

Guidelines for Effective
Adult Basic Education
for
Community Adult Learning Centers



Adult and Community Learning Services

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Guidelines for Effective Adult Basic Education

These Guidelines for Effective Adult Basic Education are based on research and performance data and outline the essential program components and processes that constitute effective ABE services. The ESE's Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) unit together with the field through task forces, public hearings and other venues developed them. Future updates to these Guidelines will be posted on the ACLS website. Please check there regularly for the most up-to-date information.
www.doe.mass.edu/acls

When reviewing the Guidelines it is important to note the distinction between those components and processes that are designated as “must” be present in a program and those components and processes that are designated as recommended in a program.

The Guidelines are divided into five sections: Adult Basic Education (ABE) Rate System, Student Services, Program and Staff Development, Administration, and Program Service Options.

The **Adult Basic Education Rate System** section focuses on the system of funding that is used to support the Guidelines for Effective ABE Programs. In order to ensure that sufficient funding is available to support each student in his/her funded program, Adult and Community Learning Services uses the ABE Rates System.

The **Student Services** section focuses on program design for rate-based classes, outreach and recruitment, intake, orientation, placement, and curriculum and instruction. This section also addresses specifics regarding instructional materials, educational counseling/ADA coordination, retention, Performance Standards including countable outcomes (student articulated goals), assessment and follow-up. Finally, this section also provides guidelines for non-rate based classes and defines supplemental and stand-alone non-rate based classes.

The **Program and Staff Development** section focuses on the guidelines that a program must follow to support program development (activities that support program improvement) and the professional development of staff.

The **Administration** section focuses on the components of effective program leadership and management including, but not limited to, the following: accountability to a governing board, required documentation and data entry requirements, attendance at required ESE meetings, staff salary and benefits information, establishment of an ABE Advisory Council, community planning, and an overview of fiscal responsibilities.

The **Program Service Options** section focuses on the student services that programs may offer in addition to their core ABE and ESOL services. Typically, these services are negotiated between ACLS and the program in year one of a five-year cycle. Program service options include: ABE for the Homeless, Participatory Health Education, Family Literacy and a Volunteer Component.

Adult Basic Education Rate System

Overview of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Rate System

Each year, grantees submit a program design (a set of services) based on the approved design from year one of the grant cycle and the Guidelines for Effective ABE. If the needs of the community change during the five-year cycle, the program director should talk with his/her program specialist about adjusting the program plan so that the program can adapt to the changing needs of the community. A program needing to make changes to the design because of changes in the community must get ESE approval prior to making the adaptations. The cost of the proposed design is based primarily on the total costs of the proposed classes. The amount of funding for each class is calculated by using the rate (or cost per student hour) established by ACLS. The rate incorporates all of the costs associated with the "musts" found in the Guidelines for Effective ABE (e.g., counseling, program and staff development, administration) and is dependent on the teacher-to-student ratio for that class. Classes funded through this mechanism are called "rate-based" classes. In addition to supporting rate-based services, ACLS also funds "non-rate based" classes.

Change in Program Location

If a program plans to move to another facility, the ACLS Program Specialist must be notified prior to the relocation and a new ADA self-evaluation must be completed and submitted no later than 30 business days after relocation.

Requirements of Rate-Based Instructional Services

In Community Adult Learning Centers a minimum of 80% of instructional funding is used to support rate-based classes. Rate-based classes are those classes that have a fixed schedule (meeting at least five hours per week and provided for a minimum of 32 weeks per year), have a fixed number of student seats or slots and whose cost is covered by using the cost per student hour established by the ABE rates system. The rates are calculated to pay the staff and to provide support to the students and the program. For more information about the structure of rate-based classes, see the Student Services section in this document.

The class selections for rate-based classes are:

- Core ABE/ESOL (default)
- Integrated ABE/Workforce Development
- Pre-Literacy ESOL
- ADP (Adult Diploma Program)
- Homeless
- Pathways to Family Success

The following two charts provide more information about class size, hours and rates per student slot.

ACLS Guidelines for Class Size and Hours (Preferred Class Size)

FY 2006-FY2010

Class Service Types	Required Class Size Per Level	Estimated Hours Needed to Complete 1 GLE or 1 SPL	Hours of Instruction Per Week	
			Range	Preferred
Beginning Literacy ABE (GLE 0-1.9) Beginning ABE (GLE 2-3.9)	*7-12 *7-15	150	5-20	7 – 9 for employed
Pre-ASE/GED (GLE 4-8.9)	10-20	140	5-20	
ASE/GED (GLE 9-12)	10-20	100	5-20	12 – 20 for unemployed
Beginning ESOL (SPL 0-3)	*7-15	125	5-20	
Intermediate ESOL (SPL 4-5)	10-20	135	5-20	
Advanced ESOL (SPL 6-7)	10-20	135	5-20	

Note: Programs must provide classes for a minimum of 32 weeks up through a maximum of 48 weeks per year. The optimum range is considered to be 42-46 weeks.

* Refer to the chart on the next page.

ACLS Guidelines for Student Teacher Ratio & Rate per Student Slot FY2006-FY2010

Required Class Sizes (Student to Teacher Ratio)	Class Levels	Rate Per Student Slot
7:1 to 8:1	Students with <i>documented</i> learning disabilities*	\$11.55
9:1	Beginning Literacy ABE Beginning ABE Beginning ESOL	\$9.82
10:1	Beginning Literacy ABE Beginning ABE Intermediate ABE (Pre-ASE / GED) Advanced ABE (ASE / GED) Beginning ESOL Intermediate ESOL Advanced ESOL	\$9.82
11:1 to 12:1	Beginning Literacy ABE Beginning ABE Intermediate ABE (Pre-ASE / GED) Advanced ABE (ASE / GED) Beginning ESOL Intermediate ESOL Advanced ESOL	\$8.73
13:1 to 15:1	Beginning ABE Intermediate ABE (Pre-ASE / GED) Advanced ABE (ASE / GED) Beginning ESOL Intermediate ESOL Advanced ESOL	\$7.58
16:1 to 20:1	Intermediate ABE (Pre-ASE / GED) Advanced ABE (ASE / GED) Intermediate ESOL Advanced ESOL	\$6.48

* Classes with seven to eight students may be used when a majority of students have documented special needs. Programs must be able to collect a minimum of at least one of the following documents from students:

- Individual Education Plan (IEP) or written verification of the IEP.
- Any evaluation information provided by another agency (e.g., Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Transitional Assistance, Department of Mental Retardation, medical center, etc.) that is based on the clinical documentation of a learning disability.
- Nancy Payne Learning Needs Screening Tool (The individual receives a screening score that places him/her in the “at risk” range). If an ABE program decides to screen students for special needs as a part of the admission policy, the ADA requires that all students must be screened. Students can be individually assessed for special needs after they are enrolled in the program.

Non-Rate Based Instructional Services (supplemental and stand alone)

In Community Adult Learning Centers, a maximum of 20% of the instructional funding can support non-rate based classes. Non-rate based classes are optional and not funded based on the rate system. The primary purposes of non-rate based classes are 1) to provide supplemental instruction (e.g., computer instruction) to students enrolled in a rate-based class (supplemental) or 2) to provide instruction to targeted populations through stand-alone non-rate based classes (e.g., students in need of short-term instruction in order to pass the GED tests). Non-rate based classes do not have to be offered for a minimum of 32 weeks/year for a minimum of 5 hours/week. A sequence of three classes is not required for non-rate based classes. Programs, however, must maintain an enrollment of a minimum of eight adult learners in non-rate based classes. Non-rate based classes must be cost effective and based on the expenses necessary to support the class. Like rate-based services, funding for non-rate based classes is determined by the need in the community and should be responsive to student articulated needs. See the Student Services section for more information about supplemental and stand-alone non-rate based classes.

The class selections for non-rate based supplemental (SP) classes are:

- Writing
- Math
- Health Education
- Computer Literacy
- ESOL Conversation
- Employability Skills
- Parenting Support/Education
- Interactive Literacy (formerly called Parent and Child Together or PACT)
- Drop-in Learning Center (may or may not serve students enrolled in Core ABE classes)
- Citizenship - No less than 75% of the learners in the citizenship class must be enrolled in the program.
- Next Steps

The class selections for non-rate based stand alone (SA) classes are:

- GED/Content Area Classes
- Drop-in Learning Center (may or may not serve students enrolled in Core ABE classes)

Foundation Funding

Foundation funding is provided for each Community Adult Learning Center to support specific activities. Most of these activities are required, (e.g., Community Planning, Program and Staff Development Coordination, Technology Coordination and ADA Coordination). The unrestricted funds are also defined below.

- **Community Planning:** Included in each grant award is foundation funding which supports community planning activities. These activities include leading or participating in a community planning process. ABE Programs for Incarcerated Adults receive funding to participate in the community planning partnership/s in the primary community to which inmates are discharged. (For more information on Community Planning, see the Administration section of these ABE Guidelines.)
- **Unrestricted:** Included in each grant award is an amount of funding that programs may use at their discretion to provide additional support to any functions that are within the ABE Guidelines. For example, a program may elect to use some or all funds to provide instruction, counseling, community planning, or administration hours.

Non-Instructional Components Supported by both Rates and Foundation Funding

Some required program components are supported by the rates as well as by foundation funding. These components are as follows:

- **Program/Staff Development Coordination:** Programs must use a planning process that links program development activities and professional/staff development. The Program/Staff Development Coordinator guides the process of aligning program goals with individual staff development goals. Refer to the Program and Staff Development section for more information.
- **Technology Coordination:** This position provides support to teachers and students in order to integrate technology into the curriculum. The Technology Coordinator must develop and provide training and technical assistance to staff in effectively utilizing a variety of technologies for communication and administration. The Tech Coordinator may also provide limited troubleshooting. Refer to the Student Services section for more information.
- **ADA Coordination:** The ADA Coordinator ensures that the program implements the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements, as all programs must ensure that people with physical, emotional and cognitive disabilities have equal access to services available to the general population. ACLS strongly encourages programs to combine the ADA Coordinator and Counselor positions into one staff position. Refer to the Student Services section for more information and the Disability Guidelines at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/disability/default.html>.

