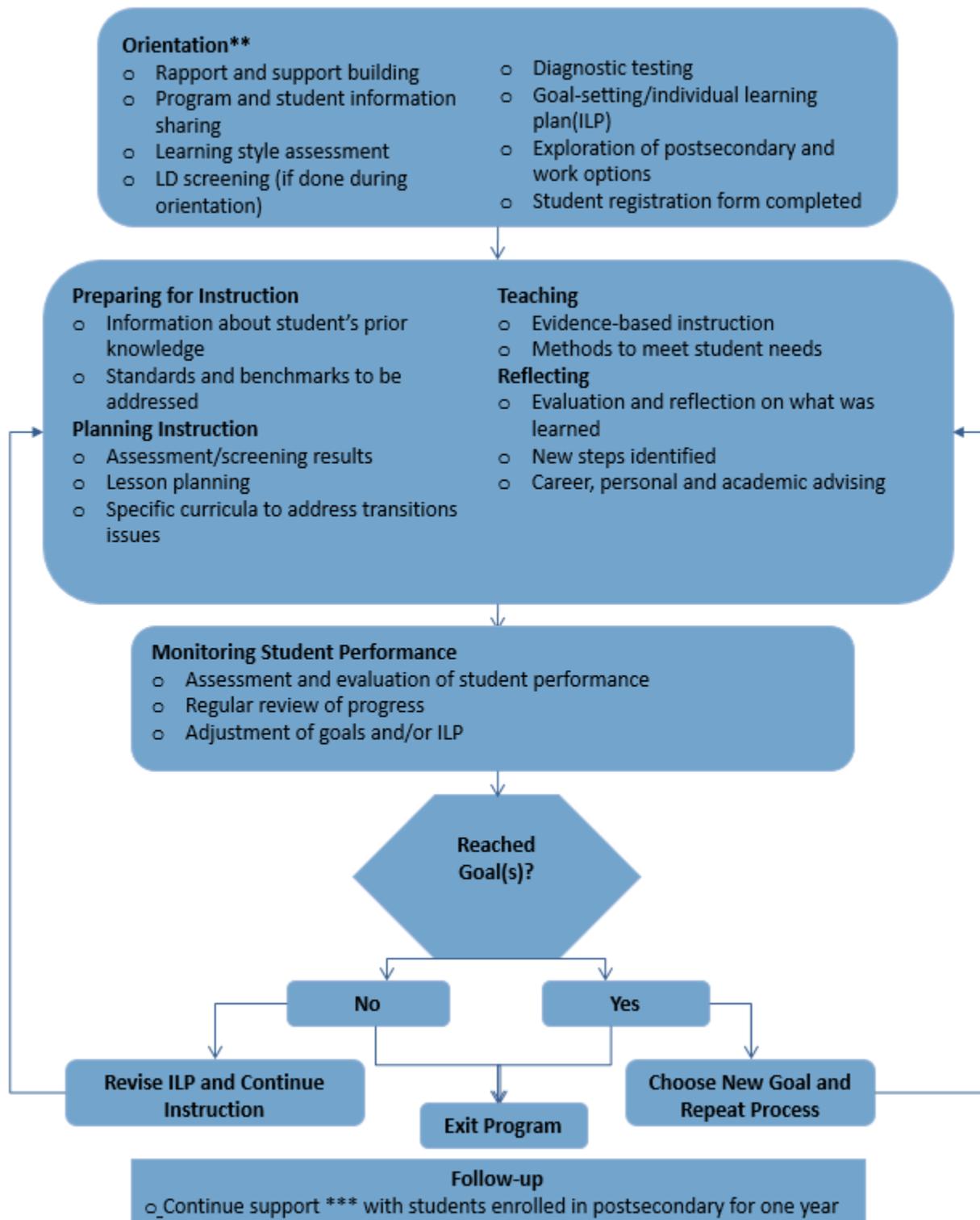
Student Experience Model (SEM)
ohioaspire.org/Teacher Resources

Retention is crucial to student success; therefore, it is imperative that programs incorporate structure, evidence-based strategies, and practices that encourage student motivation, persistence, and achievement.

The graphic of the Student Experience Model shows the elements of the model as separate and distinct. However, based on the variety of student needs and Aspire program services available, some of these elements may overlap or blend together.

Student Experience Model*

Orientation**
- o Rapport and support building
- o Program and student information sharing
- o Learning style assessment
- o LD screening (if done during orientation)
- o Diagnostic testing
- o Goal-setting/individual learning plan(ILP)
- o Exploration of postsecondary and work options
- o Student registration form completed

Preparing for Instruction
- o Information about student's prior knowledge
- o Standards and benchmarks to be addressed

Planning Instruction
- o Assessment/screening results
- o Lesson planning
- o Specific curricula to address transitions issues

Teaching
- o Evidence-based instruction
- o Methods to meet student needs

Reflecting
- o Evaluation and reflection on what was learned
- o New steps identified
- o Career, personal and academic advising

Monitoring Student Performance
- o Assessment and evaluation of student performance
- o Regular review of progress
- o Adjustment of goals and/or ILP

Reached Goal(s)?

No → **Yes**

Revise ILP and Continue Instruction

Exit Program

Choose New Goal and Repeat Process

Follow-up
o Continue support *** with students enrolled in postsecondary for one year

*The Student Experience Model may vary based upon program structure and student needs.

**Intervention and referral to other services may occur at anytime during the student's experience in an Aspire program.

***Support –defined as academic intervention per the concurrent enrollment policy

Revised June 2017

The SEM is based on student retention research. The framework was developed to help local programs serve Aspire students effectively. It is designed to:

- promote the development of systematic processes, procedures, and program components that enhance the quality of literacy services and increase student retention
- help local programs meet standards, benchmarks, and accountability requirements

SEM features:

- The SEM represents good practices employed by Aspire programs.
- It delineates the sequence of events that students encounter as they go through the educational process.
- The SEM may vary based upon program structure and student needs.
- Intervention and referral to other services may occur at any time during students' experiences in Aspire programs.
- Support is defined to be academic intervention per the concurrent enrollment policy.

Guidance on the Workplace Education Model can be found under the heading Supporting Documents at ohiohighered.org/aspire/ reference. This model may be followed for Aspire programs offered at worksites, especially when services have been customized to meet employers' needs. If Aspire programs choose not to use the Workplace Education Model, the SEM or the modified SEM must be followed.

Orientation

Orientation Purpose

The purpose of orientation is to ensure that all prospective students are provided with the information and assistance they need to make informed decisions about their participation in Aspire. Some individuals may have been away from the educational process for a long time, so orientation is a way to reintroduce the learning process and acquaint participants with Aspire in Ohio.

Orientation Features

- Orientation is required for all persons interested in participating in an Aspire program.
- All Aspire-funded programs are expected to implement a formal, separate student orientation that includes the required activities detailed on the following pages.
- Orientation is facilitated by qualified, knowledgeable Aspire staff.
- Orientation is offered at regularly scheduled intervals to support managed enrollment.
- The length of orientation is determined by individual programs.

Required Orientation Activities

Local Aspire programs may determine the order of required orientation activities and programs may find it beneficial to combine some of the activities. However, all programs' orientations must include the following required activities:

Rapport and Support Building — This includes activities (e.g., icebreakers, motivational films, student success stories, group activities, mini- lessons) that help the student build confidence, feel comfortable, establish relationships, identify support systems, and increase levels of trust and motivation.

Program and Student Information Sharing — Program staff and the student exchange information, so the student may make an informed decision about participation in an Aspire program. This includes:

- program information — oral and written information about the program's goals, services, structure, delivery, organization, policies, procedures, schedules, referral and support services, the instructor's role, and the program's expectations of students
- student information — student contact information (i.e., name, address, telephone number, and student Social Security number) and other demographic data
- assessment, the Portfolio System, and the standards and benchmarks – it is important to introduce these items to students during orientation, so they may be aware of the ways in which learning will be assessed, monitored, and documented. (For more information, see the **Assessment** section of this guide.)

