

## Projects to Improve Workforce Development Services

---

The Department funds adult basic education (ABE) programs that help undereducated and limited English proficient adults improve their literacy and workforce skills. ABE is an umbrella term used to describe a range of educational services for adults including basic literacy, numeracy, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for non-native speakers of English, high school equivalency (GED), and adult diploma programs (ADP). ABE programs<sup>1</sup> serve adults with academic skill levels below 12th grade and/or adults who need English language skills. Providers include school systems, community-based organizations, colleges, libraries, correctional facilities, workplaces, municipalities, and volunteer organizations.

Research and experience have shown that these programs not only improve the literacy and workforce skills of adults who are parents but also benefit school-aged children. Districts might consider the following options to improve workforce development services and, over time, increase children's academic achievement.

- Contact ABE programs in the district and work with them to increase the number of enrolled parents whose children attend Level 4 schools.<sup>2</sup> Options include targeting these parents for recruitment and/or giving them priority enrollment.
- Offer ABE classes for parents in Level 4 schools in collaboration with ABE programs. Depending on the availability of space and parents' schedules, classes could occur in the morning while children attend school, in the afternoon while children participate in out of school time programs, or in the evening while children receive homework and academic support.
- Collaborate with ABE programs to develop contextualized curriculum for parents that helps them support their children's school success. Hold on-going meetings to expand and strengthen the collaboration.

### Progress

Progress on these activities can be assessed by the extent to which:

- Enrollment of parents whose children attend Level 4 schools increases
- Parents improve their language and literacy skills
- Parents set and meet goals related to their workforce participation
- Parents set and meet goals related to their children's school success
- Parent communication with schools improves
- Parent participation in school activities increases
- Parent leadership increases
- Contextualized curriculum is developed

---

<sup>1</sup> The location of these programs can be obtained at <http://acls.doemass.org/> or by calling 781-338-3850.

<sup>2</sup> Forty percent of parents enrolled in ABE programs statewide have children under 18 enrolled in the public schools. It is not known what percentage have children in Level 4 schools.