See the Student Services section for descriptions of services supported **only** by the rates.

- Counseling
- Intake
- Assessment
- Placement
- Follow-up of students

Flex Funding

"Flex" funding is used to support a small number of specific ESE-approved components. These include non-rate based classes and the following program service options: Participatory Health Education, Family Literacy Coordinator and a Volunteer Component. See Program Service Options section for more detail.

Set Aside Funds

Set aside funds are a portion of ACLS funding "set aside" during the 2006-2010 Open and Competitive RFP process to support targeted program expenses or activities not included in the other funding categories noted above. Based on the outcomes of the Open and Competitive RFP, some programs received set aside funds based upon the needs in their communities, on availability of funds, and ESE approval. Set aside funds support student transportation, space, childcare, staff travel (for rural programs only), and student leadership projects. In ABE for Incarcerated Adults programs, set aside funding is used to support education/reintegration counseling.

Student Services

Student Services

Program Design for Rate-Based Classes

A Sequence of Three Classes is Required

In Community Adult Learning Centers, a minimum of 80% of instructional funding is used to support rate-based classes. Rate-based classes have a fixed schedule (meeting at least 5 hours per week and are provided for a minimum of 32 weeks and a maximum of 48 weeks per year), have a fixed number of student seats or slots and have costs that are covered by using the cost per student hour established by the ABE rates system.

Programs must offer at least a sequence of three ESOL and/or ABE classes at the same part of the day (morning, afternoon or evening). This sequence enables students with constraints on their schedule (e.g., they work, have school age children, etc.) to progress through all three levels. The sequence of three classes must be part of a continuum that enables students to progress from the most basic level of proficiency to a level sufficient to meet their goals. This sequence must include SPL 0-6 (and may include SPL 7) and/or GLE 0-12. This fundamental requirement is in the best interest of the students and attests to the capacity of the particular agency to design and deliver a full range of instructional services to an undereducated and/or limited English speaking population at one site.

If an agency/program/community learning center cannot provide the sequence of classes, then under certain circumstances, and with ESE approval, this sequence may be completed through a collaboration of ESE-funded ABE providers. The requirements include:

- The availability of public transportation at the appropriate times to allow a student to travel to a second site to complete a class in a sequence.
- Coordination among collaborating agencies in order to ensure a curriculum continuum that includes agreed upon curriculum benchmarks for a seamless transition from one ABE level to another.
- A signed and dated Memorandum of Agreement between the collaborating agencies with regard to roles and responsibilities. MOA should ensure:
 - Students have access to all ESE required services.
 - All services offered meet set performance standards.
 - Counseling and/or other supports needed to transition a student successfully from one site to another.

Exceptions to the Requirement for a Sequence of Three Classes

- Programs serving students in rural areas may offer a minimum of a sequence of two classes.
- Programs serving incarcerated adults may offer a minimum of a sequence of two classes.
- Programs serving pre-literacy ESOL students may offer a minimum of a sequence of two classes. Pre-literacy ESOL adult learners must have access to ESOL classes either on-site or through community collaboration documented by a memorandum of agreement with an ESE-funded ABE program.
- Adult Diploma classes may offer a minimum of a sequence of two classes.
- ABE for the Homeless programs may offer a minimum of a sequence of two classes.

- Programs serving students in July and August may offer a minimum of a sequence of two rate-based classes.

Frequency/Duration/Intensity of Instructional Services

Program must provide services of enough frequency, duration and intensity to enable students to reach their goals.

- Programs must provide a minimum of five hours of instruction up to a maximum of 20 hours of instruction each week. (The optimum range is 7 to 9 hours per week for working adults and 12 to 20 hours per week for unemployed adults).
- Programs must provide classes for a minimum of 32 weeks up through a maximum of 48 weeks per year. The optimum range is considered to be 42-46 weeks.

Student/Teacher Ratio for Classes

Programs must offer classes of no fewer than seven and no more than 20 students per teacher.

However, classes with seven to eight students may only be used when a majority of students have documented special needs. For required class sizes for other classes, see the chart “ACLS Guidelines for Class Size and Hours” in the Adult Basic Education Rate System section. Programs offering classes with seven to eight students must be able to collect a minimum of at least one of the following documents from students:

- Individual Education Plan (IEP) or written verification of the IEP.
- Any evaluation information provided by another agency (e.g., Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Department of Transitional Assistance, Department of Mental Retardation, medical center, etc.) that is based on the clinical documentation of a learning disability.
- The results of a screening with the Nancy Payne Learning Needs Screening Tool that places the student in the “at risk” range. Students can be individually assessed for special needs after they are enrolled in the program. However, if an ABE program decides to screen students as a part of the admission policy, the ADA requires that all students must be screened.

Student Enrollment

Programs may over-enroll rate-based classes by not more than 20%. For example, in a class approved for 15 students, another three students ($15 \times .2 = 3$) may be enrolled for a total of 18. Only students who are officially enrolled in a class may attend that class.

Student Outreach and Recruitment

Programs must employ a variety of outreach and recruitment strategies in order to ensure that eligible adults, including those most in need of literacy, are aware of the program’s services.

Wait List Policy

Programs are expected to maintain an active wait list for applicants who are unable to enroll in any instructional classes due to capacity constraints. Programs must keep their wait list up to date. At a minimum, all students placed on the wait list must be contacted annually to confirm they are still interested in enrolling in the program. Any waitlist records older than 18 months should be reviewed and deleted as appropriate so that SMARTT wait list numbers are accurate.

Programs must submit the "Wait List Update" in SMARTT by December 1st each year indicating that the wait list information is up to date and accurate. Programs must indicate in the wait list module if the student has been assessed or not. Optional assessment information can be entered to indicate date assessed, test name, and score. Only applicants for whom such confirmation is obtained shall remain on the wait list and all others removed. If the student contacts the program again in the future, the previous or new wait list date may be entered at the discretion of the program.

Programs must immediately enroll any student in good standing who seeks to transfer from another ESE-funded ABE program or place this student at the top of the appropriate waiting list. This includes students from other ESE-funded ABE programs including workplace education and the ABE for Incarcerated Adults programs.

Student Intake

Programs must have a formal process in place for conducting student intake.

- Programs must use the ESE intake and goal form as the basis for collecting student intake and goal information. The program must capture the information that is required on the ESE goal form. The goal form can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smartt/forms/goals.doc>.
- Programs must ask each student in a neutral manner to provide his/her social security number and to sign a release of information form for the purpose of goal follow up.
- Students must be at least 16 years of age to be eligible for services.

Student Orientation

Within 30 days of enrollment, programs must provide all students with an orientation to explain the attendance policy, class participation, counseling services, fire drills, emergency evacuation procedures, grievance procedure, rights and responsibilities and basic rules and regulations.

- Programs must ensure that all students, including limited English proficient students, understand the information provided at orientation.
- The information should be made available to students with low levels of English proficiency in their native language. Translation may be provided in writing, through a recording or through an interpreter (who may be a volunteer translator, a bilingual counselor, upper level student, etc.).
- The program must provide each student with a student handbook that clarifies and explains program policies, such as, for example, policies regarding attendance, absenteeism, grievance procedures, educational counseling (and all student support services), assessment policy, course offerings, severe weather policy, fire drill instructions, drug and alcohol

Student Placement

Programs must use effective assessment tools to place students in the most appropriate instructional/class level.

Student Retention

Programs must employ a variety of strategies to promote student retention in order to ensure that students participate in the program long enough to reach their goals.

- The program must have an attendance policy that is applied effectively.
- The program must implement a process that follows up on student absences.
- Programs are encouraged to provide transportation and childcare and/or other additional services.

Program Developed Assessments/Classroom Based Assessments

In addition to the ESE required student assessments, programs must develop their own classroom-based assessments. Both the required and the classroom-based assessments must be used to measure student progress, inform students of their progress and inform instruction. These assessments may include activities such as role-plays, mock interviews, writing exercises, quizzes, dictations, student self-assessment, portfolios, presentations, etc.

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum development and instruction must be aligned with and incorporate learning standards from the Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Frameworks and contribute to students' progress toward achieving their goals. The program must be working toward one unified program-wide curriculum for each service type (e.g. ABE, ESOL). The curriculum should be reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually) to ensure that curriculum, instruction and assessment are aligned with the Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Frameworks.

- Programs must have a written curriculum that is aligned with the Massachusetts ABE curriculum frameworks learning standards and is used by all staff and administrators.
- The curriculum development process must involve all levels of stakeholders from the student to the Program Director.
- The program must have regular and ongoing common planning time to the extent feasible for the purpose of developing curricula.
- The program must base its methodologies and strategies on a foundation of research and effective practice.
- Curricula must be designed to bring students from the lowest to the highest levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities. (E.g., SPL 0-6 and GLE 0-12; programs may serve up to SPL 7).
- Collaborating entities must have complementary curriculum that is aligned with the Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Frameworks.

- Students' goals and objectives must be incorporated into the curriculum. At least annually, programs must update curriculum if the general, broad goals that students are making at the program has changed.
- Curricula must incorporate "authentic" real-life contexts that are responsive to the needs, goals, and interests of adult students in their roles as workers, family members, members of the community, and lifelong learners.
- The curricula must not be dependent upon a single publication or student text.
- The curricula and associated materials must reflect the diverse educational, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of the students served.
- A variety of tools and technologies (e.g., audio-visual, computers, video, telephones, tape recorders, calculators, etc.) must be used to support learning.
- Instructional methods must include interactive activities to engage a range of learning preferences, (e.g., visual, aural, tactile, kinesthetic, etc).
- Instructional design, lesson planning, and teaching strategies in the classroom must be coordinated with curriculum design at the program level.
- Instructors must have written lesson plans. The expectation is one lesson plan per class, per week, that covers plans for the week and addresses the five components outlined in *The Basics of Writing Lesson Plans for ABE / ESOL Classes*. Please see Lesson Planning below.
- Instructional strategies including whole group, small group, and individualized instruction must be used to respond to the needs of the student population at diverse levels and with different learning styles. Strategies should also promote student team and student leadership skills.
- The program must use the benchmarks in the Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Frameworks to help coordinate instructional levels.
- Teachers must create an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and promotes active classroom participation, in which learners are willing to take risks in ESOL with respect to the use of English.