Initial Goal-setting Instruction — This includes basic instruction on how to set goals. (See the Goal- setting portion of this section for further information.)

Initial Assessment — Programs should administer instruments for the purpose of determining the student's estimated skill level and the appropriate diagnostic testing level for the entering student. The results of the locator/initial assessment should not be used to determine the subject area in which the student should be tracked. (See the Assessment Policy under the heading Policies at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference for exceptions and further information.)

LD Screening - Some programs may choose to conduct a screening for possible learning disabilities during orientation if the program's Learning Disabilities Policy and Planning Guide calls for screening all students. More information about screening options appears in the LD Policy and Planning Guide. (See the LD Policy and Planning Guide under the heading **Policies** at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference.)

Exploration of postsecondary and work options - This is an opportunity to build awareness of postsecondary and work options, especially those that students have direct access to through the program. Programs may choose to have students register on ohiomeansjobs.com during orientation. *NOTE, while Aspire students are encouraged to register on ohiomeansjobs.com, it may not be appropriate for all students, such as low-level ESOL students.*

Student registration form completion - Student forms, such as registration, release of information (RIF), and special needs if applicable, must be completed as the final step of orientation. See RIF and Registration under the heading Forms at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference.

Optional orientation activities

Based on the objective, focus of the program, program structure, student demographics, and other factors, programs may choose to expand orientation by adding additional topics or activities. Suggestions include:

- aptitude tests
- high school equivalency testing information
- vision and hearing screenings
- values identification and prioritization
- language acquisition principles
- listening skills strategies
- multiple intelligence surveys
- career needs assessments
- additional diagnostic assessments
- problem-solving strategies
- reading comprehension strategies
- skills and interests inventories
- workplace assessments
- study and test-taking strategies
- time management techniques

Registration and Enrollment

Registration
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Forms

Students are registered once they have made informed decisions to participate in Aspire programs - - usually at the end of orientations — and completed Student Registration Forms.

- Programs may choose to separate registration from the orientation process or include registration as the last orientation activity.
- All students must have completed Student Registration Form, which includes the Special Needs Screening
  - o Note: Most of the LD screening instruments are not appropriate for the non-native English-speaking population, and therefore, should not be administered to ESOL students. The Ohio Department of Higher Education State Aspire Program is not requiring or recommending that LD screenings be used with ESOL students at this time.
- Talking through students' goals and understanding his/her purpose for registering is an important part of process.

Enrollment

Enrollment means that a student has received a minimum of 12 hours of service in an Aspire program. The student is called a participant. Until an individual has received 12 hours of service, he or she is considered a reportable individual rather than a participant. Only enrolled students/participants are counted in the Annual Performance Report (APR).

Release of Information Form (RIF) and Revocation of Release of Information Form (R-RIF)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Forms

A signed RIF is required to share information about students for data match purposes. Service to students is not contingent upon their signing RIFs.

- At the time of registration, students must be informed of follow-up procedures, including use of Social Security numbers to determine attainment of employment, high school diplomas or equivalencies, or postsecondary education. At this time, students should be asked to complete RIFs. Program staff should explain to students the importance of this form for reporting
- Students under the age of 18 must have the signature of a parent or guardian.
- Students who previously signed RIFs but wish to revoke them must complete R-RIFs.
- All RIFs and R-RIFs must be maintained in a locked location at your program site. The forms can be found at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference, under the heading Forms.

Goal Setting and Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Development

Overview
- Goal setting must take place during orientation and after the completion of the diagnostic assessment.
- All students must have goals recorded as a part of the individual learning plan.
- Student goals may be modified anytime during a program year.
- Each student must have an individual learning plan.

Initial Goal Setting

Goal setting is one of the most important procedures of any learning experience. This ongoing process begins during orientation, extends into the creation of the student's individual learning plan, and continues throughout instruction as the student progresses. Initial goal-setting instruction helps prospective students begin the process of setting their own goals and making informed decisions about participation in Aspire programs. Program staff should explain the benefits and basic components of goal setting and the action steps involved. Goal setting may be offered individually or in a group setting. A chart illustrating the **Goal-setting Process** can be found on the following pages.

Introducing Goal Setting

What is a goal and goal setting?

- A goal is something that a person wants to learn, do, have, or be.
- Goal setting involves defining and prioritizing choices and deciding how to get from the beginning to the end.
- Effective goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound.

What are the benefits of goal setting to the student?

- Defining goals helps a student take action.

- Student benefits of goal setting include realized achievement, improved performance, enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem, and increased motivation and persistence.

What are the supports and barriers to goal achievement?

- A support network (e.g., family, friends, work and business contacts, support groups, professional counselors) may help in achieving goals. Students need to identify the support networks in their lives and recognize how support can help them overcome barriers.
- Certain factors in life may hinder the achievement of goals. Students need to identify those factors in their lives that are potential barriers to goal achievement and prepare themselves to deal with those factors.

Types of goals

To make goal setting more manageable, it is important to break down large goals into smaller goals that can be achieved in shorter periods of time. Goals may be divided into long-term, short- term, and immediate goals.

Long-term goals:

- are major and overarching
- provide general targets to aim toward
- may be distant
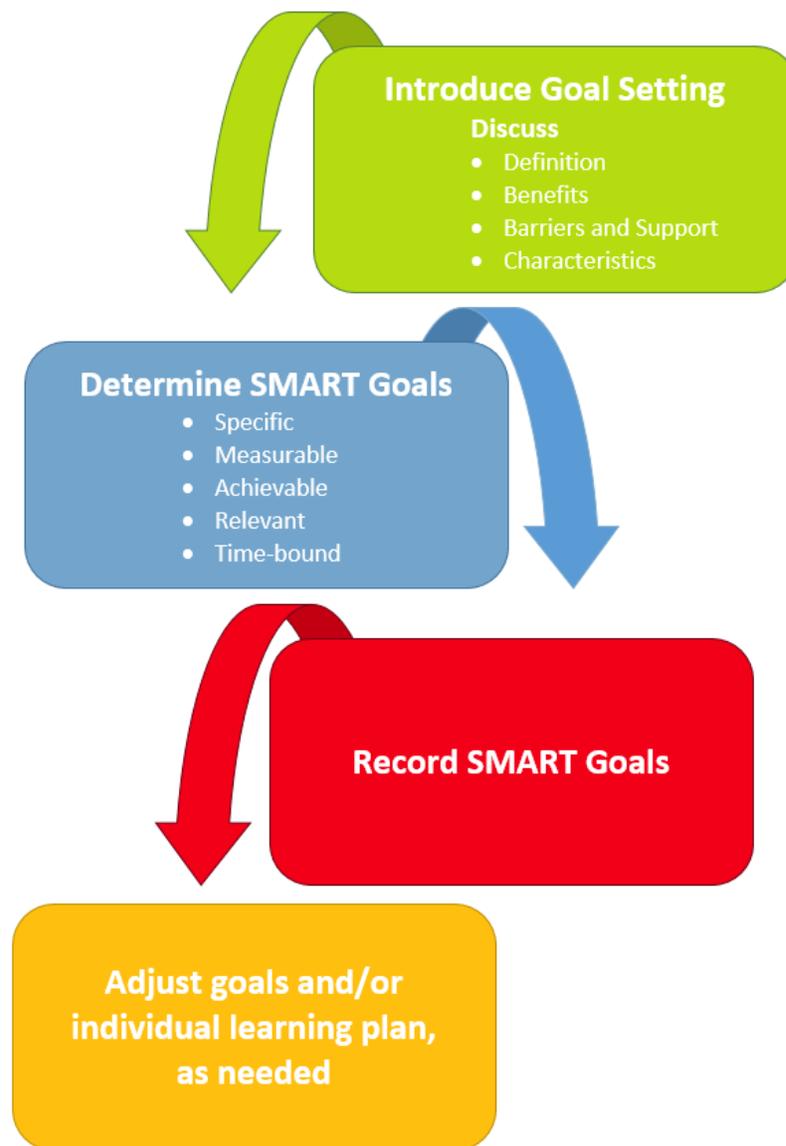- may extend beyond the program year (one year to five years)

