

CHAPTER 12

Description of Proposed Leadership Activities

In general, each eligible agency shall use funds made available under Section 222 (a) (2) for one or more adult education and literacy activity.

12.0 Description of Proposed Leadership Activities

The State will use no more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds to conduct leadership activities. The State will continue to support a statewide adult education and literacy resource center. The funding support for such a center will be reviewed annually and will be based upon a program evaluation and performance outcomes.

The North Dakota Lifelong Learning Resource Center (NDLLRC) will undertake the following leadership activities during this plan period:

12.1 Strategies to Implement Leadership Activities

Activity 1: The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b) including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a State or outlying area.

The NDLLRC will continue to offer professional development opportunities through the statewide inservices and regional/ local workshops. These training opportunities will build instructional skills in literacy, reading comprehension, family literacy, personal employability skills, and effective use of technology and Web-based instruction in the classroom. Special topics of perennial interest are strategies for the learning disabled and providing services in isolated rural sites. The center will also provide training in the areas of literacy tutoring for professional staff and volunteers based on whole language theory which incorporates phonetics, language experience and sight word memorization in reading and writing activities. The NDLLRC will also present training in a wide range of adult education topics on GED, Basic Skills, and English as a Second Language.

A Statewide Staff Development Planning Committee will establish the topics and activities annually for the NDLLRC to serve the needs of the local program staff. The plan will be devised through an annual statewide needs assessment, local staff development plans and individual staff professional development needs. The

state staff development plan will be updated on a yearly basis throughout the five years.

Activity 2: The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities.

The State, through the NDLLRC, will provide technical assistance to all local program providers in the areas of special needs populations such as learning disabled and persons with developmental, physical, mental, or emotional disabilities. Other target populations are the incarcerated and homeless.

The State will provide technical assistance to local program providers to review data collection procedures through the Student Information Management System (SIMS) and to train for any changes in the procedure.

The NDLLRC will publish a quarterly newsletter, The EdWord, offering the latest in articles, program news and information, research, and adult education practices. The NDLLRC will also provide technical assistance to programs through telephone, email or online Web site.

Activity 3: The provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities.

The NDLLRC will provide technology support designed to aid the local programs to utilize the latest technologies in the classroom, professional development and other program activities. The staff will provide current information about the latest research and technologies, conduct workshops on the best uses of the technologies, and encourage local staff participation in one or more of National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) electronic forums (also referred to as listserves).

Activity 4: The support of State or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

NDLLRC is the established state adult education resource center. One of the responsibilities of the NDLLRC is to provide training to locally funded programs and local volunteer literacy groups. The training is offered in a variety of topics, including adult literacy, family literacy, workplace literacy, employment preparation skills, English as a second language, numeracy and problem solving skills, strategies for adults with special learning needs, technology, and latest research and best practices.

Activity 5: The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.

The state office will continue to:

- Refine SIMS to reflect changes in required information and efficacy of use;
- Train program personnel in appropriate gathering of valid and reliable data consistent with federal guidelines;
- Assess and, if necessary, update or revise student pre-/post-study assessment instruments;
- Examine current research in the development of level completion/exit tests to ensure accurate progress data;
- Collect, aggregate and analyze qualitative and quantitative program data through program reports and statewide demographics and surveys; and
- Conduct local program monitoring and evaluation procedures to assure quality standards are met.

Activity 6: Incentives for program coordination and integration and performance awards.

The NDDPI, in cooperation with other partners, will identify quality programs and promising practices through a comprehensive evaluation process.

The NDDPI will recognize local programs which meet the criteria for quality. The model program activities will be disseminated to other adult learning centers throughout the State. The exemplary practices may feature:

- Reliable data collection;
- Family literacy programming;
- Use of technology;
- Distance learning;
- Special curriculum; and
- Specialized program accommodations for disabled adults.

The exemplary practices will be published in the adult education newsletter (The EdWord) and through the World Wide Web and specific workshops.

Activity 7: Developing and disseminating curricula, including curricula incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension.

The State will encourage adult education practitioners to develop curricula through mini-grants as funds are available. These curricula will then be disseminated to all local providers in hard copy and on disk. The curricula will also be submitted to NIFL for inclusion online in the appropriate national collection of locally produced materials.