See the [Curriculum Frameworks](http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/) for more information. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/>

Lesson Planning

The Basics of Writing Lesson Plans for ABE / ESOL Classes

A written lesson plan

- Describes how learning is to be organized and facilitated in the classroom.
- Documents specific plans for teaching.

To develop a lesson plan,

1. Determine what will be taught (both content and skills).
2. Formulate the learning objectives for the lesson (e.g., "at the end of the lesson, learners will...").
3. Match what will be taught to one, or possibly two, of the most applicable benchmarks from the ABE Curriculum Framework (ELA, Math, or ESOL), and identify in the lesson plan. If continuing from a previously taught lesson, the benchmark could be the same as the prior lesson.

Lesson plans contain the following 5 components:

1. Learning objectives:

- Develop clear, measurable objectives to guide what will be taught and how learners will be evaluated. Communicate objectives to students at the beginning of class so the purpose of the lesson is clear.
- Identify one to three objectives outlining what learners will be able to know/do as a result of the lesson.

2. Materials and Resources:

- Choose authentic materials to the extent possible (e.g., employment application, prescription for medicine, library card application).

3. Activities:

- Determine the steps of the activity and how long the activity will take.
- Create an activity that is clear in focus, engaging and relate to learner interests.
- Use an introductory activity to get students engaged in the topic and connect to and assess their prior experience, and use that information to adjust the lesson if necessary.
- Manage "teacher talk" time so learners are active participants throughout the learning process.
- Make adjustments as needed for students' varied learning styles, learning issues/disabilities, or learners that may have greater knowledge/skill than their classmates.
- Use the Framework benchmark(s) to ensure the activity illuminates the learning objective.
- Though brief, add enough detail so other teachers at the program might be able to use the lesson.

4. Assessment:

- Use to plan and adjust for what will be taught in following lessons, and provide feedback to learners.
- Must directly measure whether each learning objective was met, and/or how well it was met.
- Use a variety of assessment methods to capture learning, allow students with different learning styles to shine, and also so learners may monitor their own progress.

5. Wrap up and Reflection for Students (and Teacher):

- Devise a way for learners to capture the high points (e.g., what is the goal for learners to take away from the lesson?).
- Provide opportunities for learners to actively monitor their own progress.
- Build in discussion time and ask learners to summarize what they learned or apply what they learned to other contexts in their life. Ask learners to evaluate the class or activities; ask for ideas for the next lesson. Make sure to allow time for students to process questions and responses.
- Reflect on the lesson: what worked well? Did any positive unintended consequences occur, to remember for the next time the lesson is used/adapted? What should be changed in the lesson to be more effective? What to remember about specific learners' needs/goals/accommodations for future classes?

Instructional Materials

The ABE Rates System provides for \$80 of instructional materials per funded slot.

- Students must be provided with instructional materials (e.g., texts, workbooks, worksheets, dictionaries, and manipulatives) for classroom use and for review at home. The expenses for educational software may also be included.
- Photocopying that infringes on copyright laws is not permitted.

Integration of ABE and Workforce Development

In order to assist the many adult learners that identify employment related goals (e.g., get a job, get a better job, increase earnings, advance in current job) the integration of ABE and workforce development is encouraged. Workforce development partners include but are not limited to: career centers, businesses, unions, Local Workforce Investment Boards, the Department of Transitional Assistance, and skills training programs.

If students' articulated goals indicate a need for employability skills, ACLS encourages programs to provide instructional services that align with employment related outcomes. For example, these programs should develop an integrated or contextualized curriculum. A contextualized curriculum makes instruction more immediately relevant to students' career interests, which is likely to improve retention.

An integrated curriculum usually refers to working with multiple content areas in the same curriculum, (e.g., an ABE/ESOL integrated curriculum with a workforce development focus would integrate basic skills, literacy and numeracy with employability content). This content might include job readiness skills, interview techniques, vocabulary from business technology, creative use of literature and video to explore larger workplace themes, workplace communication issues, etc.

It is important to note that integrated ABE and workforce development services cannot supplant a sequence of three ABE/ESOL classes.

Role and Responsibilities of the Educational Counselor/ADA Coordinator

Programs must have a designated Educational Counselor /ADA Coordinator to provide, coordinate and document all counseling and ADA support services and to provide learners with support services and guidance to assist them in meeting their *educational* goals. The Educational Counselor is supported by the rates and is based on 2.5% of the total student instructional hours and additional foundation funding supports the role of the ADA Coordinator.

Programs must provide physical accessibility to all. Students with disabilities must be able to access all services, but not necessarily at every site. The program must have a system (policy, staffing and resources) in place to provide reasonable accommodations for students with physical and self-disclosed disabilities either through its own resources or by referral to outside agencies.

The Educational Counselor/ADA Coordinator must:

- Be informed of all issues pertaining to interested applicants and current students with disabilities. For example, reception, intake staff, and teachers must apprise the Educational Counselor/ADA Coordinator of all inquiries and encounters with community members, potential applicants, and students who are disabled or who are contacting the program on behalf of an individual with a disability or an organization that serves persons with disabilities.
- Coordinate ADA efforts with classroom teachers and be involved in crafting appropriate and reasonable responses to ADA issues.
- Lead the development, maintenance and implementation of a work plan of the program's ADA compliance activities.
- Annually submit the 10-step ADA Checklist.
- Maintain written documentation of ADA-related activities and hours. Documentation of counseling including ADA-related activities must be kept in locked files to ensure confidentiality.
- Orient new staff and train all staff at least annually regarding ADA issues.
- Attend at least one workshop each year on any disability-related topic.

Additional Educational Counseling responsibilities include:

- Intake, assessment, and follow-up. Goal setting must be coordinated with teachers to inform instruction;
- Referrals to other community resources/agencies, particularly with organizations identified through and participating in ABE Community Planning;
- Assistance in overcoming barriers to attendance such as childcare and transportation;
- Assistance with transitioning students to concurrent and/or the next step in their academic/job training experience; this includes maintaining a close and proactive working relationship with area Career Center and Community College admissions staff; and
- Record keeping to include documentation of counseling activities and hours.

Educational Counseling must be provided to all students enrolled in adult basic education programs and students must be able to identify counseling services. The program must have the capacity to communicate and provide counseling with the most predominant student language group in their native language. Multi-site programs must provide educational counseling services to enrolled students at each site. Educational Counseling and ADA services must be available at flexible times to meet students' needs, including during class hours. There must be a posted schedule stating the days and times that counseling is available to students.

Technology Coordinator

Programs must identify a Technology Coordinator. The primary responsibility of this position is to provide support to staff and students in the areas of developing and implementing training for users of computer technology, integrating technology in the classroom. The Technology Coordinator must provide training and technical assistance to staff in effectively utilizing a variety of technologies for communication and administration. Tech Coordinators may provide limited troubleshooting. The Technology Coordinator position is supported with foundation funding plus additional support in the ABE rates.

Performance Standards for all Community Adult Learning Centers

The performance standards, informed by several years of data, are set at or near the Massachusetts state averages for performance in attendance, average attended hours, pre and post testing percentage, and learner gains. The performance standards encourage programs to work toward continuous improvement and effective program administration and therefore lead to successful student outcomes. See this link for further information about the Performance Standards.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/pawg/>

Countable Outcomes/Goals

Programs must have a student goal-setting process.

- Goal setting should be done with a staff member who is likely to have an ongoing relationship with the student (e.g., counselors, teachers).
- Goals must be determined by the student and negotiated with a staff member.
- Student goals must be recorded as articulated by the student and communicated to the staff member.
- Student goals must inform instruction and be incorporated into a program's curriculum development process.
- Student goals must be revisited on a regular basis.
- The attainment of a student's goal(s) must be documented according to the ESE's Countable Outcomes policy.

Student Assessment

Programs must follow ACLS assessment policies and procedures. See the following link for the *Assessment Policy and Procedures Manual*. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/>

- Programs are encouraged to have a written process for administering and scoring the required assessments for pre-and post-testing.
- Programs must document that procedures are followed to ensure consistent test administration and scoring.
- All staff administering and scoring assessments must have successfully completed training or recertification to administer and score the required tests and have certificates on file at their program site. A minimum of two staff members must be trained to administer and/or score the required assessments used by the program.
- Practitioners who have completed a MAPT training given by ACLS or SABES may train other colleagues at their program. Programs administering the MAPT, however, must maintain at least two staff trained by SABES or ACLS staff at all times.
- The program must use required assessments (e.g., MAPT, BEST Plus, REEP, TABE) to document student learner gains.

Programs with specific specialties must use the required assessments listed below:

Required Assessments to Report Learner Educational Gain

Program Type	Assessment To Use
Community Adult Learning Centers	MAPT
ABE Learners below GLE 2	TABE Forms 7/8, Level L
ABE Learners whose Goal is to Improve Writing Skills	TABE Forms 7/8, Language Complete Battery Subtest, Levels L, E, M, D, A
Adult Diploma Program	MAPT
Career Centers	TABE Forms 7/8, Levels L, E, M, D, A
Adult Basic Education for Incarcerated Adults	TABE Forms 7/8, Levels L, E, M, D, A
Distance Learning (ABE)	MAPT
Distance Learning (ESOL)	BEST Plus or REEP
ESOL	BEST Plus or REEP
ESOL Learners below SPL 2	BEST Plus
Pre-Literacy ESOL for Levels 1, 2, and 3	BEST Plus or REEP
Transitions	MAPT
Primary Instruction by Volunteers (LVM and English at Large Only)	LVM: MAPT English at Large: REEP
Workplace Education (ABE)	TABE Forms 7/8, Levels L, E, M, D, A
Workplace Education (ESOL)	BEST Plus or REEP

- Programs must conduct pre-and post-assessments for 66% to 76% of eligible students annually using designated ESE assessment procedures and follow ESE policies.