Short-term goals:

- are smaller goals that support the long-term goals
- may be prerequisites for eventual achievement of long-term goals
- may be achieved in a relatively short period of time (one month to three months)

Immediate goals:

- have a narrower focus than short-term goals
- may combine actions and specific activities
- may contribute to the achievement of short- term goals
- should be frequently monitored to determine progress or level completion
- may be completed in a short period of time (three weeks to four weeks)
- should include steps or processes to provide students a clear path to completing immediate goals

Introduce Goal Setting

Discuss
- Definition
- Benefits
- Barriers and Support
- Characteristics

Determine SMART Goals
- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Record SMART Goals

Adjust goals and/or individual learning plan, as needed

Student implications are:

- If students have a clear vision of where they are going and the steps they will take to get there, they will be motivated to stay in the program.
- Goals provide long-term vision and short- term motivation by helping students measure progress or the levels of completion and take pride in their achievements.

Program implications are:

- Program performance is assessed by evaluating students' achievements
- Success in meeting program objectives may be increased by helping students set realistic goals that are achievable within the program year.

Identifying Students' Personal Goals

This part of the goal-setting process provides an opportunity to help students translate their personal goals into goals that can be achieved through Aspire.

- Determine students' long-term goals. — Based on the initial goal-setting instruction on long-term goals, program staff should help students determine their major, overarching goals. (See the preceding discussion of long- term goals.)
- Explain program and community services. — Program staff should inform students of available services and discuss how the services may help the students reach their long-term goals.
- Establish students' goals. — Program staff should help the students identify goals and explain how they will be measured and documented. The goals should be established after diagnostic testing has occurred.
- All students should identify goals from those listed on the Student Registration Form. Goals should be achieved during the program year.

Recording Students' Goals

Each Aspire student's long- and short-term goals must be recorded on his or her ILP. If the program chooses to use a goal form, it should include space for: student name, program name, orientation site (if different from program name), date, long-term goal, and short-term goal.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Development

What Is an Individual Learning Plan?

An Individual Learning Plan is a road map for the student and instructor to help the student reach his or her educational goals during the learning process. It reflects the immediate strategies, steps, and activities the student will employ to reach his or her goals.

Other names for Individual Learning Plans may include Career Education Plan (CEP); Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP); or Personal Learning Plan (PLP).

Features

- Each Aspire program must have an individual learning plan for every one of its students.
- Each Aspire program may develop its own individual learning plan format. The individual learning plan must include the required items, listed below.

Process

The instructor and student work together to create the student's ILP. When doing so they:

- discuss the importance of the process (i.e., planning, implementation, monitoring progress or level completion)
- discuss the roles of the instructor and student in the process
- designate the time frame in which to review goal progress and achievement
- record strategy information

Required Content

- student name
- orientation site (if different from the program site)
- short-term goals and activities and timeline for achieving them
- information about needed adaptations and accommodations, if applicable
- teacher name
- date form is completed
- program name, long-term goals, student work
- Student goals established in a one on one setting.

See the discussion of long-term, short-term, and immediate goals on the previous pages before recording information in the individual learning plan.

Refer to the Goal setting and Resources later in this section for further information.

Additional Contents

The individual plan may be one form or several. In addition to identifying information, the plan includes goals and the steps and activities to accomplish them. Goals should be realistic and broken down to a level where they can be obtained within a relatively short period. The student's plan should be developed in consideration of the student's educational functioning level, any content of particular importance to the student (e.g., specific career field goals, completing job applications, passing the citizenship test), learning techniques or strategies that would improve the student's performance as a learner, social skills that would help the student communicate and work with others, and methods of self-advocacy to assist the learner to articulate his or her rights and needs.

Standardized tests, diagnostic assessments, inventories, and screenings provide much information related to the student's basic skill strengths and weaknesses, learning strategy needs, instructional adaptations, and accommodations that may assist the student in the learning process. Discussions with the student when developing the plan will provide content areas of interest as well as social and self-advocacy needs.

The individual learning plan is not a static document and should be updated as needed during the course of the student's instructional time with the program. A time frame for meeting the immediate goal(s) and making comments (e.g., indication of whether the goal is met, explanation of why the goal is not met, date of reviews, revisions) are necessary.

Benefits of an individual learning plan

The plan is used to guide instruction. It:

- puts the student at the center of his or her learning plan
- requires that the student be an active partner in his or her learning process
- is tied directly to what happens in the learning process
- provides positive direction for goals
- improves program consistency across Aspire programs

- encourages frequent monitoring of progress toward goals
- is clearly written and understandable by the student and instructor
- responds to the unique and diverse needs of the adult student

Monitoring Student Performance

Overview

- Student progress monitoring must occur at least every 90 days.
- Level completion and advancement are demonstrated by results on a standardized posttest.
- Progress monitoring primarily involves review of the student's portfolio. When appropriate, standardized testing may also be a part of progress monitoring if the student has received an adequate number of hours of instruction or there is evidence indicating the likelihood that the student has advanced a level.
- Monitoring results, including any test information, must be recorded on the Student Progress Form and entered into LACES regularly.

Purpose and Features of Monitoring Student Performance

Student performance is monitored to provide:

- the student with ongoing feedback about his or her performance
- the instructor insight into the effectiveness of the instructional plan so areas can be adjusted as needed
- the program with current student information for the maintenance and updating of information in LACES

Monitoring Features

A formal review of each student's performance is required at least every 90 calendar days starting from the date of registration. Each student's standardized test information must be recorded on the Student Progress Form and entered into LACES. The **Monitoring Student Performance** table provides an overview of the activities involved in monitoring student performance.

Completing the Student Progress Form
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Forms

The Student Progress Form must be updated as needed to include progress assessment data. The form lists the assessments approved by the state Aspire office. This form may be modified to meet specific program needs. However, the basic content elements must be retained. The following pages include explanations regarding the completion of pertinent sections.

Monitoring Student Performance	
Tools	Details
Standards and Benchmarks	• Collect evidence that reflects students' progress toward and mastery of the standards and benchmarks. • Alter instructional strategies and materials to help students in mastering standards and benchmarks as needed. • Plan instruction for benchmarks in every standard, so students do not miss an application skill that would increase their likelihood for success in the next EFLs.
Portfolio Review	• Determine if the student has demonstrated subject area mastery as documented through: standards/benchmarks level completion, curriculum-provided assessments (including in-class or distance software), and/or teacher- or program-developed assessments. • Review achievements according to the baseline information used for placement (first portfolio review). • Use the level of performance identified in the last review as a baseline against which to measure progress and determine the appropriateness of administering standardized tests.
Assessment	• Administer standardized assessments per guidelines appearing in the Ohio Aspire Assessment Policy under the heading **Policies** at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference. • Use a variety of assessment measures, including diagnostic, formative, and summative, to gather student performance data. • Review assessment data to help in making decisions about changing resources, targeting or adjusting instruction, refocusing student efforts, and determining when to posttest with a standardized instrument. • Maintain and document specific hours of attendance between assessment and progress testing for all students and make the hours available for review by Aspire program managers. This data must also be entered into LACES regularly.
Goal Review	• Use formal and informal methods of evaluating student goals. If the student is making progress toward their short-term goals, he or she should continue working on the goals. • If the short-term goals have been met, new ones should be set and recorded. • If the review reveals that the student has met his or her long-term goal and is ready to exit the program, complete an Exit Form as directed. • If the student wishes to choose another long-term goal, revisit the goal-setting process, and complete a new goal form and ILP.
Individual Learning Plan • Informal Review • Formal Review	• Using the above monitoring tools, review the individual learning plan on a regular basis and make adjustments to the plan as needed. • Informal, possibly unscheduled, reviews offer a "snapshot" of the student's progress and allow more opportunity for decision making about his or her individual learning plan. • Using the above monitoring tools, formally review the individual learning plan at least every 90 calendar days and make adjustments to the plan as needed.