Activity 8: Other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

The NDDPI maintains a strong collaborative association with other stakeholders. The NDDPI has worked collaboratively with Job Service North Dakota (JSND) for over ten years to serve Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) eligible clients. We plan to continue this relationship with JSND and other agencies.

The refugee population in North Dakota is served by many volunteer groups as well as State agencies. The NDDPI has strong cooperative arrangements with the Department of Human Services and the local education agencies to provide ESL services for the refugee population. Such cooperative arrangements will continue during this plan period.

The State has provided tutor training for volunteer literacy groups around the State. We plan to work with Literacy North Dakota and other volunteer groups to provide literacy tutor training throughout the state.

Activity 9: Coordination with existing support services, such as transportation, child care and other assistance designed to increase rates of enrollment in and successful completion of adult education and literacy services, to adults enrolled in such activities.

Each eligible local program is required to describe the coordination with local agencies for the provision of support services for economically disadvantaged students. In North Dakota, counselors on staff in local programs have coordinated with local community action programs, county social service agencies, regional offices administering JTPA funds, local church assistance programs, abused adult centers, homeless shelters, human services and vocational rehabilitation offices to ensure each student's ability to attend classes. The State shall encourage local providers to continue to use the resources available within their community to provide for the needs of the students.

Activity 10: Integration of literacy instruction and occupational skill training, and promoting linkages with employers.

Each local adult education program provides employment preparation skills to all enrolled students, beginning literacy through advanced ABE and all ESL levels. Mastery or competency in eight employment preparation areas is required for completion of the course that focuses on career choices, job search and job retention skills.

Activity 11: Linkages with post-secondary educational institutions.

The State and local programs work cooperatively with post-secondary institutions to provide basic skills services to adult students enabling them to take advantage of vocational training within their home community. Several local programs are located on college campuses enabling an additional supportive link between the campuses and the community.

Activity 12: Reporting/Technical Assistance EL/Civics

The State will provide appropriate technical assistance to local communities who are planning to develop EL/Civics programs. The State Adult Learning Resource Center will provide staff training and continuous support to local adult educators, volunteers, and students.

The State will also document progress of successful activities and appropriate services provided by local programs and through the State leadership activities.

The State intends no administrative or leadership funds authorized under this grant.

The State will provide any financial, narrative, and progress reporting as requested by the U.S. Office of Education.

12.2 Collaboration with Other Related Agencies and Programs

The State will continue to work cooperatively with other educational and governmental agencies in providing adult education services to maximize effectiveness for the target populations. The State has established cooperative linkages with the State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee, Job Service North Dakota, North Dakota Workers' Compensation Bureau, Mental Health Association North Dakota, The Homeless Coalition, Vocational Rehabilitation, Refugee Services, Vocational & Technical Education, Job Corps, Center for Innovation in Instruction, Even Start, and other secondary and post secondary program entities. The objective of each of these linkages is to provide for the specific educational needs of North Dakota adults avoiding duplication of services.

All local projects funded through the Act will also be required to describe collaboration and outreach strategies in their application process.

On a national level, the State will collaborate and coordinate with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education regarding national trends in adult education. The State shall cooperate with the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) in its initiatives of research and dissemination of adult education curricula. The State will also work cooperatively with other groups that support adult education regionally and nationally. Some of these groups may include:

- Pelavin Research Center
- Prairie Public Broadcasting
- GED Testing Service
- Midwest Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS)
- Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
- Kentucky Educational Television Network (KET)
- National Center on Adult Literacy (NCAL)
- Missouri Valley Adult Education Association (MVAEA)

12.3 Ensuring Equitable Access (GEPA Section 427)

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) will address the special needs of students, teachers and other program beneficiaries in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation, including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age.

Providing equitable participation in all North Dakota adult education programs is more challenging now than ever before. Our most recent teacher needs survey indicates a clear need for training of staff in meeting the needs of disabled individuals.

Through our State Resource Center and the state leadership activities, the NDDPI will offer specialized training for all staff in learning disabilities and on other barriers based on gender, race, color, age and national origin.

The NDDPI will also ensure, through its local application criteria, that local programs clearly address the provisions of Section 427. The staff will specifically address the following needs:

1. Staff inservice related to special needs;
2. Cooperative planning and implementation of programs with other agencies which deal with adults with special needs; and
3. Modification to curriculum, recruitment and retention strategies.