Follow Up of Student Goals

Student outcomes reported for both learning gains and goal achievement must be based on valid data. Direct matching of SMARTT data with that of other agencies is considered to be the most valid data. With the student's written permission and provision of a social security number, the goals of entering employment, retaining new employment, and retaining current employment can all be verified through data matching with the Department of Revenue; the goal of obtaining a GED can be verified directly with the GED Testing Service. For all other goals, programs are required to use the survey method to follow up on student goal achievement.

For guidance in following up with students using the survey method, please refer to the "Sample Local Follow-up Survey for Core Measures adapted for Massachusetts" at http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smarrt/nrssurvey_followup.doc.

For definitions and documentation required to verify the achievement of each goal, please refer to ALCS' Revised Goals Form 2009 at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smarrt/forms/goals.doc>.

In summary:

- Programs must use the survey method to follow up on all goals with those students who have not provided a **social security number or who have provided a social security number but did not sign a release form**.
- Programs must use the survey method to follow up on the following goals with all students, regardless of whether the student has provided a social security number or signed a release form, **because data matching is not available** to verify these goals: obtain ADP, enter transitional education, complete transitional education, enter post-secondary education, retain in post-secondary education, enter occupational training, retain in occupational training, and complete occupational training.
- Programs are not required to survey **those students who have provided both a social security number AND a signed release form** to follow up on the goals that can be verified through data matching: enter employment/get a job, retain new employment, and retain current employment.
- Programs are not required to survey those students who have obtained a GED because data is matched regardless of whether or not SSN is provided.

Please note that programs are not allowed to pay the GED test fee for students using any federal or state grant funding.

Programs must follow up quarterly with students and former students to ascertain goal changes and achievements, using effective procedures. Programs must establish protocols for follow-up services, and assign staff to this function.

Program Design for Non-Rate Based Classes

A maximum of 20% of the instructional funding can support non-rate based classes. All non-rate based classes must be cost-effective. Programs may use the rates as a guide. The primary purposes of non-rate based classes are 1) to provide supplemental instruction (e.g., computer instruction) to students enrolled in a rate-based class (supplemental) or 2) to provide instruction to targeted populations through stand-alone non-rate based classes (e.g., students in need of short-term instruction in order to pass the GED tests). Following are the program design requirements for all non-rate based classes:

- All participating adult learners must be eligible to receive ABE services.
- Programs must maintain an enrollment of a minimum of eight adult learners per class.
- All adult learners participating in a non-rate based class must be pre-and post-tested following state assessment policies.

Supplemental Non-Rate Based Classes

Following are the program design requirements specific to **supplemental** non-rate based classes:

- All participating adult learners must be currently enrolled in rate-based ABE classes (see exception below for citizenship classes).
- Programs must provide non-rate based instruction that is directly tied to instructional activities conducted in the rate-based classes that the students attend.
- Supplemental non-rate based classes may be offered for less than five hours a week.
- Students from different level classes within the sequence of the required rate-base classes may be enrolled in the same non-rate based class where appropriate.
- Supplemental non-rate based classes include:
 - Writing
 - Math
 - Health Education
 - Computer Literacy
 - ESOL Conversation
 - Employability Skills
 - Parenting Support/Education
 - Interactive Literacy (formerly call Parent and Child Together/ PACT)
 - Drop-in Learning Center
 - Citizenship - No less than 75% of the learners in the citizenship class must be enrolled in the program.

Two Types of Stand-Alone Non-Rate Based Classes

The first type of stand-alone classes is the GED/Content area. This class is for students who are in need of short-term instruction (at least 12 hours) in one or two content areas in order to successfully complete the GED tests. Eligible students must be functioning at a pre-ASE/ASE level.

The second type of stand-alone class is the Drop in Learning Center. Programs are encouraged to develop placement criteria to identify those students who would benefit from a drop-in service. The Drop-in Learning Centers must use ABE /ESOL content as the base for instruction.

The program design requirements specific to the **stand-alone** non-rate based classes (GED/Content Area Classes and Drop-in Learning Centers) are as follows:

- Eligible students include both students enrolled in a core ESE-funded ABE class and students not enrolled in a core ABE class.
- Programs do not have to offer a sequence of three classes.
- Instruction must be offered a minimum of five hours per week and be of sufficient duration (e.g., 10-12 week cycles) to ensure that students can achieve their goals.
- Stand-alone non-rate based programs/classes must follow the same policy requirements as all other ESE-funded ABE/ESOL programs, including goal setting/countable outcomes and assessments.

Program and Staff Development

Program Development

ACLS requires that each program engage annually in a formal planning process for continuous improvement. (The terms Program Development/Program Continuous Improvement Planning may be used interchangeably.) The overall goal of program planning is to ensure the program is offering high quality services to students to assist them in meeting their goals. Program development activities must focus on the infrastructure that comprises the systems or components that make up the whole program.

Programs (Fund Codes 340, 345 and 359) are required to submit a Continuous Improvement Plan to their Program Specialists in the fall, annually. If a program has met all the standards, they must still submit a Continuous Improvement Plan (using the action plan format in the SABES manual) to their Program Specialist in the fall, annually. The program, however, is not restricted to addressing the performance standards. The program should address the areas of improvement identified through its planning and evaluation process. Programs must use one of the two formats for “action plans” found in the SABES *Planning for Program Improvement: A Manual for ABE Programs* available at <http://www.sabes.org/resources/index.htm#docs>.

Note that what is labeled as an action plan in the manual is the format programs should use for their “Continuous Improvement Plan”.

Over the past several years, ACLS has worked with the field to develop performance standards. These include: attendance, average hours of participation, learning gains, pre-and post-test rate and the achievement of student goals. The performance standards and related information can be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/pawg/fc340_345_359.html.

Programs should review their performance relative to the performance standards. Programs that do not meet one or more of the standards must address how they plan to improve their performance relative to those standards in the Continuous Improvement Plan. For example, if a program has 64% attendance rate, they have not meet the performance standard and at least one goal in the program’s action plan must address improving attendance. However, if that same program has a 75% pre-and post-test rate, it is not necessary for the program to address the pre-and post-test standard in their plan.

If a program has not met three or more of the performance standards, the program should contact their Program Specialist before developing their Continuous Improvement Plan. The Program Specialist and the program will negotiate which performance standards should be addressed in the development of the Continuous Improvement Plan.

The continuous improvement planning process must be purposeful and intentional as well as ongoing and systematic in order that a program continually evaluates its efforts to improve its services. A program with a planning process in place is better able to respond to changing community needs and demographics, new initiatives, trends in technology, staff turnover, etc. Key steps in the continuous improvement planning process include:

- Assess program needs/strengths (The process looks at each component and the interrelationship of components within the program, e.g. intake, orientation, curriculum development, instruction, assessment, counseling, instruction, follow-up, etc.)
- Define and prioritize goals for program improvement, based on needs
- Develop a continuous improvement (action/work) plan to meet goal (s) that incorporate individual staff development plans.
- Engage in activities to implement the plan in order to meet those goals and document these efforts
- Evaluate efforts and progress (e.g., the effectiveness of the plan, making revisions as needed).

Additionally, the Continuous Improvement Plan must include an established process for collecting and using data to assist with daily operations, program planning and continuous improvement. The plan must include a staff review of Cognos data (among other data), and all staff must meet at least quarterly to analyze data that affect daily operations, program planning, and continuous improvement. In addition at a minimum of twice per year, staff must review data, including Cognos data, specific to continuous program improvement.

These activities constitute a cycle of planning that guides the process of continuous improvement from one year to the next. The steps may be simple or involved. For example, the “assess program needs/strengths” step may be as straightforward as asking, “what is needed?” A more elaborate approach might involve a staff retreat, outside consultants, and a year-long extensive data collection activity. Large and small programs alike make these determinations based on their individual philosophies, identified goals, staffing and the resources at their disposal.

The ABE rates allow a program to assign (3.5% of total staff hours) a limited number of staff to lead or conduct the program development activities that are identified in the Continuous Improvement Plan. These staff hours are designated on the programs’ (SMARTT) staffing chart. Finally, Continuous Improvement Plan must be documented, shared, and discussed with all staff. Programs must have regularly (at least quarterly) scheduled staff meetings that allow for the maximum possible participation of both full and part time staff. Programs must document these meetings with minutes.

Staff Development for Each Staff Member

Every staff member in a program, e.g., teachers, support staff, counselor, director, no matter how experienced, must participate in professional development activities. (The terms “staff development” and “professional development” may be used interchangeably.)

Each program must identify a Staff Development Facilitator (P/SD) to assist staff in their staff development efforts. The program director and Program/Professional Development Facilitator work together to ensure that the program uses a continuous planning process that links program goals with individual professional development plans, and that is reviewed annually. The P/SD Facilitator will ensure that information regarding professional development opportunities, including ACLS mailings, the SABES calendar, and other resources, are shared with all staff. The P/SD Facilitator is also responsible for developing a system to track the hours spent on these activities. The P/SD Facilitator position is supported by foundation funding plus additional support in the rates.

Many different kinds of activities “count” as staff development (not only workshops) so that staff may study, practice and reflect in the process of acquiring new skills and or knowledge. Some examples of these types of staff development activities include: peer coaching, study circles, teacher research, mini-courses and institutes, reading, visiting another program to learn new practices, etc. Staff development hours must be entered in the professional development database in SMARTT.

Annually, each staff member must:

- Assess his/her needs for professional development.
- Set and prioritize goals for each year's staff development.
- Create an individual staff development plan. The plan should address the individual staff member's goals for professional development and also align with the program's improvement goals.
- Engage in the selected staff development activity.
- Evaluate and document the staff development effort and activity.

ACLS requires that for both full and part-time staff, 2.5% of each staff member's time (or 12 hours, whichever is greater) must be used for staff development activities. This 2.5% per 12-hour minimum is in addition to the 15-hour New Staff Orientation required in the first year of hire. A full time staff member working 40 hours/week throughout the year receives support for and is required to complete 52 hours of staff/professional development each year. The program must make time available for staff development activities by providing substitutes or using other strategies in order that staff have access to development opportunities.