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Exiting Students

Overview

- All enrolled students must have completed Student Exit Forms when they exit their programs.
- Aspire programs use the Detailed or Total Attendance feature in LACES. The Total Hours field on the Exit Form is calculated from the information programs entered into LACES.
- Data should be entered and updated by the 10th of the following month.

Exit quarter is the quarter when one or both of the following occur:

- Instruction ends.
- The student has not received instruction for 90 calendar days and is not scheduled to receive further instruction

Procedures for Exiting Students

A student exits the program when either:

- instruction ends
- he or she has not received instruction for 90 calendar days and is not scheduled to receive further instruction

Exiting Features

- The exit date for individuals with 90 days of non-attendance is the last date of attendance for each student. Programs should wait until the 90 days of non-attendance have passed before setting the exit date in the system unless circumstances justify exiting a student sooner.
- Student exit data must be entered into LACES.

Follow Up

Overview

- Follow-up information for obtaining high school equivalency, employment, and transitioning into postsecondary education or training is obtained through state-level data matching.
- Only data-matching information is used to determine attainment of the high school equivalency.
- Programs may continue to report follow-up information through the Follow-up Survey if a student has entered postsecondary instruction or obtained employment not covered in data matching.

Data Matching

To comply with the WIOA and the NRS, Ohio is required to collect information relative to the Core Indicators of Performance after students exit Aspire programs. State and local Aspire programs must be consistent in their methods of collection and reporting data to ensure the comparability, reliability, and validity of the information.

State Data Matches Conducted	
Type of Data Match	Reasons for Collecting Information
HSE The state Aspire program has an interagency agreement with the ODE to conduct a data match for HSE information.	• To help students earn HSE or secondary school diploma • Programs receive all student data from the data match, including test forms, individual test scores, and pass/fail indicators.
ODJFS The state Aspire program has established an interagency agreement to access employment- related information from the ODJFS.	• To help students obtain a job or retain a current job • Programs receive quarters employed from the data matching.
Ohio Department of Higher Education The state Aspire program has an interagency agreement with the ODHE to conduct a match for postsecondary enrollment data.	• To help students enter postsecondary education or training • Programs receive student-specific information, including year/term enrolled and school/campus information.

NOTE: Only state-level data match information will be accepted as evidence of high school equivalency obtainment.

Follow-Up Surveys
*ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> * Follow-Up Survey for Employment and Postsecondary Outcomes

Programs should use the Follow-up Survey to collect data for students who enter postsecondary training and education in agencies and institutions or whose employers are not covered by the data match. Surveys and the list of students for whom follow-up is done must be kept on file.

The NRS includes exit-based outcome measures for students including employment, earning a high school equivalency, and entering post-secondary education or training.

Use a LACES data query to determine students who have exited and review data match information. Follow-up surveys should be sent to students whose employment or postsecondary transition were not included in data match results.

Overview

ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies -> Assessment Policy

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, describing, or quantifying information about performance or learning.

- Assessment begins at the student's initial point of contact with the Aspire program and continues throughout the student's involvement with the program.
- Results of assessment should be used to help guide instruction.
- Assessment involves both formal and informal evaluation of student progress and mastery of content.
- Assessment results provide the program, the instructor, and the student with the tools that they need to make good decisions or rethink previous decisions about the educational process.
- All students are to have a portfolio that includes an individual learning plan and student work. This portfolio may not be used to determine level completion or progression for reporting purposes, but it should be used to monitor student learning.
- To determine level completion and advancement, all students are to be assessed using state-approved standardized tests.
- Staff who administer standardized assessments must be trained in proper test administration procedures. Records must be maintained in the PDN history log of persons who were trained.

Selecting Assessments

- Offer a variety of assessment options to ensure accommodation of varied skills, goals, and learning styles.
- Select appropriate assessments for the population being served.
- Choose assessments that determine appropriate instruction for individual students.

Recording Assessment Results on the Student Progress Form

ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Forms -> Progress Form

A benefit of using online TABE assessments is that assessment data is imported daily from Data Recognition Corporation/TABE into LACES. If manually scoring assessments, programs are encouraged to record progress on the Student Progress Forms and in LACES in all areas for which instruction is provided. Scale scores from these assessments are required. The scale scores are used as the basis for determining students' Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) for placement and progress. LACES will automatically track in the subject that puts the student in the lowest level. However, programs may adjust the tracking subject. Level completion in any academic subject will count as a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)

Elements of Assessment for Placement, Progress, and Level Completion	
Assessment for Placement	Assessment for Progress and Level Completion
Standardized assessment for placement may assist in identifying student goals. Locator or Initial Appraisal • A locator or initial appraisal determines which diagnostic level of standardized assessment is appropriate for the student. (If the TABE is used, the Word List may be utilized for students functioning at the Beginning ABE literacy level). • The locator or initial appraisal assessment should be given prior to diagnostic testing, but it does not replace the full assessment. • If a locator test is not used, alternative assessments must be used to determine the appropriate placement test. Diagnostic Testing or Pretesting • Diagnostic testing involves administering a standardized assessment to determine the student's EFL. • A student's EFL, as determined by the diagnostic pretest scale score must be recorded on the Student Registration Form and the Progress Form. LACES will automatically assign the student's EFL based on his or her scale score. Areas for Assessment • Programs must at least test students in the basic skill areas in which the students want to be instructed, but they may also test in other areas. The program is encouraged to keep documentation of progress for all areas in which instruction occurs.	Standardized Testing • Ohio's Assessment Policy stipulates that standardized assessments must be used to determine if a student has completed one or more EFLs. • If the posttest is administered within six months of the pretest, a different form or level of the test must be used. • If the posttest is administered after six months of the pretest, the same form of the test may be used. Portfolio Review • Students' portfolios must be maintained to help instructors and students monitor students' learning and make decisions about when posttesting may be appropriate. *NOTE: Any student not receiving instruction in the last 90 days would need to be retested. See the Assessment Policy for guidelines related to retesting students who have "Stopped Out."* Students with diagnosed disabilities may need accommodations on standardized tests. Refer to the test publishers' manuals for the appropriate procedures to follow for accommodations. Students must have a formal record of disability to request assessment instruments in alternative formats and/or alterations in test administration procedures.

Progress- and Post-Testing

As a rule, programs should follow the publishers' guidelines for minimum hours of instruction needed before administering a progress test.

A posttest may be administered before a student has obtained the recommended amount of instruction only if there is evidence in the student's portfolio to substantiate a conclusion that the student may have completed a level. The program administrator must approve early posttesting on the Early Progress Test Exception Form and attach evidence to the form of student's work to justify early testing. This documentation must be maintained in the student's portfolio. Early testing should account for no more than 20% of progress tests within a fiscal year.

