A Strategic Plan for Ohio's Adult Basic and Literacy Education Program

FY 2017

Ohio | Department of Higher Education

John R. Kasich, Governor
John Carey, Chancellor

Introduction

Our progress has been steadfast, but our work is far from over. There are still too many Ohio adults in need of our services whom we are not reaching through our current programs. For the students who are enrolling, we must continue to seek innovative solutions to address barriers to access and persistence, particularly for those adults with special learning needs. A rapidly growing immigrant population poses additional challenges to our readiness level. In our quest for quality services, we must continue to refine and strengthen our accountability system. We must provide a relevant, evidence-based professional development system that increases the professionalization of our dedicated adult educators and rewards professional growth.

To ensure that we are poised to address these issues and other opportunities that will strengthen our services, ABLE initiated a comprehensive planning process. The Strategic Plan has been a guide to the development of the ABLE program. In addition, the plan has been revisited frequently to update the objectives and priority actions.

At the heart of the strategic plan are five questions that serve as the framework for the Ohio ABLE System. The five questions serve as short, simple, yet powerful reminders of the public we serve and will guide the work of the adult education system. The questions also serve as the framework for accountability measures with key indicators that monitor our progress and encourage and reward behaviors that move us closer to our goals.

Based on the focus of the five questions and the recommendations received from the needs assessment process, goals and objectives were developed related to:

> Instructional Services
> Partnerships
> Professional Development
> Capacity
> Accountability

Five Questions

Are more Ohioans enrolled in ABLE programs?

Are more ABLE students meeting their educational goals?

Are more ABLE students advancing on to postsecondary education or job training?

Are more ABLE students preparing for, entering or sustaining employment?

Are Ohio families, communities and economy benefiting?

The content of this strategic plan will be used to guide the development of the ABLE portion of the Unified State Plan and is aligned with the Ohio Department of Higher Education's Strategic Plan for Higher Education.

Five Critical Questions

Critical Question 1. Are more Ohioans enrolled in Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) programs?

- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of Ohioans enrolled in adult education programs. (10% growth rate from 2010-2020)

Critical Question 2. Are more ABLE students meeting their educational goals?

- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels.
- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Receipt of a secondary school diploma or GED.
(Quantified targets for these two indicators are negotiated annually with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.)

Critical Question 3. Are more ABLE students advancing on to postsecondary education or job training?

- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of adult students with a goal of advanced education or job training who enter postsecondary education or training. (Quantified target for this indicator is negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.)
- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of GED graduates enrolling in college or job training programs. (Number will increase annually)

Critical Question 4. Are more ABLE students preparing for, entering or sustaining employment?

- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of adult students who are in unsubsidized employment during the second and fourth quarter after exit. (Quantified target for this indicator is negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education.)

Critical Question 5. Are Ohio families, communities and economy benefiting?

- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Return on investment as defined by earnings of ABLE students who secured employment.
- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Return on investment as defined by tax savings from ABLE students being removed from public assistance.
- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of adult students who obtain skills to pass the U.S. citizenship exam.
- o <u>Key Indicator:</u> Number of adult students who register to vote or vote for the first time.
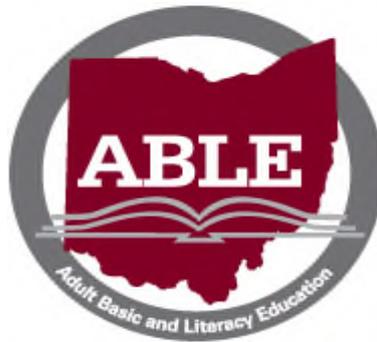
~Mission~

The mission for Ohio ABLE is to provide high-quality basic educational services to assist students in acquiring skills to be successful in postsecondary education/training and employment, to earn a living wage, and to be contributing members of society.

~Vision~

The vision for Ohio ABLE is for Ohio to have a highly trained and educated workforce.

~Goals~

Instructional Services	**Ohio ABLE will sustain an effective delivery system that provides instructional support for adult students to maintain participation and meet their educational goals.**
Partnerships	**Ohio ABLE will work collaboratively with practitioners, students and other key stakeholders to strengthen customer-driven services and to increase awareness of the value and impact of the ABLE program**
Professional Development	**Ohio ABLE 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.**
Capacity	**Ohio ABLE will continue to systematically expand the capacity of local programs to provide services.**
Accountability	**Ohio ABLE will maintain and enhance an accountability system that supports and recognizes program achievement.**

Goals, Objectives and Priority Actions

Goal 1: Instructional Services
Ohio ABLE will sustain an effective delivery system that provides instructional support for adult students to maintain participation and meet their educational goals.

Objective 1.1 Ohio ABLE will support local programs in promoting student access and persistence and reducing barriers to participation.

Priority Actions	
1.1.1	Sustain and enhance a comprehensive student persistence process with appropriate instructional and programmatic strategies; e.g. distance learning, student experience model (SEM), managed enrollment.
1.1.2	Continue to offer services to those special needs students who can benefit from ABLE services (who can set a goal, make progress towards that goal).
1.1.3	Assist local programs in selecting and implementing policies and programs that increase student access to ABLE services.

Objective 1.2 Ohio ABLE will utilize evidence-based methods and materials that promote effective instruction.