ACLS also requires that programs keep a record of professional development hours for each staff member but leaves to the discretion of the programs the method for calculating those hours. For example, some programs may wish to include travel or lunch time in the professional development hours, while others may not. The amount of hours to be entered into the SMARTT system should be based on program policy for paid professional development time.

Integrated Program and Staff Development Planning

Every program benefits from efforts to improve its own systems as well as individual staff members' skills and knowledge. A "process", however, is needed to help the program and the individual staff manage these efforts so they are working toward a common goal or purpose. The full impact of the program and staff development efforts can best be achieved when the two are joined systematically. The steps recommended earlier in this section for the continuous improvement planning apply as well as an individual staff member creates a staff development plan. The Program Director and the P/SD Facilitator should work together to ensure that the program uses a continuous improvement planning process that deliberately links program continuous improvement goals with the individual staff members' staff development goals.

Pre and Post Planning Time

Programs must provide 2-4 weeks of paid time for teachers to devote to issues of planning and development during weeks that classes are not in session. It is recommended that staff use this time to address programmatic issues. These activities may include: review and document curriculum aligned with the ABE Frameworks; improve learning gains, instruction, student retention, attendance and/or other program related activities.

Administration

Administration

ESE Program Directors are expected to implement these guidelines. All ESE-funded ABE programs must have written personnel and administrative policies and procedures in place to ensure efficient and effective service delivery and to guarantee fiscal accountability.

Educational Leadership

Grantees must provide for sufficient program administration and educational leadership. A program coordinator/director operating a minimum size grant of \$100,000 must commit a minimum of fifteen (15) hours/week to these functions.

The Director is responsible for the overall coordination, administration, and educational leadership of the adult education program. The Director oversees the hiring, training and supervision of all staff, provides written job descriptions, policy manuals, mission statement, and organizational chart to all staff. The demographics of the program staff reflect the ethnicity, linguistic and cultural background of the student population. Interview/hiring teams include key stakeholders (e.g., student and staff representation). The Director is responsible for grant writing, and preparing reports and statistics to ESE, as well as for sharing the monthly mailings with all staff.

The program must have an organizational chart that includes the umbrella organization as well as the entire ABE program.

The Director's responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Facilitates effective program development activities in accordance with program needs and leads the process to set program goals and program improvement goals.
- Collaboratively designs a staff development program in accordance with program needs; integrates program and staff development and works closely with the program's staff and program development facilitator.
- Is responsible for overall fiscal oversight and ensures that expenditures are allowable and appropriate and that allocated funds are available throughout the fiscal year.
- Ensures compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Oversees curriculum design and development and ensures that program curricula and instruction are aligned with the ABE Frameworks. Instructional processes and strategies must be based on research in adult learning and development. Student goal-setting and the assessment of student learning are part of the curricula design.
- Conducts staff evaluations or assigns a qualified staff person annually at a minimum, including classroom observations, written feedback and follow up for instructional staff.
- Maintains a time and effort record for each staff person.

Refer to these three excellent resources for Program Administrators:
www.sabes.org
SABES Planning for Program Improvement: A Manual for Adult Basic Education Programs.

SABES Program and Staff Development Process: A Guidebook for Facilitators.

Program Administrators' Soucebook: A Resource on NCSALL's Research for Adult Education Program Administrators.

- Maintains current written job descriptions for each job category of the ABE program.
- Oversees student outreach, intake, orientation and recruitment policies.
- Provides ongoing staff supervision.
- Promotes clear procedures for collecting, documenting, analyzing and reporting data. The Director also promotes the use of data for program improvement and accountability. The Director must establish and maintain an effective record-keeping system.
- Works with staff to develop systems and protocols for evaluating the program.
- Participates in the New Directors' orientation within a year of hiring.
- Oversees community planning activities.
- Attends the annual ABE Directors' Meeting.

Program Governance

Programs must provide documented accountability to an active governing board which has general decision making authority, including fiduciary responsibility for the organization, and whose membership is different from and not related to the program's operating staff. In the case of private, non-profit organizations, the Governing Board must have documented protocols for hiring and evaluating the executive director, and for checks and balances on the director's policy and decision making authority; for example, these written procedures must specify at what amount checks must be co-signed by a member of the Governing Board. In the case of public agencies, the Governing Board and related protocols requirements are fulfilled by public oversight mechanisms such as school committees, trustees, etc.

Annual ABE Directors' Meeting

The annual ABE Directors' Meeting, sponsored by ACLS, provides opportunities for MA ABE Directors to learn about policy updates and to provide feedback. Programs must send two representatives to the Annual ABE Directors' Meeting. The Director must attend both days. The second representative may be the same or different staff each day.

Staff Compensation

ACLS is committed to ensuring that all staff members at all ESE-funded ABE programs are paid at least at the salary rate supported by the ESE rates. This applies to staff hours paid with ESE Direct and ESE Indirect funds as well as hours that are used as Match to the ESE grant.

Programs must provide a competitive package of salary and benefits that will attract and retain highly qualified and experienced staff.

- The ABE Rates System supports an hourly rate for professional services staff (P) of **\$18.54 plus fringe benefits valued at 25%**
\$23.17 for those staff not receiving benefits.
This results in a “contact hour rate” of **\$34.77**.
- The ABE Rates System supports an hourly rate for administrators (A) of **\$25.50 plus fringe benefits valued at 25%**
\$31.87 for those staff not receiving benefits.
- The ABE Rates System supports an hourly rate for support/clerical staff (S) of **\$13.91 plus fringe benefits valued at 25%**
\$17.39 for those staff not receiving benefits.

Programs must provide paid preparation time for instructional staff. The rates support teaching time to prep time at a rate of 2:1 (teaching to prep time). The recommended range is 1:1 to 4:1 (teaching to prep time). Paid prep time is not required when the hourly rate paid by programs meets or exceeds the rate system's **contact hour rate (\$34.77)**.

Staff Salary Analysis

The Staff Salary Analysis figures indicate the difference between the amount the program is spending and the amount the ESE rates support. These figures are found on the Staff Salary Analysis screen in SMARTT. Programs must ensure that the Staff Salary Analysis is within an Allowable Range of +/- 3% of the ESE approved rate per staff category (Administrative, Professional, and Support).

- If the amount is more than 3% below the allowable range per category (A, P, S) the program is not spending what the ABE rates support for salaries. The grant award will be lowered if programs choose not to use all funds allocated to them according to ESE rates. The grant award will be lowered by the difference between the program total and the ESE rates total of each applicable category.
- If the amount is more than 3% above the allowable range per category the program is spending more than what the ABE rates support for salaries. Matching funds (above the minimum required 20%) and/or Unrestricted funds must account for the difference. The Matching funds should provide salaries and may also include funds for space costs and other rates supported costs. The Match Narrative must document clearly what role in the ABE program each matching staff person plays, the value that is added to the program by the match items, and the source of matching funds.

SMARTT Staff Plans and Corresponding Budgets

All staff hours that are paid out of ESE Direct, ESE Indirect and Non-ESE matching funds must be entered into the SMARTT Staff Plans and also appear on the corresponding lines on each budget narrative and budget detail pages. The SMARTT Staff Plans, budget narrative and detail budget pages must reflect accurate hourly salaries and accurate fringe *offered to* each staff person. The fringe rate on the staffing chart and in the budget must reflect the agency's policy on benefits and the amount the agency is prepared to pay for fringe, using ESE Direct, ESE Indirect, or Matching (Non- ESE) funds. For example, if part-time staff members are eligible to receive 10% benefits and full-time staff members are eligible to receive 25% benefits, the staff plan and budgets will reflect these separate fringe amounts that are offered to each staff person. Programs may not list an average of benefits for all staff. Benefits may include FICA, unemployment insurance, workers compensation, pensions, health insurance, etc.

While an agency may have its own salary/staffing structure, for the purposes of grant funds received by ESE, staff should be recorded (in the SMARTT Staffing Plan and on the budget) as Administrator (A), Professional (P) and Support (S) according to the following guidelines/definitions.

Administrator (A): Directors, Coordinators and any other staff who have overall supervising and administration responsibilities

Professional (P): Teachers, Educational Counselors/ADA Coordinators, Technology Coordinators, Program and Staff Development Facilitators, Community Planners

Support (S): Data Entry Staff, Clerical Staff, Support Staff

Other Rates Supported Costs for All Staff

The ESE rates support three weeks vacation for every staff person. ESE strongly encourages programs to use the funds to provide vacation time for every full-time and every part-time staff person.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) Advisory Council

Programs must have an ABE Advisory Council made up of a diverse group of stakeholders (e.g., students, volunteers, community members). This Council should play an active role to support the program's ability to meet its goals and to contribute to the program's success. The Advisory Council is separate from any governing board, Board of Directors or Community Planning Partnership. Although ESE will not approve having a program's governing board also serve as the ABE Advisory Council, a subcommittee of the community planning partnership may function as the Advisory Council, provided they keep separate minutes and spend separate time focusing on the ABE program. Students participating on the Advisory Council must be provided with training and support. The council must reflect the many needs and interests of the local community. The Advisory Council must meet at least three times per year and programs must maintain meeting minutes.

Documentation of Services

Programs must maintain accurate documentation for all required and agreed to services.

- An updated ABE staffing chart or equivalent documentation must be maintained on site to provide accurate details of how staff resources are assigned to all essential ABE program functions.
- Programs must be able to demonstrate that required functions are provided according to the approved budget (e.g., counseling, program and staff development).
- Program must be able to account for set aside funds (e.g., space, childcare).
- Programmatic and fiscal data collection and reporting systems are official records. Falsification of any required documentation or report may be grounds for immediate termination of the grant, return of grant funds and/or prosecution.
- Programs must maintain both programmatic and fiscal records for seven years. Programmatic records include, but are not limited to SMARTT intake forms, goals information sheets, educational counseling notes, meeting minutes.

Required Reporting

Programs must submit timely and accurate reports. Examples of these reports include the Standard Application for Grants, amendment requests, final financial reports, continuous improvement planning reports, etc.