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Aspire Portfolio System

The Aspire Portfolio System is a purposeful collection of student work based on student goals and standards-based education with expectations that it be used in preparing, planning, learning/teaching, assessing, and reflecting by student and teacher collaboratively to demonstrate achievement and progress. The Aspire Portfolio System is meant to enhance learning and teaching through Ohio's Student Experience Model (SEM) and to be a user-friendly, standards-based education tool to help students and teachers gauge learning and target instruction. Each student is to have two files: the administrative file and the student portfolio. Together they make up the Aspire Portfolio System.

Student portfolios must be used to collect and analyze their work to monitor their learning.

Portfolios should be used to:

- create a student-centered approach in which students monitor and evaluate their own work and achievements in learning experiences
- determine students' progress in achieving standards and benchmarks
- provide a method for collecting samples of students' work, monitoring their progression toward their instructional goals, and determining when standardized posttesting may be appropriate

Actions for managing the portfolio process

- Plan the process for handling confidential information.
- Choose the physical form of the portfolios and how they will be stored.
- Use color-coded forms to quickly recognize the paperwork in the files.

Required elements of the Aspire Portfolio System
Student portfolio (non-secured) includes:
1. Individual learning plan that includes:

    - Student name
    - Teacher name/site name
    - Instructional implications from a learning styles inventory
    - Instructional implications from a learning disabilities screening, if applicable
    - SMART goals

- o Specific
- o Measurable
- o Attainable
- o Relevant
- o Timely
- Comments
2. student work to document beginning, progress toward, and subject area mastery
3. Early Progress Test Exception Form, if applicable

Administrative file (secured) includes:
1. Aspire student forms
2. Standardized test scores
3. Release of Information Forms
4. Screenings and inventories, such as learning disabilities screening and learning styles inventory
5. Any student-identifiable information

Portfolio Features

- The portfolio must be reviewed and updated at least every 90 calendar days. The portfolio is developmental and shows student growth over time.
- The portfolio shows a more holistic picture of the student than do results from a standardized test.
- The portfolio is evidence of the importance of self-evaluation by students and is a vehicle to help students develop awareness of their skills.
- The portfolio involves instructor and student collaboration.
- Collection of evidence of student work is a selective and collaborative process between the student and instructor.
- Evaluation of the portfolio is the shared responsibility of the student and instructor.
- Portfolio assessment gives the instructor and the student information about the student's progress and level advancement relative to his or her EFLs.
- Monitoring a student's work utilizing the portfolio gives the instructor and the student information about the student's progress relative to his or her previous performance on goals.

Guidance for Programs

- The portfolio is a requirement for all students.
- Each program is to develop its own policies and procedures to consistently manage the information associated with the Aspire Portfolio System.
- Each program is to determine the physical nature of the student portfolio (e.g., folder, binder, electronic resource).
- A student's portfolio and administrative file, including attendance records, must be kept for one year after the student has exited the program. Attendance records may be copied and kept in a separate binder.
- Programs are required to maintain a secure, hardcopy of student standardized test scores in the administrative file. Standardized test scores cannot be kept in the student portfolio.

- Programs must retain the student portfolio and administrative file for one year after the student exits the program. For audit purposes, programs must retain individual student records in LACES for no fewer than three years or longer if required by the local school district.
- At Workplace Education sites, programs may use a class portfolio in place of individual student portfolios (see Workplace Education section).

Guidance for Teachers

- The standards-based education system (namely Ohio's standards and benchmarks) remains the focus of teaching within the Aspire Portfolio System. As a teaching tool, the student portfolio is used to select standards and benchmarks, to plan instruction, and to monitor the results of instruction.
- The Aspire Portfolio System serves classroom purposes rather than state reporting purposes.
- The student portfolio is to be developed and maintained collaboratively by the teacher and student.
- The teacher and student both participate in selecting work samples and using the samples to evaluate progress relative to the student's previous performance on goals.

Guidance for Students

- The student portfolio is an ongoing record of a student's thoughts on the educational process.
- It contains goals, educational and career plans, assignment sheets, and other concrete pieces that can be used to trace the student's experience throughout his or her learning.
- It contains samples of what a student has done — items a student has completed over time. It should not be an entire collection of work.
- It is a process and product that a student can use to take ownership of work and be proud of accomplishments.

Additional Information

Additional Assessments
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies -> Assessment Policy

Programs are encouraged to supplement required assessments with additional assessment instruments. These other assessments help to avoid over-testing students with standardized instruments. Some examples of additional assessments are as follows:

- subject-specific diagnostic tests
- checklists
- individual projects or products
- small group projects
- role playing

- journals
- demonstrations
- teacher-made tests
- student self-evaluations
- performance examples
- end of chapter tests
- anecdotal records
- rubrics or matrices
- student interviews
- audio or video tapes
- worksheet or homework assignments
- curriculum assessment, including in-class or distance software

Learning Styles Assessment

Programs may choose to administer a learning styles assessment to identify each student's preferred learning style in order to educate the student on specific practices that promote higher levels of learning, tailor the student's individual learning plan, and determine instruction.

Use of Rubrics

Rubrics are scoring guides that help instructors make decisions as to whether or not students are able to perform benchmarks at levels of proficiency.

Putting the emphasis on student performance and helping guide students in developing their work, rubrics also are intended to provide some consistency in instructor judgment of students' performance. Rubric results, along with those from standardized tests and other assessments, will be maintained in the students' administrative files.

Aligning Assessments with Ohio's Benchmarks and Standards

As illustrated, there are numerous assessment options available to Aspire instructors to help document students' progress in achieving benchmarks. Within the Aspire Portfolio System, instructors will utilize assessments to verify students' abilities to perform benchmarks. Multiple benchmarks may be addressed by a single assessment.

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)

Classroom Assessment Techniques are simple, non-graded, anonymous, classroom activities designed to give you and your students' useful feedback on the teaching-learning process as it is happening. CATs can be used to improve teaching and learning that occurs in a class. Frequent use of CATs can:

- Provide just-in-time feedback about the teaching-learning process
- Provide information about student learning with less work than traditional assignments (tests, papers, etc.)

- Encourage the view that teaching is an ongoing process of analysis, investigation, and reflection
- Help students become better monitors of their own learning
- Help students feel less anonymous
- Provide tangible evidence that the instructor cares about learning

Overview

- The Ohio Department of Higher Education Standards for ABE/ASE and ESOL define the desired outcomes for instruction. Therefore, curricula should be selected or created that lead students to the achievement of the knowledge and skills reflected in the standards and benchmarks.
- Instruction must be designed in consideration of students' learning goals and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).
- Results of learning style inventories and, when applicable, learning disability screenings, should be considered when selecting instructional methods and designing learning environments.
- Teachers should use evidence-based instructional strategies and learning activities that are proven to support student persistence and achievement of goals.

Standards Framework
ohioaspire.org/Teacher Resources

The Standards for ABE/ASE and ESOL provide clear guidance as to the content and skills that should be taught within Aspire classrooms. The benchmarks define what students should know and be able to do at the end of each level. A student must be able to perform with proficiency on all benchmarks to achieve a standard.

A student's ILP describes student goals and the strategies for achieving them. Ohio's standards and benchmarks provide instructors and students with a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills needed to achieve those goals. They convey a vision for learning and a common set of criteria that may be used to evaluate individual student success.

Selecting Curricula
ohioaspire.org/Teacher Resources

It is up to teachers to select appropriate curricula that will help lead students to the achievement of their academic goals and the acquisition of skills represented by the ABE/ASE Standards or ESOL Standards respectively.

According to the ODE Center for Curriculum and Assessment, "Curriculum is the way content is designed and delivered." It includes the structure, organization, balance, and presentation of expected or recommended study topics that address content standards and meet local expectations. A curriculum contains three primary elements: substance, purpose, and practice.

