



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):

What's not new?
What's new that's old?



Hello. I am Amanda Harrison, chief of the Division of Adult Education. Welcome to the first of several modules that will explain important points about services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, also called WIOA. The division is creating these modules to provide all staff members at our adult education and family literacy programs the opportunity to learn about expectations under WIOA. I will be joined on these modules by division staff members Mary Kay Peters, Sonya Harris Saunders, Christine Houck and Luke Suereth.

WIOA - Background

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
 - Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)
- Signed July 2014
- PA Combined State Plan
 - Includes adult basic and family literacy services



Title II of WIOA is the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, which governs adult basic education activities funded by the Division of Adult Education. WIOA was signed into law in July 2014, and we have been transitioning to full implementation of the new law since then. As part of WIOA requirements, Pennsylvania developed a Combined State Plan that outlines how Pennsylvania will provide a range of coordinated services to meet the purposes of WIOA. Adult basic and family literacy services funded through the Division of Adult Education are included in the plan. Although the WIOA state plan includes some changes to how adult education programs will provide services, there are many things that stay the same. In this module we will explain the purpose of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, provide definitions of several key activities and services, and discuss the ways in which much of what your programs are currently doing align with adult education activities under WIOA. After watching this module, you will have the opportunity to complete some discussion activities as a staff.

Title II, AEFLA - Purpose

...create a partnership among the federal government, states and localities to provide adult education and literacy activities to:

- assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency,



First, let's look at the purpose of our services as defined in WIOA.

The purpose of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of WIOA is to create a partnership among the federal government, states and localities to provide adult education and literacy activities to:

- assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency,

Title II, AEFLA – Purpose cont.

- assist adults who are parents or family members to obtain education and skills that are necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their families,



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Title II, AEFLA – Purpose cont.

- assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and in the transition to post-secondary education and training through career pathways, and



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Title II, AEFLA – Purpose cont.

- assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their reading, writing, speaking, comprehension skills in English, and math skills, and acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom, and the responsibility of citizenship.



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So, the purpose of Title II is to provide adult education and literacy activities that help students expand the knowledge and skills they need to be self-sufficient and to fully participate in society.

Adult education and literacy activities

- programs, activities and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, family literacy, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.



WIOA defines “adult education and literacy activities” as programs, activities and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, family literacy, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.

Each activity in that list is further defined in the law. We will look at a few of them now.

Adult education

- academic instruction and education services that increase a person's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent; transition to postsecondary education or training; and obtain employment.



The term “adult education” means academic instruction and education services that increase a person’s ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent; transition to postsecondary education or training; and obtain employment.

Literacy

- a person's ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.



The term “literacy” means a person’s ability to read, write, and speak in English, compute, and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.

English language acquisition program

- a program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competency in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and the transition to postsecondary education and employment.



The term “English language acquisition program” means a program of instruction designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competency in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language that leads to attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and the transition to postsecondary education and employment.

Workforce preparation activities

- activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.



The term “workforce preparation activities” means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

Content standards for adult education

- Must have content standards for adult education
- Standards must align with state-adopted challenging academic content standards adopted for K-12 system.



Moreover, WIOA requires states to ensure that their content standards for adult education align with the state-adopted academic content standards for K-12 schooling.

Translation, please!

Programs provide standards-based instruction in:

- Reading
- Writing
- Mathematics
- Civics education
- English as a second language (where needed)



So, if we translate all of that legalese and bureaucratic speak into everyday language, programs are supposed to provide standards-based instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, civics education, and English as a second language

Translation, please!

So that adults have the

- Academic skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Problem solving skills

so that adults have the academic, critical thinking, and problem solving skills

Translation, please!

- High school equivalency credential
- Employment
- Support children's education
- Postsecondary education/training
- Career pathway
- Rights and responsibilities of citizenship



to earn a high school equivalency credential if they need one, get jobs that they can live on, help their kids with school, go to postsecondary education or training that will get them on a career pathway, and understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Does that sound familiar? It should. That is essentially what we expect of programs now.

Now (i.e., "old" rules)

- Full service
- Support transition
- ESL where needed with transition to ABE/ASE
- Intake and orientation
- Case management: barriers and transition
- Tutoring with state grant
- CCRS



Right now, the Division of Adult Education requires all of our funded adult education programs to be full service providers. You must provide instruction in all six ABE/ASE educational functioning levels and support students to earn their high school equivalency credential, when needed. You are expected to prepare students for and support them in transitioning into employment and/or postsecondary education or training. In areas with an ESL need, programs must provide a full range of ESL services. Programs must also provide services that help non-native speakers transition from ESL services to ABE/ASE services. We require programs to have a high quality intake and orientation process, so that students and teachers together can identify student goals. Program must provide case management services that help students remain in the program long enough to meet their goals. Case managers are also expected to help students plan for and transition to employment and/or postsecondary education and training. As part of state funding, program must have a tutoring program that supports all of these activities.

So, if your program is providing all of the required services now, you are well prepared to provide services required under Pennsylvania's WIOA Combined State Plan. In many cases, you are going to be doing the same or similar activities under WIOA, but WIOA has given them a new name. In other cases, the requirements have expanded under WIOA or they are a little more specific. But they really are not all that different.

How does this relate to WIOA?

