# *Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education FY2018*

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| **Name of Grant Program:** Community Adult Learning Center **Fund Code:** 340/345  |

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| PART III – QUESTIONS |

Massachusetts continues implementing the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) in full alignment with WIOA**.** The Massachusetts WIOA Combined State Plan see link here: <http://www.mass.gov/massworkforce/state-plan/wioa-2020/ma-wioa-state-plan-final-4-7-16.pdf>

incorporates core partners and includes a unified vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce. A major component in the plan is the Adult Basic Education system which has a strong focus on the development of career pathways for access to high-demand, regionally significant employment and training services. Strong partnerships among ABE programs, workforce partners, and community partners are needed to successfully serve students with a heightened emphasis on strategies to serve out-of-school. Therefore, programs are encouraged to develop and expand ongoing engagement with employers and workforce development partners in the design and delivery of career pathways. Understanding and promoting the skill needs of high-demand jobs will maximize opportunities for family sustaining wages for students. The current expectation is that programs are engaged in local area planning and are expected to have local MOUs with WIOA partners by mid-June 2017.

**New Performance Accountability System aligned with WIOA Outcomes Measures**

ACLS and the Performance Measures Task Force recognized the need to closely align the Massachusetts accountability system with the WIOA federal measures. The current system was created in 2006; much has changed in terms of what students need to get to their next steps. Also, in the past, programs were not aware of how Massachusetts fared in terms of federal accountability; the new accountability framework is more aligned with the federal accountability system.

ACLS’s performance accountability system currently includes one state performance standard: Measurable Skill Gains (MSG).  The new performance standard will apply to community adult learning centers, family literacy programs, workplace education programs, ABECI programs, and Primary Instruction by Volunteer programs.

The MSG standard is a measurement of the educational outcomes made by students in at least one of the following: Educational Functioning Level (EFL) completion, High School Equivalency (HSE) credential obtainment, or Postsecondary Education and Training (PSE/T) enrollment after exit. Each fiscal year, after all pre-testing is completed in a program, ACLS will assign an MSG target; the target is weighted and based on: (1) the number of students who pre-test into each of the program's National Reporting System (NRS) levels, and (2) (based on five years of statewide historical data), the difficulty of attaining each of the three outcomes in the MSG standard. (Note: Programs will get partial credit (i.e., .1) for each additional outcome earned beyond the initial MSG.)

Initial MSGs could be any of the following:

* *One Educational Functioning Level (EFL) completion in the student's primary assessment area*
* *High School Equivalency (HSE) credential attainment*
* *Postsecondary Education and Training (PSE/T) enrollment after exit*

In FY18, ACLS will continue to pilot the MSG standard.  ACLS will also be collecting data from programs on student employment based on the WIOA federal employment measures.

In FY19, ACLS will create state employment standards based on data gathered in both FY17 and FY18.  The employment standards will be aligned with the WIOA federal employment measures.

For more information, please see the ACLS [performance standards page](https://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/accountability/) on the ESE website.

All programs are encouraged to experiment with innovative approaches with regard to program designs. **Note:** If planning to alter your program design in FY 18, contact your program specialist prior to creating a staff plan and budget, to ensure a streamlined approval process for your budget and SMARTT plan submission.

Further, to maximize the potential of each program in the system to provide high quality services to students, ACLS has set forth a theory of action for the ABE system:

Theory of Action

**IF:**

* The FY 19 Open and Competitive RFP sets a high quality and high capacity expectations bar for funding programs in the FY 18 Open and & Competitive RFP and the programs selected for funding provide the skills students need to be successful in today’s labor market;
* The FY 19 Open and Competitive RFP frees organizations to design programsthat best meet their students needs with necessary safeguards to ensure access and equity;
* The new performance accountability system, with the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) standard sets clear expectations for student outcomes and expectations for program quality set by the revised Indicators of Program Quality (IPQs);
* ACLS provides robust feedbackwith a focus on program quality vs. compliance (monitoring and site visits); and
* The System for Adult Basic Education Support (SABES)provides high quality professional development(SABES) and technical assistance

**THEN:**

Adult students will make substantive educational progress and gain meaningful access to college and career.

**Please respond to the following items.**

1. **Education Functioning Levels and Curriculum**
2. What strategies is the program implementing in order to ensure that students progress through educational functioning levels, and/or obtain their high equivalency credential and/or enroll in post-secondary education or training? Address how the instruction will ensure student success in one or more of these areas.
3. **Integrate Digital Literacy**
4. Give an example of an innovative approach used in FY17 to integrate digital literacy skills into curriculum and instruction to prepare students for college and careers. Describe how you will continue to expand the use of digital literacy in FY18.
5. **Collaborate with Workforce Partners**

In FY 17, as part of the development of WIOA Local Plans, ABE programs and WIOA core partners in each of the workforce regions entered into collaborations to jointly identify opportunities for employment, education, training and support services for student success. Each collaboration addresses how services are to be connected, integrated or enhanced by sharing staffing, resources or jointly designed services in ways that improve outcomes for “shared” customers – youth, job seekers and businesses.

1. Describe how the MOU discussions with core partners have increased career pathways opportunities for students in your program.
2. Provide a status update of how your program is positioned to address the unique needs of sub populations such as, out of school youth, parents and caregivers of school age children[[1]](#footnote-1), and individuals with disabilities?

***Note:***

**Programs must** **engage in a continuous improvement planning process**. This process includes identifying goals, objectives, and major activities that align with WIOA. Programs must keep the continuous improvement plan updated for FY 18 as these may be requested at any time during the program year by ACLS staff. The continuous improvement planning process may be used to help the program align with WIOA priorities.

1. family literacy [↑](#footnote-ref-1)