- Substance communicates what should be taught. It is the field of instruction.
- Purpose communicates why a topic should be taught. It is the context of instruction.
- Practice communicates how a topic should be taught and learned. It is the methodology of instruction, including collecting and using evidence of students' learning to inform and adjust instruction.

Curriculum and Instruction

It is recommended that teachers use the program-wide written curriculum, aligned to the Aspire standards, to guide classroom instruction.

The Academic Content Standards reflect the purpose and substance of curriculum. All Aspire programs need to ensure that instructional activities, assessments, and resources align to the ABE/ASE or ESOL Standards.

Ohio Department of Higher Education ABE/ASE Standards		
	Content	**Content Categories**
English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA/Literacy)	Reading (R)	Foundational Skills
		Key Ideas and Details
		Craft and Structure
		Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
	Writing (W)	Text Types and Purposes
		Production and Distribution of Writing
		Research to Build and Present Knowledge
	Speaking and Listening (S)	Comprehension and Collaboration
		Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
	Language (L)	Conventions of Standard English
		Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
		Knowledge of Language
Mathematics	Numbers (N)	Numbers and Operations
		The Number System
		Ratios and Proportional Relationships
		Number and Quantity
	Algebra (A)	Operations and Algebraic Thinking
		Expressions and Equations
		Functions
	Geometry (G)	Geometric Shapes and Figures
		Congruence
		Similarity, Right Triangles, and Trigonometry
		Modeling with Geometry
	Data (D)	Measurement and Data
		Statistics and Probability

Ohio Department of Higher Education ESOL Standards			
Communication Modality	**Anchor Standards**		
Receptive The ability to process, understand, interpret, and/or engage with level-appropriate literary and informational written and spoken text to construct meaning.	1	Construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through level-appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.	
	6	Analyze and critique the arguments of others orally and in writing.	
	7	Adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.	
	8	Determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text.	
Productive The ability to produce level-appropriate written and spoken text such that it meaningfully transmits meaning.	3	Speak and write about level-appropriate complex literary and informational texts and topics.	
	4	Construct level-appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence.	
	7	Adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.	
	9	Create clear and coherent level-appropriate speech and text.	
	10	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English to communicate in level-appropriate speech and writing.	
Interactive The ability to process and produce level-appropriate written and spoken text interactively with the purpose of understanding, interpreting, engaging in, and transmitting meaning.	2	Participate in level-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, in various social and academic contexts, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions.	
	5	Conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems.	

Curriculum Components
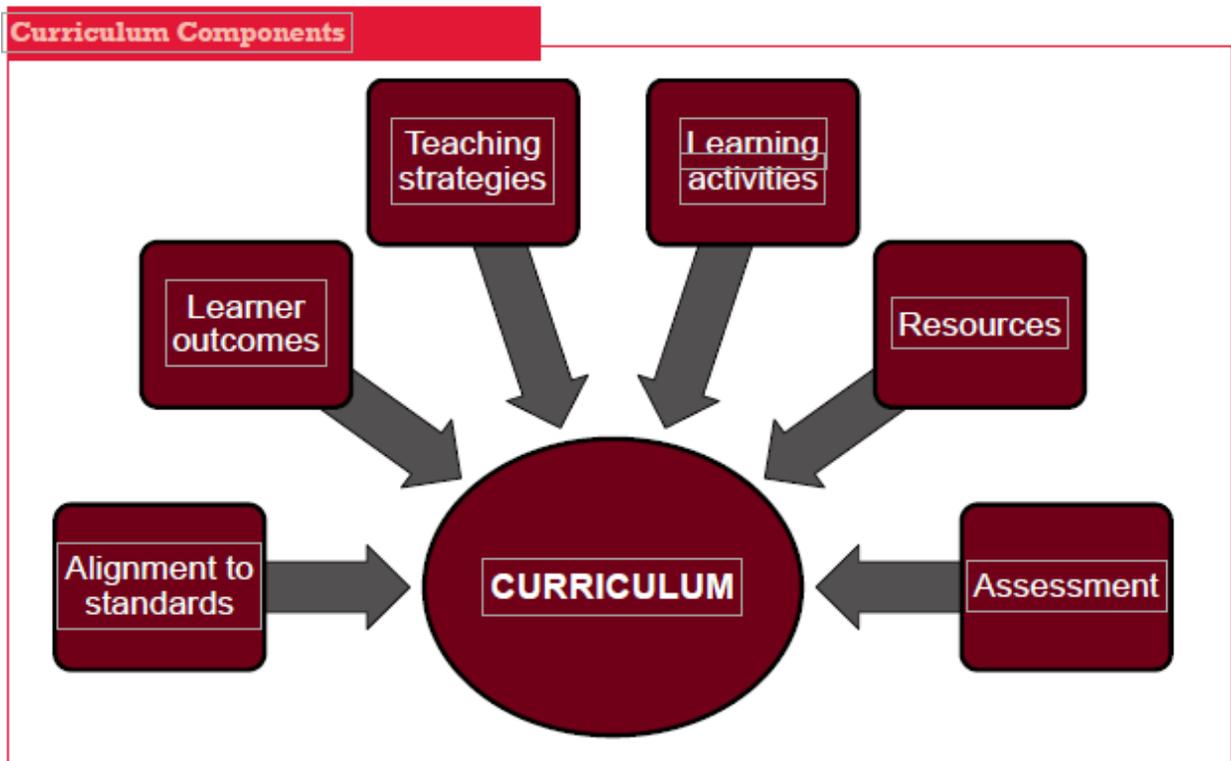
Instructional Considerations

Instruction is the "practice" part of curriculum. When planning and implementing instruction, Aspire instructional staff should remember that learning situations for all students should:

- be purposeful by providing activities that will help students achieve their goals
- be transparent by offering students a clear understanding of what they need to know and be able to do to reach their goals
- be contextual by providing learning activities in a context that is meaningful to their lives
- build upon students' expertise by utilizing students' prior knowledge and experience

In addition, teachers should utilize instructional practices that help adult students effectively acquire the skills and knowledge they seek. The following are some instructional practices that are particularly applicable for adult learners.

Utilize Various Methods and Materials to Meet the Diverse Learning Needs of Adult Students.

To enhance the learning opportunities of students with varying learning styles, good instructional practice dictates utilizing a variety of instructional materials from standard texts and workbooks to contextualize instruction and real-life situations.

Activities that require multisensory involvement are particularly advised for students who have or who are suspected of having a learning disability or ADD.

Teachers should provide instructional adaptations and accommodations to assist students who

would benefit from them. Magnifying strips, color overlays, rulers, and other simple instructional adaptations can have a major impact on student learning.

Accommodations are legally required adaptations that help ensure that students with disabilities have a chance to succeed. Extra time to complete a task, large print material, and books on tape are a few examples of accommodations.

Present Instruction to Adult Students in Meaningful Contexts

Adult students particularly appreciate and benefit from learning activities that have relevance to their day-to-day lives. Therefore, to the extent possible, teach basic skills through authentic activities. Also consider presenting lessons within the context of occupations that students may be planning to pursue. This contextualized instruction can serve to more fully engage students in their academic learning and demonstrate to students the relevance of what they are learning to their future occupational choices.

Use Teaching Practices That Have Proven to Be Effective in Helping Students Learn.

Educational programs at all levels are being urged to utilize instructional methods that have proven via research to be successful, such as explicit instruction and activating students' prior knowledge. Some evidence of effectiveness has resulted from studies involving adult learners. In some cases, results of research from K-12 have proven to have relevance for adults.

Employ Technology in Instruction as Appropriate.
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Technology

Knowledge of appropriate use of technology in the classroom is critical to student success. Students should have the opportunity to utilize technology in instruction and research.