How does this relate to WIOA?

Full service

- Literacy activities
- Adult education activities
- Pennsylvania Combined State Plan requires full services adult education programs



Let's take a closer look at some of the things your program is already doing or should already be doing that support the purpose and expectations of WIOA.

As we just mentioned, we now require all programs to be full service. You have to provide instruction at all six ABE/ASE levels from Beginning Literacy ABE through High Adult Secondary and support students to move up through those levels. For students who don't have a high school diploma, you should be helping them prepare to take and pass a high school equivalency test. As part of instruction, programs should be helping students prepare to transition successfully to postsecondary education or training or employment as appropriate for the students' goals. In cases in which students do not have employment or postsecondary goals, your instruction should help them support their family and function in society.

Is your program doing that? If so, you are providing "literacy" and "adult education" activities as defined in WIOA. Furthermore, the Pennsylvania Combined State Plan continues the requirement for funded adult basic education programs to be full service.

How does this relate to WIOA?

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College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education

- In PA since 2014
- Aligned with Pennsylvania Core Standards
- Professional development to support



Pennsylvania adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education in 2014. The CCRS are fully aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards adopted for the K-12 system. Since program year 2014-15, we have required all programs to participate in professional development related to implementation of the CCRS. Programs have worked on understanding the standards, evaluating resources against the standards, creating standards-based lessons, and are now beginning to review student work. Are the teachers in your program actively participating in this professional development? Are you creating lesson plans based on the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education? If so, you are well on your way to meeting the requirements in WIOA to have instruction aligned with high quality standards.

How does this relate to WIOA?

How does this relate to WIOA?

Workforce preparation activities

- CCRS
- Foundation Skills Framework
- Integrating Career Awareness
- Instructional strategies
- Technology
- Classroom materials/toolkits
- Agency policies
- Orientation
- Case management



Adult basic education and family literacy programs in Pennsylvania have a long history of incorporating what WIOA calls “workforce preparation activities” into instruction and case management services. These activities help student build “...a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills and self-management skills, including...utilizing resources, using information, working with others and understanding systems...” In the past, these skills have gone by many names in our programs: soft skills, 21st century skills, foundation skills, and employability skills. The use of the CCRS supports these skills. In addition, many programs have used the Foundation Skills Framework and/or the Integrating Career Awareness framework to include workforce preparation activities in instruction. Many teachers use instructional strategies such as group work and research projects that support these skills. Many programs regularly use digital technology in instruction, thereby helping students develop their digital literacy skills. Programs have learning support materials available to students in classroom toolkits that help students learn to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and use appropriate materials to address them. Agencies have student contracts, attendance policies and other policies, that, when consistently and fairly enforced, help students develop self-management skills to persist in services with the goal that those skills will transfer to employment situations.

Good orientation and high quality case management services also incorporate workforce preparation activities. Programs already work with students to help them determine their readiness for attending class, address barriers, and determine their goals. Transition case management support services help students identify and plan for long term education and

employment goals. When done well, these activities require students to use self-management, critical thinking and problem solving skills. Again, as long as programs have been providing such services to students, they are well prepared to provide workforce preparation activities as defined in WIOA.

How does this relate to WIOA?

How does this relate to WIOA?

English language acquisition program

- All ESL levels
- Support transition to ABE/ASE instruction
- High school credential if needed
- Case management
- CCRS



In areas where there is a need for English as a Second Language, programs are required to offer those services at the full range of ESL EFLs, from Beginning Literacy ESL through Advanced ESL. Programs are also required to support students to transition from ESL services to ABE/ASE services, and earn a high school credential if appropriate. A program providing these services as required is close to meeting all of the requirements of an English Language Acquisition program under WIOA. Programs that are also already using the CCRS as the basis for their ESL instruction and that are providing educational and career counseling to their ESL students to help them transition to employment or postsecondary education are even closer to fully meeting the requirements of an English Language Acquisition program under WIOA. As a side note, we realize that the WIOA abbreviation ELA could be confused with the term ELA as used in standards implementation, so in Pennsylvania we will continue to use the term ESL to refer to the English Language Acquisition program activities.

Discussion questions

- For each of the bulleted points describing the purposes of Title II, brainstorm a success and a challenge for your agency.
- Describe ways in which your agency's services address the full range of workforce preparation activities as defined in WIOA Sec. 203 (slide 11)
- Have staff members describe how they see their roles fitting into the key activities and services of your agency in support of WIOA and the PA Combined State Plan.



This first module was designed to help program staff understand several of the activities listed in WIOA that really shouldn't be new ideas since they align closely with work that programs have been doing or should have been doing for many years.

We want to stress that these modules will not cover everything that programs are currently doing that will continue to be required of funded programs. In addition to activities that we can tie directly to activities under WIOA, there are many things that the Division currently requires of agencies that it will continue to require in order to support high quality programs.

We encourage program staff to discuss the information in this module after viewing it. We have included some suggested questions to get the discussion started; there are additional questions in the resources tab. These are just suggested discussion points, however programs can talk about whatever aspects of the module they feel is most relevant to them.

Please write down questions that come up during the discussions and send them to your advisor in an email. We will collect all of the questions and provide answers to as many as possible.



For more information on the topic of the presentation, please visit
PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov

The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high quality education.