Priority Actions	
1.2.1	Increase the integration of technology into ABLE services and instruction through technical assistance and capacity-building support.
1.2.2	Ensure that learning activities and delivery systems are varied, engaging, responsive, and purposeful for students and their learning styles.
1.2.3	Continue using the portfolio system as a tool that supports standards-based education.
1.2.4	Improve and increase the proficient use of effective screening and assessment instruments in ABLE programs.
1.2.5	Continue to support adult students with their transition to postsecondary education/training and employment.
1.2.6	Continue to participate in evidence-based initiatives; e.g. STAR,TEAL
1.2.7	Continue research, production, and dissemination of promising practices.

Goal 2: Partnerships
Ohio ABLE will work collaboratively with practitioners, students and other key stakeholders to strengthen customer-driven services and to increase awareness of the value and impact of the ABLE program.

Objective 2.1 Ohio ABLE will expand state-level partnerships to provide greater opportunities for input, maximize the efficient use of resources and create a continuum of services for adult students.

Priority Actions	
2.1.1	Assist students in transitioning to postsecondary education/training and employment within the University System of Ohio
2.1.2	Produce standards that align with Ohio's common core standards and curriculum.
2.1.3	Assist students in transitioning to postsecondary education/training and employment through involvement with state-level partners and programs.
2.1.4	Build state-level partnerships to provide better coordination of services through active involvement with One-Stop Systems, Department of Job and Family Services, Department of Education, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities and other key state agencies.
2.1.5	Continue to provide outlets for practitioner input through task forces (such as ESOL, Special Needs, Reading and Writing, OIPLD, Mathematics, Assessment, Transitions, Technology).
2.1.6	Develop a communication plan to facilitate collaboration between partners and programs that support student transitions.

Objective 2.2 Ohio ABLE will provide leadership to local programs as they integrate and/or collaborate with other community partners to increase enrollment and provide the full array of services needed by eligible youth and adults in each community.

Priority Actions	
2.2.1	Support cross-agency professional development and technical assistance on building and maintaining effective partnerships with key stakeholders to increase referrals and to reduce student barriers to participation.
2.2.2	Build articulation agreements with University System of Ohio institutions and other providers.

Objective 2.3 Ohio ABLE will provide leadership to increase the visibility of ABLE services and the impact of those services on Ohio families, communities, and the state's economy.

Priority Actions	
2.3.1	Collaborative in the development of a statewide campaign to increase visibility and make a stronger, more consistent statement about our services at local, state, and national levels.
2.3.2	Build awareness of ABLE's value at the state, local and federal level by providing local programs with access to advocacy resources.
2.3.3	Use reliable methods to determine return on investment of ABLE services to measure ABLE's impact on Ohio's Workforce and economic development.

Goal 3: Professional Development
Ohio ABLE will maintain and enhance a comprehensive, professional development system that provides adult educators with the tools to support student achievement in postsecondary education and employment.

Objective 3.1 Ohio ABLE will direct a State Leadership Network and Adult Educators in the development of a multi-tiered standards-based professional development system that includes a variety of access options and incentives to encourage professional growth.
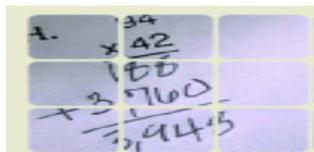
Priority Actions

3.1.1	Develop a multi-tiered standards-based professional development system that includes self-assessment, core requirements, incentives, and a credentialing option.
3.1.2	Increase availability of professional development opportunities including a combination of alternative and traditional delivery modes.

Objective 3.2 The State ABLE Program will invest federal and state funding toward the continuous improvement of ABLE services through relevant, evidence-based professional development activities and technical assistance.

Priority Actions

3.2.1	Strengthen the evaluation component of the professional development cycle to ensure data-driven decisions are made at the state, event, program and individual levels.
3.2.2	Integrate evidence-based research into ongoing professional development using multiple-delivery methods.

Goal 4: Capacity
Ohio ABLE will continue to systematically expand the capacity of local programs to provide services.

Objective 4.1 Identify and secure additional revenue streams.

Priority Actions

4.1.1	Build the financial capacity of programs to expand services through an aggressive examination of expanded and/or alternative revenue streams from both public and private entities.

Objective 4.2 Explore strategies for delivering services in a more cost-efficient and effective manner.

Priority Actions

4.2.1	Provide models of local and regional collaboration of ABLE programs to strengthen local capacity.
4.2.2	Determine the most efficient process for providing leadership services through the State Leadership Network.

Goal 5: Accountability
Ohio ABLE will maintain and enhance an accountability system that supports and recognizes program achievement.

Objective 5.1 ABLE funding will increasingly depend on the performance of programs with respect to student enrollment, persistence, learning gains and goal achievement.

Priority Actions
5.1.1   Create and implement a performance-based funding system which includes setting state and local targets and providing incentives for high-performing programs.

Objective 5.2 Ohio ABLE will provide clear guidance and technical assistance for the delivery of quality services.

Priority Actions
5.2.1   Continue to refine the accountability system including Ohio's Performance Accountability System (OPAS) and the Indicators of Program Quality.

Objective 5.3 Ohio ABLE will continue to evaluate its effectiveness to promote continuous improvement.

Priority Actions
5.3.1   Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to measure state and local quality of services.
5.3.2   Sustain and enhance the use of desk reviews and program reviews to evaluate local program effectiveness.
5.3.3   Evaluate the effectiveness of the State Leadership Network projects.
5.3.4   Expand the capacity of the ABLELink system and data analysis in making informed decisions at the state and local levels.