Incorporate Distance Education in Your Program.
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies -> Distance Education Policy

Structured, monitored distance education can provide an instructional option for students who have difficulty attending classes due to work schedules, family obligations, or other situations that prohibit their regular class attendance. Distance education can assist students to study throughout the summer when some programs offer fewer class options. Also, distance education, when used in addition to in-class instruction, enables students to accelerate their learning.

Help Students Reflect on Their Learning.

Teachers and students should frequently review the students' learning plans and progress in developing proficiency in the ABE/ASE or ESOL Standards. These reviews should be an opportunity to examine the students' assessments of their accomplishments and gather inputs as to what instructional strategies have been particularly beneficial in and out of the Aspire classroom.

Instructional Process Chart

The **Instructional Process chart** provides an overview of the steps of the instructional process and factors that Aspire instructional staff should consider at each step.

Instructional Process		
Steps	**Students should**	**Teachers should**
Preparing	- Participate in formal and informal assessments. - Create a long-term goal(s). - Become familiar with program policies, expectations, and services. - Become familiar with standards- based education.	- Work with the student to determine the student's goals and prior knowledge. - Take into consideration the learner's background. - Consider the results of standardized tests, diagnostic assessments, learning style inventories, and, when appropriate, learning disabilities screenings to determine the appropriate instructional level for the student. - Identify the standards that will help the student achieve his/her instructional goals. - When working with groups of students, identify a shared goal or purpose and, as with individual students, determine the appropriate standards and benchmarks.
Planning	- Develop an ILP. - Select a short-term goal(s). - Choose steps and activities to accomplish goals in alignment with ABE/ASE Standards, appropriate learning styles, and effective learning strategies. - Determine the end product(s) to be used for assessment (evidence).	- Work with students to select curriculum and activities that align with ABE/ ASE Standards and are at the appropriate instructional levels. - Select authentic activities as learning opportunities, especially related to career goals. - Select learning activities that match students' learning styles. - Set up a method for maintaining student portfolios and recording progress. - Ensure that the learning environment is not only safe but also conducive to learning. - Produce written lesson plans to guide instruction.
Teaching/ Learning	- Participate in a variety of multi- sensory learning activities. - Seek help as needed. - Create end products (work samples) for assessment.	- Utilize a variety of teaching modalities — textbooks, authentic activities, and supplemental materials . - Employ multisensory instructional activities. - Model learning strategies that will help students become more strategic and independent learners. - Maintain a supportive, non-threatening instructional environment. - Offer instructional adaptations and accommodations to students whose learning would be supported by them.

Instructional Process		
Steps	**Students should**	**Teachers should**
Assessing	• Adjust strategies based on feedback from instructors and other students. • Evaluate what (knowledge or content) has been learned.	• Provide the student with ongoing feedback on his/her progress. • Follow guidelines for monitoring student progress discussed in the **Assessment** and **Student Experience Model** sections of this guide. • Document evidence of student performance on the appropriate forms. Follow instructions in test manuals for providing testing accommodations.
Reflecting	• Evaluate and reflect on how what was learned is transferable to real- life situations. • Determine next steps.	• Determine which instructional activities were most effective in helping students achieve their goals. • Obtain students' perspectives of what activities were most useful to them inside and outside of the classroom. • Determine with the student the next steps in his/her learning plan. • Consider what professional development opportunities would enhance your effectiveness as an instructor.

Lesson Plans
ohioaspire.org/Teacher Resources

Aspire teachers must plan lessons and produce lesson plans that help students achieve the goals articulated in students' ILPs. Teachers are encouraged to use the ODHE Approved Lesson Plan Templates.

Lesson plans can take many forms. They may be produced for individual students or classes of students. At a minimum, a lesson plan should include:

- an estimated timeline for completing the instruction
- expected outcomes of the activity
- the Standards (ABE/ASE or ESOL) being addressed
- teaching strategies, learning activities, and resources that will be used
- methods and/or materials that will be used to assess learning gains
- ways in which differentiation will occur in teaching strategies, learning activities, assessments, and/or resources

Program Components

Basic Skills — ABE

All programs must provide instruction at the 0 - 8.9 grade levels in reading, communication skills (writing, speaking, listening), mathematics, social and physical sciences, health, critical thinking, financial literacy, health literacy, basic computer literacy and employability skills needed to function effectively in society. The curricula of beginning and intermediate ABE courses shall assist adult learners in the development of the skills necessary to process both written and oral information, and to derive meaning from the information applied to specific tasks.

Advanced Skills — ASE and High School Equivalency Preparation

All programs must provide instruction at the 9.0 – 12.9 grade levels designed to assist learners in pursuit of a high school equivalency diploma. Adult secondary education/HSE test preparation provides instruction designed for adults who have some literacy skills and can function in everyday life but who are not proficient in reading, writing, speaking, problem solving or computation or do not have a high school credential.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)

All non-exempt programs must provide a program of instruction designed to assist English language learners, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation and may include workforce training.

All Aspire instructional services are to be provided in English; Aspire funds may not be used to provide instruction in other languages.

Career Pathways (CP)/Integrated Education and Training (IET)
ohioaspire.org > Administrator Resources

All programs must provide services to help students transition to postsecondary education and employment. All Aspire programs must play a major role in helping students move beyond ABE and high school equivalency, but the exact activities to be undertaken vary depending on the levels of the students to be served.

The Aspire Transitions Framework describes three categories that are important in assisting students' success in postsecondary education and employment. These include instructional services, support services, and collaboration. All elements of the model must be addressed by Aspire programs and/or through partnerships with other agencies, including postsecondary education institutions.

Collaborations between and among Aspire programs and institutions of higher education will make transitions more effective (e.g., sharing physical locations, such as offering classes on a college or Ohio technical center campus, sharing personnel/board members).

Distance Education (DE)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Policies -> Distance Education Policy

All programs must provide this component. A distance education (DE) component is defined as a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Most distance education, also called distance

learning, occurs as a blended approach to instruction for Aspire students; they receive both distance and traditional classroom education during the program year in order to increase access to instruction.

Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media, including print, audio recordings, videotapes, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs, and other online technology.

Optional Program Components

Aspire programs may offer the optional components of Workplace Education and/or Corrections Education based upon areas of need.

Corrections Education

Correctional education is defined as a partnership with a jail, reformatory, work farm, detention center, halfway house, community-based rehabilitation center, or other similar institution designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminals. Funding is limited to partnerships that involve learners who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of receiving Aspire services.

Projections for students to be served should be reasonable and in line with dollars requested.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education with Integrated Education and Training (IELCE/IET)

IELCE/IET is a separate, competitive grant under Title II, Section 243. The program must include education services that enable adult English language learners to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. It must include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training. Additionally, the IELCE/IET program must be provided in combination with integrated education and training. As part of the IELCE/IET program requirements, each program that receives funding under Section 243 must be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

Workplace Education

Ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Supporting Documents -> Workplace *Education Resource Guide*

Workplace education is defined in the Ohio Aspire Workplace Education Resource Guide as "Education services offered in collaboration with business, industry, government, and/or labor for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through improvement of literacy skills." The Ohio Aspire Workplace Education Resource Guide can be found under the heading Supporting Documents at ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference.

Education services include those activities designed to improve the work-related basic education and literacy skill levels of workers that are offered to business, industry, government, and/or labor by an ODHE–funded Aspire service provider.

See the Workplace Education Model in **the Workplace Education Guide** for a graphic representation.

Ohio Aspire Transitions Framework
ohioaspire.org > Administrator Resources

Being an integral part of ODHE gives Ohio Aspire programs the ability to facilitate student success through partnerships among Aspire programs, community colleges, regional campuses, Ohio Technical Centers (OTC), and throughout community-based organizations.