- The Department encourages weekly data entry in the System for Managing Accountability Through Technology (SMARTT), but requires that it be brought up to date monthly.
- Failure to submit/transmit timely and accurate reports may result in a suspension of further payments until the ESE receives accurate and complete reports.

Indicators of Program Quality –See attachment A on page 52.

Required Staff Trainings

New Staff Orientation

A program must offer each new staff person an orientation to the program. This orientation must include an overview of the program's philosophy, services, goals, policies and procedures and of ACLS requirements including the ABE Guidelines. Additionally, all staff must receive an employee policies and procedures handbook that addresses key employee issues, for example, absenteeism, travel reimbursement, benefits, ADA policies, grievance procedures, performance appraisal, expectations for staff behavior, working hours, professional development, and benefits.

All administrators and direct service staff hired in a ESE-funded ABE program are required to complete the SABES New Staff Orientation (NSO), with two exceptions: a new staff person who possesses a certificate of completion from having taken the NSO through employment in a prior job (in another ESE-funded program) does not need to complete it again, and a new administrator with experience in the ESE-funded ABE system (e.g., in a different role) may have the NSO requirement waived. Data entry staff and other non-direct service staff are encouraged but not required to attend.

Direct service staff is required to complete the New Staff Orientation in the first 12 months of employment. However, since all directors must complete the New Directors' Orientation in their first 12 months, those directors who also need to complete the New Staff Orientation have up to 18 months to do so.

The SABES New Staff Orientation provides a broad introduction to the Adult Basic Education system in Massachusetts, and includes information on the adult learner, adult learning theory, approaches to teaching, curriculum and assessment, literacy and language acquisition, and an overview of the field. Not intended as a basic course in teaching, the NSO is rather a first step from which participants can go on to further staff development. The New Staff Orientation is offered by SABES, usually at least once in each region and twice in some regions; participants may register for the session that best meets their scheduling needs (even if it is in another region).

New Directors' Orientation

Within their first 12 months of employment, all directors to ESE-funded ABE programs must complete a New Directors Orientation, offered each fall by ACLS. Programs are strongly encouraged to also send Coordinators and Assistant Directors.

The New Directors' Orientation provides an overview of the Massachusetts ABE system, including the Guidelines for Effective ABE and the Indicators of ABE Program Quality, ESE requirements and performance standards for ABE programs and how programs are monitored, issues related to program management, accountability and educational leadership, and the resources and supports available to Mass. ABE directors.

It will be helpful, if scheduling permits, for a director to have completed the New Directors' Orientation before beginning the ABE Program Design training. (However, no director should postpone taking ABE Program Design if s/he has not yet been able to complete this Orientation.)

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Training

ADA Coordinators must attend at least one ADA training each year. SABES Regional Support Centers and ACLS provide trainings. For more information see the ADA Compliance Section on p. 39.

System for Managing Accountability and Results Through Technology (SMARTT): SMARTT New User, SMARTT Refresher/Updates, and Cognos trainings

The 5-hour SMARTT New User workshop, provided throughout the year by each SABES regional center, provides a hands-on introduction to Massachusetts' web-based ABE student database MIS reporting system: The System for Managing Accountability and Results Through Technology, or SMARTT. The New User training provides an introduction to SMARTT features and how SMARTT is used for accountability and program management; it is required for all new users of the SMARTT system. Cognos workshops cover accessing, filtering and exporting SMARTT data and creating reports.

Directors need proficiency in using SMARTT in order to prepare and submit a program design annually, and in Cognos in order to review and analyze their performance data. It will be helpful, if scheduling permits, for a director to have completed the SMARTT New User training before beginning ABE Program Design. (However, no director should postpone taking ABE Program Design if s/he has not yet been able to complete SMARTT training.)

ESE programs are required to maintain at all times a minimum of two staff proficient in using SMARTT and Cognos. Programs must send two staff members (who have regular SMARTT responsibilities) to required SMARTT and Cognos trainings, including refresher/update trainings as needed in order to stay current with changes. In addition to the director, most programs choose as the second trained person a support staff person who then usually becomes the primary data entry person. Programs are required to send new people for training whenever turnover of trained staff necessitates.

ABE Program Design

The application process for both new and continuation ABE funding from ESE requires the applicant to utilize the tools in SMARTT to develop a program plan. The ABE Program Design training is designed to enable participants to develop a fundable plan, using SMARTT, which is consistent with the MA Guidelines for Effective ABE and ESE policy requirements.

All Directors and other staff who may be required to enter program plans into SMARTT (e.g., site coordinators, assistant directors) must complete this four-day training within her/his first 12 months of hire.

Program Planning

- See Program and Staff Development section.

Community Planning

All ESE-funded programs in a community will participate in one ABE Community Partnership in that community. Allocations for community planning in ESE-funded programs are as follows:

- If the program is the only ESE-funded program in the community it will receive \$10,250.
- If there are multiple ESE-funded programs in a community, each program will receive \$6,150.
- If an ESE-funded program is in Boston, each program will receive \$6,150 of which \$2,050 will support the citywide initiative through its fiscal agent, Jobs and Community Services, a Division of the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Programs will retain \$4,100 for community planning purposes within the neighborhoods they serve.

Programs must be part of a community planning partnership that is working towards the following goals:

- To ensure that the needs of all undereducated and/or limited English proficient constituencies are accounted for, and that strategic plans are developed that identify how and when every such constituency will ultimately be served.
- To ensure that every organization with an interest in, and the potential for, supporting services to these populations is included in such planning, and that protocols are established to coordinate these services.
- To ensure that students benefit from the broadest possible array of education, employment and training, health and human services that so many students need in order to successfully pursue their goals and aspirations.
- To ensure that adult basic education takes its place as a key ingredient in every organization, community's and region's plans to improve the quality of life.

For more information about Community Planning, see the Community Planning Guidelines on the ACLS website. <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/mailings/2005/1111/cpguidelines.doc>

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), is a comprehensive federal civil rights law that was enacted on July, 26 1990 to ensure that the civil rights of persons with disabilities were not violated through the use of discriminatory practices in employment, public services, public accommodations and communications. The ADA also protects people who are not disabled, but may be discriminated against because of their association with a person that is disabled. For example, a person cannot be denied employment because s/he provides care for a spouse or child with a disability. An employer cannot assume that because a person is a caregiver of a person with a disability s/he will be an unreliable employee. As a provider of services to the public, each ESE-funded program is obligated to provide reasonable access to services for all persons. In an effort to ensure that all ABE programs are responsive to adult learners with disabilities, the Department requires that each ABE program have an ADA Coordinator whose primary role is to ensure that the program is in compliance with ADA.

The Department requires that ABE programs adhere to the ten standards listed below. For a comprehensive explanation of each standard, please see the Disability Guidelines webpage at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/disability/default.html>

1. ADA Coordinator: Designate a responsible person to be the program ADA Coordinator. This person will be responsible for ensuring that the program is in compliance with ADA requirements. He/She will make sure the program is accessible, and that policies and practices do not discriminate against students with disabilities.
2. Public Notice: The public notice articulates a program's commitment to adhering to the ADA requirements. The public notice must be posted in a prominent location at the program.
3. Grievance Procedure: The grievance procedure may be used by a student who wishes to file a complaint alleging the ABE program has discriminated against him/her on the basis of disability in the policies, practices or the provision of services, and activities. The grievance procedure must be posted in a prominent location at the program.

4. **Conduct a Self-Evaluation:** A one-time self-evaluation is an opportunity for a program to review its policies and practices to ensure that they are inclusive and non-discriminatory. When a program moves to another facility, a new self-evaluation is required.
5. **Transition Plan:** A transition plan for barrier removal is required when a program identifies a barrier that prevents access to any area of the program (i.e. no ramp, no accessible parking, heavy doors, etc.).
6. **Letter of Commitment:** A letter of commitment must be submitted each year along with the ADA Checklist. This letter formally states that the program will adhere to the requirements set forth by the ADA.
7. **Training of Staff:** The ADA Coordinator is expected to provide ADA training to new staff at orientation and to all program staff at least once a year.
8. **Involvement of Persons with Disabilities:** The ADA Coordinator and staff must actively recruit students with disabilities to participate in the student council, advisory boards, committees, etc.
9. **Accommodations for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** All ABE programs must have a TTY telephone. The TTY telephone ensures that individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired can communicate. The TTY telephone number must be on stationery and brochures. If a program uses the relay service, it is still required to have a TTY telephone.
10. **ADA Coordinators must attend at least one ADA training each year.** It is strongly recommended that the ADA Coordinator complete six hours of disability related professional development each year. A new ADA Coordinator, defined as an individual with less than one year of experience in the position, should complete a five-hour ADA overview orientation. It is strongly recommended that new ADA Coordinators continue to develop his/her knowledge of the ADA by participating in additional professional development opportunities.

Fiscal Responsibilities

Grantees must operate programs using sound fiscal procedures that meet all state and federal requirements.

- Non-governmental grantees must submit an annual audit report to the ACLS grants liaison that segregates ESE adult education grants in a separate fund.
- The grant recipient will not use the award funds to pay for expenses that have been paid for by any other local, state, federal, or private award.
- Fiscal reports must be submitted by the deadline established by the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education unless the grant recipient acquires a prior written waiver. Failure to submit/transmit timely and accurate reports will result in a suspension of further payments until the Department receives accurate and complete reports.

Acknowledge ACLS/ESE Funding

Grant recipients must identify the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education as the entity supporting the delivery of services in any official correspondence, brochures and publications.

- Programs must track expenditures and notify ESE if there is a change in their fiscal plan (underspending, etc.). If a program believes that funds will be unspent during the program year, they must notify ACLS at least 2 months prior to the end of the fiscal year. ACLS will reallocate these funds, as unspent funds are reverted back to the state or federal government, not to ACLS.
- Programs must maintain a time and effort record for each staff person that reflects appropriate alignment among the hours worked on the grant, the hours in the budget, and the payroll.
- All staff must be paid for the number of hours and at the hourly rate reflected in the Program Design approved by ACLS. This includes hours and rates on the ESE Direct, ESE Indirect and Match staff plans.

