

Overview of Adult Basic Education (ABE) in Minnesota

2015-16 Program Year (Revised December 21, 2016)

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The **mission** of Adult Basic Education in Minnesota is to provide adults with educational opportunities to acquire and improve their literacy skills necessary to become self-sufficient and to participate effectively as productive workers, family members, and citizens.

ABE Programs Available

- **GED® (General Educational Development Diploma):** National high school equivalency assessment operated by GED Testing Service that includes a set of 4 tests: Math, Reasoning through Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.
- **Local Credit Completion Adult High School Diploma:** Programs for eligible adults leading to a high school diploma from a local Minnesota public school district.
- **State Competency-Based Adult High School Diploma:** Programs for eligible adults based on English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Employability/Career Development and Digital Literacy domains that embeds prior experience, standardized assessment, ABE instruction and applied and experiential learning options. It leads to a high school diploma from the state department of education and possibly the local school district.
- **ESL (English as a Second Language):** Instruction for learners whose native language is not English.
- **Basic Skills Enhancement:** For learners who need goal-specific elementary or secondary level basic skills such as work-related math, functional literacy (e.g.- banking skills), reading or writing assistance. Generally considered "brush-up" and not leading to a diploma or GED.
- **Family Literacy:** Program for adults and their pre-school children. Features instruction for adults in literacy, instruction in parenting, and educational/developmental services for kids.
- **Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IEL/Civics):** Civics education includes ESL, work readiness and contextualized career skills to encourage full participation in U.S. communities and employment.

ABE Initiatives and Priority Program Areas

- **Adult Career Pathways: Preparing Adults for Postsecondary Education, Training, Employment and Workforce Education.** Pre-employment programs to provide basic skills necessary for work are provided at the local ABE site or WorkForce Centers. ABE services are also provided at some local employers' sites and are designed to improve the basic skills (in the context of work) of the worker. Career pathway programming combines basic skills instruction, counseling, and college prep skills to better prepare students for postsecondary success in credit bearing or credentialed programs and occupational programs at postsecondary institutions.
- **Distance Learning and Digital Literacy: Building Adults' Technology Skills.** Minnesota adults statewide can get digital literacy certification and can access numerous distance learning options through their local ABE sites to build their reading, writing, math, employability and digital literacy skills.

ABE Instructional Content

Core Content	Supplementary Content
• Reading • Writing • Mathematics • Speaking • Listening • ESL/ELL/ESOL • GED/Adult High School Diploma	• Citizenship/civics • Foundational technology skills • Transition to higher education • Employment readiness/workforce education • Knowing how to learn • Creative thinking and problem solving • Personal, group and societal effectiveness • Study skills

Eligibility

Must be 17 and over, not enrolled in secondary school, and seeking a secondary credential or lacking skills in any of the basic academic areas including reading, math, writing and speaking English.

ABE Student Information

66,314 ABE Enrollees from May 2015-April 2016

ESL	39%	Unemployed	26%
Conditional Work Referrals	3%	Receiving Public Assistance	12%
In Corrections	17%	No Prior Schooling	8%
Single Parents	10%		

Objectives and Outcomes

Adult Basic Education addresses a variety of learner goals. ABE helps learners to:

- Attain employment and/or better their current employment in order to become self-sufficient;
- Achieve high school equivalency (GED or Adult High School Diploma);
- Attain skills and certificates necessary to enter postsecondary education and training;
- Learn to speak, read and write the English language;
- Master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school;
- Become U.S. citizens and participate in their local communities; and
- Gain self-esteem, personal confidence and sense of personal and civic responsibility.

Selected Outcomes

- The average participant in Minnesota's ABE system received 140 hours of instruction in 2015.
- 33% of ABE participants who had or earned a secondary credential were enrolled in postsecondary institutions within the first year after exiting ABE.

Quick Statistics

Earned a Diploma or G.E.D. in ABE*	686	Entered employment*	2,787
Entered Postsecondary Education*	2,262	Retained employment*	7,589

* Under-reported due to federal cohort procedures and follow-up issues such as mobility and data privacy

Program Delivery

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) funded **43 ABE consortia** that serve the entire state. Consortia deliver ABE programming at public schools, workforce centers, community/technical colleges, prisons/jails, libraries, learning centers, tribal centers, and non-profit organizations. Consortia hire **more than 1,400 staff (licensed teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors and administrators)** and work with more than **1,400 trained volunteers** to provide high quality instruction. **68% of paid instructors are part-time.**

Staff Development & Program Support Services

Three percent of the state ABE appropriation supports supplemental services that address the needs of ABE programs across the state. Using these funds, the state ABE office awards grants to organizations that provide services in the areas of professional development, volunteer training, distance learning, educational technology, disabilities, assessment, workforce collaborations, and program quality.

Adult Basic Education Law

ABE operates under both state and federal law. State law (89% of ABE funding) is MN State Statute 124D.51-52. No operating or administrative funding is provided to MDE under state ABE appropriation. Federal funds are provided under Title II ("Adult Education and Family Literacy Act" or AEFLA) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Administrative policies are established by the ABE office at MDE.

ABE Funding

State funds are distributed to consortia using a mandated aid formula integrating school district population, LEP counts, census no-diploma data, and prior year learner contact hours. Competitive grant funds (one-time appropriations) and ongoing federal ABE funds are also allocated.

	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
State ABE Aid	\$46,495,881	\$47,433,028	\$48,047,113	\$48,625,120	\$49,039,610
Federal ABE Aid	\$5,085,523	\$4,804,353	\$4,697,800	\$4,846,810	\$5,030,979
Grant Programs (IEL/Civics)	\$1,012,407	\$913,794	\$913,791	\$932,399	\$930,673
Total	\$52,593,811	\$53,151,175	\$53,658,704	\$54,404,329	\$55,001,262
Enrollment	74,736	69,623	65,831	66,314	
Student Contact Hours	5,931,207	5,607,747	5,571,308	5,497,385	
Average Annual Cost/Enrollee	\$704	\$763	\$815	\$820	