The Ohio Aspire Transitions Framework is organized into three primary categories: Instruction, Support Services, and Collaborations.

- **Instruction** - Provide instruction aimed at addressing the gaps in knowledge and skills needed for success in postsecondary education and the workplace (e.g., algebra, reading, critical thinking).

- **Support Services** - Develop and implement supports that assist with transition including, but not limited to, career evaluation and counseling, and advising when the student has enrolled in a postsecondary option.

- **Collaborations** - Participate in collaborative activities to connect with agencies that can support Aspire students in meeting their goal of completing postsecondary education or workforce training.

The framework is constructed broadly to encompass requirements of both postsecondary and career/workplace transitions. It has been edited by state Aspire staff to align with the national adult career pathway model promoted by the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor and Health and Human Services.

All Ohio Aspire programs should operate within this framework. It is expected that all Aspire programs provide bridge programs and maintain formal partnership agreements among ODHE and local community partners. Programs should: define the desired adult career pathway system and program outcomes; determine how to measure system and program outcomes; establish how data will be collected, stored, tracked and shared as well as analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess progress.

Aspire transitions services are defined as those services that facilitate students successfully transitioning to postsecondary education, training, and/or employment as a result of receiving Aspire services. Transition services are applicable to ALL students at ALL skill levels.

Career Pathways/Integrated Education and Training (IET)
ohiohighered.org/aspire/wioa-resources -> Program Resources -> IET Checklist

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the federal legislation established to improve coordination between employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation activities. Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), of WIOA defines adult education (AE) to mean academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increases an individual's ability to:

A. read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities

necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
B. transition to postsecondary education and training; and
C. obtain employment.

In addition, WIOA defines career pathways to mean a series of rigorous and high-quality education and training strategies and other services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific occupational sector and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Elements of Career Pathways will:

A. align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
B. prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;
C. include advising to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
D. include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
E. organize education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent possible;
F. enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
G. help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is defined in WIOA Section 203(11) as: A service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities **concurrently and contextually** with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

Required IET Components:
ohiohighered.org/aspire/wioa-resources -> Program Resources -> IET Checklist

1. Adult Education and literacy activities which must include one
2. Workforce preparation activities
3. Workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster

Creating Pathways for Education, Career and Life
Ohioaspire.org > Administrator Resources
An Ohio Aspire Career Pathways Planning System has been designed to assess a program's current status in meeting career pathways related requirements under WIOA through a comprehensive gap analysis, followed by a planning process where programs can articulate the steps they will take to reach full compliance, if all required components are not in place. The goals of the process are to

1. Assess what programs are already doing through a full gap analysis in order to show what, if anything, adheres to career pathways related requirements. Everything that is articulated in this planning document should clearly relate to career pathways.

2. Identify gaps in program services that are essential for a comprehensive career pathways system.
3. Develop a step-by-step action plan that will address the identified gaps (i.e., Planned New Activities) toward implementing a comprehensive career pathways service delivery model. This model will enable students to access needed education and training, transition successfully into postsecondary programs and employment, earn industry-recognized credentials and advance along a career path.
4. Integrate contextualized College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)-aligned instruction with occupational training while meeting individualized learning needs so that students achieve learning gains, meet their goals and become college and career ready.
5. Forge necessary partnerships among stakeholders involved in a local education and training pipeline that are essential to an effective career pathways system that help to leverage resources with other local, state and federal programs.

Programs should use the Career Pathways Plan as a 'living' strategic planning tool by documenting and regularly reviewing and updating career pathways related services that integrate education and training, provide necessary support services, align and bridge services to post-secondary education and employment, are supported by strategic partnerships with critical stakeholders, and enable students to move beyond adult education and succeed in college, career and life.

Partnerships and Coordination

Under WIOA, local Aspire programs must diligently seek out partnerships and coordination of services. Effective administrators must be willing to seek out partnerships to expand service to students and, as much as possible, reduce the duplication of services in their communities. Obtaining a copy of your local workforce development plan will help inform coordinators of the potential partners and services already established in the community.

Successful collaborations between Aspire programs and other agencies in communities are very important. They require consistent effort in the beginning phase and require continuous attention to be sustained in the later phases. Programs should collaborate with the communities they serve to develop and maintain partnerships that prove effective for all involved parties: students, adult education programs, businesses, the workforce, and postsecondary education. Elements that support the success of collaboration include:

- diversity of members
- strong leadership and an identification of shared needs and interests
- shared legislative priorities, goals, and outcomes
- readiness of agencies and their personnel to work together for non-duplication of efforts and sharing of resources (e.g., One-stop system)

Effective collaborations have the following characteristics:
- **Breadth and Depth of Membership** In collaborations, it is important for partners to understand the other organizations' systems, legislative drivers, policies, and parameters. This is important so that there is a better chance of sharing resources and reducing duplication of services to shared customers. In developing collaborations with other agencies, local programs are cautioned   not to create new bureaucracies, but take advantage of the strengths of each agency.

- **Good Communication** The key to building trust in collaborations is communication which is enhanced through setting up systems — personal, paper, and electronic — for sharing information, clarifying each entity's responsibilities, expressing expectations, and listening. Communication must be open and frequent, using formal and informal channels. Privacy issues for customers may be discussed among all partners for their similar and different requirements. Professional development training and materials are provided for cross-training purposes among the partners.
- **Shared Vision** It is essential to have a shared vision. This common understanding of what the collaboration is trying to achieve includes an agreed-upon mission, objectives, and strategies. Building trust and commitment, the shared vision must involve the community at large and should make clear the expectations and responsibilities of each partner. Each organization should contribute uniquely to the collaboration to avoid duplicating efforts while respecting the missions of individual organizations. Concrete, attainable goals for accomplishing the vision heighten enthusiasm and sustain momentum in a partnership.
- **Effective Use of Resources** Programs should collaborate with their partners for the effective use of resources, including funding, technology, staff, and professional development. Financial resources include those that member organizations are able and willing to commit, and those that the group obtains from outside sources. Such outside resources may be comprised of in-kind contributions on the part of the partners, including: paid staff time; facilities, including custodial services; utilities; supplies; materials; or volunteer time. Human resources that can be committed to projects can include skilled coordinators, committed leaders, and a bountiful mix of knowledge, skills, and abilities among the collaboration's members.

The benefits of collaboration can include:
- delivery of services where they have never been delivered and often result in fewer resources being needed
- resolved proprietary issues between organizations and agencies
- gains in ownership among all parties
- establishment of a systematic and consistent approach to problem solving
- provision of cost savings
- potential for additional revenue generation
- increased services and satisfaction of common customers

Shared resources can increase maximum capacity-building capabilities and provide added resources to the programs and services of all participating partners.

One-stop System Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Guide
ohiohighered.org/aspire/reference -> Accountability -> WIOA MOU Guide

The foundation of the comprehensive reforms made possible by Title I of the WIOA of 2014 is the creation of a One-stop delivery system. The purpose of the system is to make it easier for individuals and employers to access education and training services as well as a diversity of other resources that help to build the capacities of communities to sustain economic and workforce development.

Ohio Aspire programs supported by Title II of the WIOA, the Adult Education and Family

Literacy Act (AEFLA), are required partners of Ohio's One-stop delivery system (i.e., OhioMeansJobs). The One-stop provisions of Title I of the WIOA offer Aspire programs and other partners exciting opportunities to expand customer access to programs and services and help them to operate more efficiently. By working collaboratively, One-stop partners will collectively achieve goals that they may not be able to accomplish by working independently. With funding and other resources being increasingly difficult to secure and maintain by Ohio's respective workforce development delivery systems, it makes good economic and social sense to integrate a portion of these limited funds and other resources to maximize our return on our investments through the creation and implementation of One-stop systems.