Grants Information

<http://finance1.doe.mass.edu/Grants/>

Facility Costs

Rental costs may be charged to the ESE grant if the program was approved for a space set-aside or is using unrestricted funds.

- The agency must have on file rental documents, such as leases or receipts that demonstrate the actual amount of money paid to the landlord.
- The cost of the space being claimed by the agency must be adjusted to reflect the percent usage for the funded program.
- If the agency claims donated or in-kind space as match, the agency must be able to demonstrate that the amount claimed reflects the market value of that space prorated for usage by the ABE program.
- Agencies receiving 100% reimbursement for facilities costs from state government (e.g., public schools, community colleges, corrections facilities) may not charge lease, rental, or utilities costs to state or federally funded grants with the intention of using the grant money to supplant the state's contribution. Grant funds may be used for facilities costs if the agency has a cost allocation plan to identify each allocated service and defines the method used to appropriately distribute the costs on a reasonable and consistent basis.

Matching Funds

Programs must provide fully auditable matching resources for each year of the multi-year grant equal to at least 20% of the initial grant award.

A program can claim as match the value of the volunteers who are providing tutoring services and the services provided by non-instructional volunteers. The value of volunteer hours that are claimed as match should be set at \$15/hour; the value of non-instructional volunteer hours (e.g., for clerical support) that are claimed as match should be based on the standard hourly rate for a given position at an agency, not to exceed \$15/hour. The ESE will limit the value of volunteer time included in the program's matching share on the ESE grant to 5% of the grant, not to exceed \$20,000. This limit does not apply to Primary Instruction by Volunteer Programs (Fund Code 287).

The cost of equipment used solely for an adult basic education program may be used as a matching expense if it was not purchased with ESE funds. This cost can be used in one of two ways. First, the

cost of the equipment may be used as match for one year of the grant. Second, the cost of the equipment may be pro-rated over two or more years, with the pro-rated value serving as the match for two or more respective years. Equipment costs may be used as match if the agency has a cost allocation plan to identify each allocated service and defines the method used to appropriately distribute the costs on a reasonable and consistent basis.

Matching funds must:

- Be fully documented, auditable and comprised of directly allocable (not indirect) costs.
- Add value to program operations, instructional and support services.
- Services provided with matching funds must comply with the Guidelines for Effective ABE and the ABE Rates system.

ESE requires that matching resources support the core ABE instructional program. Funds from grant programs that do not include adults as a target population are not eligible (e.g., after school programs for 7th graders). Funds that support any portion of the continuum of services provided to learners through the program are good examples of match that support the core ABE instructional program. Local cash contributions such as local ABE appropriations from cities, towns and LEAs (local educational agencies) are an example of match if it supports the core ABE instructional program. We require that programs list the source of matching funds in grant applications and all applicable budget forms. The chart below provides more detail on eligible match. The chart is not all-inclusive.

Description of Matching Resources
ABE classroom and office equipment
Adult furniture for the ABE program
Advertising for adult learner and/or staff recruitment purposes
Audit-related expenses for the ABE program
Childcare expenses which include an educational component for children of ABE learners
Computer equipment for the ABE program
Conference registrations for ABE program staff
Consulting fees/contracts for computer support in the adult education program
Consulting fees/contracts for substitute ABE teachers
Educational supplies for adult learners in the ABE program
Fringe benefits for ABE program staff
Liability Insurance for the ABE program, staff and board
Maintenance and repair of ABE program's equipment and space
Memberships to ABE-related professional organizations
Office supplies for the ABE program

Description of Matching Resources
Printing and reproduction of non-copyrighted materials for ABE program use
Salaries for ABE agency's Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator and Program and Staff Development Facilitator in excess of the rate-based amount provided by ESE
Salaries for ABE program's clerical and data entry staff
Salaries for ABE program volunteer coordinators funded by sources other than ESE
Salaries for Administrators including time for any of the categories listed on the staff plan
Salaries for direct service personnel including teachers and counselors including time for any of the categories listed on the staff plan
Salaries for staff who provide translation and interpretation services for the ABE program
Software upgrades for learners and staff in the ABE program
Space with formula used to pro-rate cost including square footage, cost per square foot, pro-rated amount for time used by ABE program
Subscriptions to ABE-related publications for learners and program staff
Telephone and Internet expenses for the program including TTY, ISDN
Transportation for ABE learners (e.g., van, T-passes, etc.)
Travel expenses for ABE program staff
Vacation/Leave Time for ABE program staff

Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

Community Adult Learning Centers are generally funded for five-year cycles. Programs must meet the maintenance of effort requirement.

- Each year, programs must provide a matching share that is equal to 20% of the grant award or equal to the MOE amount, whichever is greater.
- The matching share in year one of the funding cycle must be the greater of the organization's maintenance of effort in the previous cycle or 20% of the new grant award.
- The MOE/matching share committed in year one of a multi-year grant cannot be reduced without the Department's written approval.

Administrative Costs and Indirect Costs

Grantees must not commit more than 25% of grant funds to administrative costs, including indirect costs.

- Agencies with an ESE-approved indirect cost rate (IDC) shall not receive more than a 5% indirect rate for adult education programs.
- Agencies with an approved federal indirect cost rate shall not receive more than an 8% indirect rate for adult education programs.
- The total of direct and indirect costs may not exceed your total grant award.
- In lieu of charging for indirect costs, grantees that provide an appropriate and detailed allocation of agency wide costs to programs may receive ESE approval to include them as direct costs.
- Agencies must re-apply every year for an approved indirect cost rate.

Indirect Cost Rate

Programs may claim indirect in their match. The combination of the indirect supported in the grant and the indirect claimed in the match cannot exceed the total approved indirect rate.

Indirect Cost Assignment When Sub-Grantees Are Involved

If both agencies claim indirect (IDC), the total indirect dollar cannot be higher than the amount the prime recipient could receive.

- A subcontract may charge IDC as long as the prime grantee has an approved IDC rate and the total IDC is not more than the prime grantee could receive.
- All subcontracts are bound by the total dollar amount the prime grantee could possibly claim under the grantee's approved IDC rate. If the prime grantee does not have an approved IDC rate, then no subcontract may claim IDC.
- If Prime Grantee (Fiscal Agent) has an approved IDC rate, and the sub-contractors also have approved rates, then both the Prime Grantee and the sub-contractors can charge IDC. The total indirect costs, including that taken by the grantee and the subcontracts, may not exceed the prime grantee's IDC allocation.
- If the subcontract does not have an IDC rate, the prime grantee must have an approved rate in order to assign indirect costs to the subcontract. Note that the total IDC on the grant (including subcontracts) may not exceed the prime grantee's total possible IDC allocation.

Memorandum of Agreement

Grantees that include a collaboration of more than one organization must have a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that is signed by all parties and renewed annually. Agencies with sub-contracts must also have an MOA between the lead agency and the sub-contracting agency that is renewed annually.

- The MOA must include a description of how grant funds relate to supporting overhead costs as well as how funding will be allocated among the partnering organizations.
- The MOA should include the roles and responsibilities of each partnering organization.
- The MOA should outline decision-making protocols.
- The MOA should include protocols for terminating the partnership/s.

Full-Time Equivalency

Grantees must base full-time equivalency (FTE) calculations on the grantee agency's written definition.

- FTE for non-public school programs is calculated by dividing the employees paid hours/year by the number of annual hours that the agency defines as "full time," i.e., (actual paid hrs/wk) x (paid wks/yr)/ (agency definition of full time hrs/wk) x (52 wks).
- The FTE for public school programs is based on the district's definition of full-time employment.

No Charges to Students

Programs must ensure that adults enrolled in adult basic education programs shall NOT be charged tuition, fees or any other charges or be required to purchase any books or materials that are needed for participation in programs.

- Although discouraged, programs may charge a refundable deposit only for books used for review at home.
- Programs must maintain documentation of the deposits and refunds and must include in its annual report to ESE what percent of deposits are not refunded.

Equipment Inventory

Programs should maintain an inventory of equipment. The inventory of computers, copiers, furniture and other major items purchased with ESE funding must be updated annually. There is a policy for disposal of such items when they become out of date. The inventory list should include:

A description of each item

- The model and serial or other identifying number
- The source of the property (grant number, agreement number, etc.)
- Acquisition date and cost
- Location and condition of the equipment prior to disposal
- Date of disposal and sale price (including the method used to determine fair market value), if applicable

Obsolete Equipment

Equipment may be considered obsolete depending on type. For example, a computer older than four years may be considered obsolete. Some office equipment such as fax or copy machines, overhead projectors may be considered obsolete after five years, while furniture and other large items (desks, file cabinets, vehicles, etc.) may be considered obsolete after ten years. While equipment items may be discarded or disposed of, equipment databases or inventory lists must be kept for not less than 15 years and should be updated annually. Equipment purchase records such as requisitions, packing slips, and invoices must be retained for seven years.

Equipment Disposal Requirements

A program must have a policy for disposal of out-of-date equipment. When a program is in possession of equipment that is either unusable or obsolete, the program may delete the equipment from its active inventory list using any of the following methods:

- Donating the equipment – usable equipment may be transferred to students by means of a lottery or drawing, or may be transferred to another non-profit agency

- Selling the equipment – usable equipment may be sold at fair market value and the resulting income claimed as match.
- Disposing of the equipment – equipment that is no longer usable may be discarded.
- Programs that have usable equipment purchased with ESE /ABE funding that will no longer be used on behalf of an ESE-funded ABE program must notify ACLS. The reallocation of usable equipment is at the discretion of the Department.

Mandated Reporters of Abuse

All adult basic education and ESOL practitioners are considered mandated reporters and are required by law to report cases of suspected abuse. Mandated reporters:

- Include public and private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or adjustment counselors, psychologists, attendance officers, social workers, day care providers, health care professionals, court and public safety officials.
- Are immune from civil or criminal liability as a result of making a report. Non-mandated reporters are also protected providing the report was made in “good faith.”
- Are protected from retaliation and identities will be kept confidential.
- Who fail to file a report are subject to a fine of up to \$1,000.

This table outlines age, population, reporting agency and statute information for mandated reporters:

Age	0 – 18 years old	18 – 59 years old	60+
Population	Children	Disabled Adults	Elderly
Reporting Agency	Department of Social Services	Disabled Persons Protection Commission	Executive Office of Elderly Affairs
Statute	51A	19C	19A

Program Service Options

Program Service Options

Program Service Options include: ABE for the Homeless, Family Literacy Component, Participatory Health Component, and the Volunteer Component. With the exception of the ABE for the Homeless, the PSOs are a supplement to Community Adult Learning Centers/Core ABE programs. ABE for the Homeless can be offered as a supplement to a Core ABE program/CALC or as its own CALC.

ABE for the Homeless

ACLS uses the federal definition of homeless. The federal definition of a homeless person is: “An individual who (1) lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and (2) has a primary nighttime residence that is (a) a supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters and transitional housing for the mentally ill), (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized or (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.” (McKinney Act (P.L. 100-77, sec 103(2)(1), 101 stat. 485 (1987))).

Program Design for ABE for the Homeless

- Homeless service providers must collaborate with a Community Adult Learning Center to ensure that homeless adults have access to a full continuum of ABE services.
- Adult Basic Education for the Homeless programs may offer multi-level classes.
- ABE for the Homeless programs may offer a sequence of two classes.
- Programs must maintain an active enrollment of a minimum of seven adult learners per class.
- Funds must be used to provide rate-based classes to homeless adults.
- ABE for the Homeless programs must adhere to the Performance Standards.
- Programs must include an evaluation (including student and program outcomes) of the ABE for the Homeless component in an annual continuation application.

Family Literacy and Family Support

ACLS supports programs that provide integrated Family Literacy and Family Support services to parents. ACLS uses the federal definition of family literacy services contained in Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act). This act defines family literacy as "...services that are of sufficient intensity in terms of hours, and of sufficient duration, to make sustainable changes in a family and that integrate all of the following activities:

1. Interactive literacy activities¹ between parents and their children (Programs may provide non-rate based classes for interactive literacy and parenting education/support or provide these services through a collaboration.)

¹ The purpose of interactive literacy activities is to provide opportunities for positive interaction between parents and children, to model effective practices and promote the value of literacy in families.

2. Training for parents on how to be the primary teachers for their children and full partners in their children's education
3. Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency
4. Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences."

Program Design for Family Literacy

In addition to following policies for CALCs, programs with Family Literacy must:

- Coordinate the collaboration among partnering organizations in order to support the integration of existing components (adult basic education, childhood education, interactive literacy, and parenting support/education) into a comprehensive and unified family literacy program. These roles and responsibilities must be detailed in an MOA and updated annually.
- Have a coordinator to identify and recruit families and to serve as a liaison to partnering organizations (e.g., children's education program, public school, family service providers, etc.).
- Provide services to parents enrolled in a Community Adult Learning Center.
- Actively collaborate with the educational providers of the participating children to develop curricula that is mutually reinforcing.
- Maintain an active enrollment of a minimum of 8 families who participate over time in both rate and non-rate based classes.
- Project the number of students who will be served annually.
- Assist participating parents in creating a minimum of one goal related to their children's learning and monitor progress toward the stated goal(s).
- Submit a report that addresses student and program outcomes in the annual continuation application.

Participatory Health Education

ACLS supports the literacy, language and leadership skill development of students enrolled in a Community Adult Learning Center through participatory health education. Programs who have the participatory health education PSO are required to form student health teams.

Program Design for Participatory Health Education

- Programs must have a program facilitator to serve as a link to student health team members and to collaborate with health care organizations and other related resources within the community.
- Programs are encouraged to develop and support student leadership through the creation of student health teams and activities. Student health teams are comprised of adult learners, enrolled in a Community Adult Learner Center, working with the facilitator to promote health education in ABE programs. The activities of the student health teams include, but are not limited to: researching health topics; developing health-related curricula and lesson plans; creating health education materials; providing health-related instruction; and providing staff development.
- Student Health Team members must be actively enrolled in a Community Adult Learning Center class.
- A significant amount of the funding for the participatory health education component, not less than 20%, must be used to compensate students for their work.

- Programs must integrate health topics into the comprehensive ABE/ESOL instructional services and build on the ABE/ESOL and Health Curriculum Frameworks.
- Programs must include an evaluation (including student and program outcomes) of the Participatory Health Education Component in an annual continuation application.

Volunteer Component

ACLS supports effective supplementary instruction from well-trained and supported volunteers provided to students enrolled in Community Adult Learning Centers.

Program Design for Volunteer Component

Programs with a volunteer component must identify a Volunteer Coordinator who is responsible for implementing effective processes for tutor screening, referral, orientation, training, placement, ongoing supervision and support.

- Funds for a volunteer component for a Community Adult Learning Center must be used to support a minimum of .25 FTE or a .5 FTE Volunteer Coordinator. The .25 FTE Volunteer Coordinator will be required to maintain a minimum active caseload of 20 tutor matches with a minimum of 12 tutors. The .50 FTE Coordinator will be required to maintain a minimum active case load of 35 volunteer matches (assignments) with a minimum of 24 tutors.
- Funds for a volunteer component in collaboration with one or more additional ESE-funded programs must be used to support a .75 or 1.0 FTE Volunteer Coordinator. The .75 FTE Volunteer Coordinator will be required to maintain a minimum active caseload of 50 tutor matches with a minimum of 36 tutors. Programs with a 1.0 FTE Coordinator serving more than one ESE-funded program is required to maintain a minimum active caseload of 65 tutor matches (assignments) with a minimum of 48 tutors.

Number of Programs Served	One Community Adult Learning Center	One Community Adult Learning Center	More than one Community Adult Learning Center	More than one Community Adult Learning Center
Volunteer Coordinator Time	.25 FTE	.50 FTE	.75 FTE	1 FTE
Active Volunteer Caseload	No less than 12	No less than 24	No less than 36	No less than 48
Active Volunteer/Student Matches (assignments)	No less than 20 matches	No less than 35 matches	No less than 50	No less than 65

- The ESE defines volunteer matches (assignments) as volunteers
 - Who provide tutoring to one, two, three or four enrolled students outside of regular class time;
 - Placed as in-class assistants or working with one or more students during class time.

Tutors may be credited for more than one match (e.g., Tutor A with Student B is one match, if Tutor A also tutors Student C, then the program is credited with two matches).

- The minimum active caseload must be maintained throughout the program year.
- Programs must make a concerted effort to recruit volunteers who reflect the ethnicity, race, nationality and language background of the student population
- Volunteers are required to make a minimum service commitment of 6 months. However, exceptions may be allowed for shorter-term placements (e.g., a college student volunteering for a semester). Short-term volunteer placements are placements that result in 30 or more hours of volunteer service in less than six months.
- Volunteers must receive a minimum of 12 hours of initial training, to be completed within the first ten weeks of service. The recommended range of hours for this initial training is 12-15. Programs must maintain documentation of tutor participation in initial and in-service training.
- Volunteers must be paired with students who are enrolled in ESE-funded classroom-based ABE programs, with few exceptions. Any volunteer who has been tutoring an enrolled student may continue to tutor the student when the student is no longer enrolled (e.g., due to a reasonable interruption in the student's class participation) as long as the student is still working towards meeting her/his goals, up to attainment of the skills and abilities expected of a high school graduate.
- A minimum of 85% of the tutor matches must be with students actively enrolled in an ESE - funded ABE class.
- Programs with a volunteer component must maintain records of all tutoring hours provided by *volunteers* whom the programs claim or identify as tutor *matches*. Programs must track and show the number of students served by volunteers and the number of individual student hours as a result of tutoring.
- Programs must include an evaluation (including student and program outcomes) of the Volunteer Component in an annual continuation application.

The Massachusetts Indicators of ABE Program Quality

In 1992 revisions to the National Adult Education Act created a mandate for states to adopt Indicators of Program Quality and to use those Indicators to evaluate and monitor program effectiveness. ACLS developed the Indicators of Program Quality that Massachusetts would use by engaging with the field to identify measures, standards, and resources. Although the Indicators of Program Quality have been reorganized over the years, they reflect the values identified in consultation with ABE practitioners in the early 1990s. They continue to represent the foundation on which the ACLS Program Monitoring is built. These include:

Indicators of Program Quality	
Indicator	Descriptor
Indicator 1: Curriculum Development, Implementation and Instructional Methods	Curriculum development and instruction are aligned with and incorporate learning standards from the Massachusetts ABE Curriculum Frameworks, and contribute to students' progress toward achieving their goals.
Indicator 2: Student Educational Progress	Students demonstrate gains in literacy and/or English skills and abilities that impact their roles as workers, family members, community members, and as lifelong learners.
Indicator 3: Instructional Support Services	The program offers counseling and other services to support instruction and meet students' needs.
Indicator 4: Community Linkages	The program has developed linkages that connect community assets to student needs.
Indicator 5: Program Continuous Improvement Planning	Program continuous improvement planning embodies effective organizational structures and processes to serve the needs of adult students.
Indicator 6: Professional Development	Exemplary professional development opportunities enhance educator professionalism to provide quality instruction for students.
Indicator 7: Program Management, Leadership and Accountability.	Program management and accountability are efficient, and effectively address all components of service delivery.

Program Director Checklist: 2008 – 2009

Items to Submit to ESE	Projected Due Date
○ Disability Checklist	September 30, 2008
○ Continuous Improvement Plan	October 2008
○ SMARTT Waitlist Verification	December 2008
○ BEST Plus Recertification (Due to SABES)	March 30, 2009
○ REEP Recertification (Due to SABES)	April 30, 2009
○ RFP Continuation Applications	Spring 2009
○ Request for Rollover in SMARTT (Data Verification)	August 2009

Important Events	Date
○ Annual ABE Directors' Meeting	September 23 & 24, 2008
○ Annual MCAE Network Conference	October 22 & 23, 2008
○ Massachusetts Family Literacy Month	November 2008
○ Annual MassALL Student Leadership Conference	May 2009