

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Kansas Four-Year State Plan

Executive Summary

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act is Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The Workforce Investment Act combines federal legislation for employment, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation programs to create an integrated, "one-stop" system of workforce development for adults and youth. Entities funded under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) are mandatory partners in this one-stop delivery system. The act replaces the Adult Education Act (AEA), the National Literacy Act of 1991, and other previous adult education and literacy legislation.

Kansas adult education is guided by a one-year transitional plan approved through June 30, 2000. AEFLA requires that an additional four-year state plan be developed, approved by the Kansas Board of Regents, and submitted to the U. S. Department of Education. The Kansas Four-Year State Plan was developed cooperatively with adult education center directors and coordinators who provide services to citizens in Kansas. Input was solicited and incorporated from other adult education partners and stakeholders. The questions and answers below provide an overview of the goals, key components, and funding as outlined in the full Kansas Four-Year State Plan.

What are the goals of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act?

The act requires specified performance measures and levels of performance to assess the progress of the state agency in enhancing and developing more fully the literacy skills of its adult population. The state agency is required to use AEFLA grant funds to award multi-year grants to eligible providers to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities. These activities include basic skills for the workforce and family life, English as a Second Language and citizenship skills, and adult secondary education leading to an adult high school diploma.

The central focus of AEFLA is on serving those adults designated most in need, including adults with the lowest skill levels, with disabilities, or with other significant barriers to employment and self-sufficiency. Eligible providers are expected to provide intensive, quality instructional and support services to adults and to meet state levels of performance.

Who does the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act serve?

AEFLA programs in Kansas serve adults and out-of-school youth age 16 and over. Individuals qualifying for services meet one of the following conditions:

- do not have a secondary credential;
- do not have basic reading, writing, or math skills; or
- do not have proficiency in the English language necessary to function in the multiple adult roles of citizen, employee, and family member.

What are the expected outcomes of AEFLA activities?

AEFLA programs in Kansas will report their levels of performance in eight measures:

1. Learning gains measuring completion of educational skills, workplace readiness, and/or technology for each of 12 instructional levels;
2. Entry of adults into employment;
3. Adult retention or improvement of employment;
4. Adult completion of adult high school diploma or GED;
5. Placement of adults in post-secondary education or training;

6. Adult achievement of skills necessary to pass a U.S. citizenship examination;
7. Increased involvement of parents in school-age children's education through participation in family literacy;
8. Increased involvement of parents in pre-school-age children's literacy activities through participation in family literacy.

How are programs that receive AEFLA funds held accountable for quality services?

Programs will receive funding on a competitive basis through two-year subgrants on the basis of their performance on the eight outcomes and on measures of quality indicators set by the state. Programs must meet competitive grant review criteria based on nine new quality indicators. The same indicators are used for state monitoring and for program self-evaluation. Each indicator was established in response to AEFLA requirements and consists of 20 rigorous, measurable standards. Current program directors and numerous other stakeholders have reviewed the indicators through four drafts and honed them to the following Indicators of a Quality Adult Education program.

1. Participants in the program are fully representative of the undereducated population in the service area. The program serves the most-in-need/hardest-to-serve members of the community.
2. The program is of sufficient intensity and duration so that participants demonstrate progress toward their educational/workplace readiness/technology goals.
3. The program documents participant outcomes, and participants remain in the program a sufficient length of time so that they are able to achieve outcomes.
4. The program design and implementation process for all program sites is based on research and effective educational practice. Programs offer flexible schedules and support services.
5. Program activities effectively employ advances in technology, including the use of computers.
6. The program receives local financial support and is viewed as a valuable component of the sponsoring institution or non-profit institution.
7. The program demonstrates a commitment to quality service to adult learners and to the professionalism of the field of adult education by having paid staff with appropriate educational backgrounds, with credentials in adult education, and with adequate training.
8. The program actively collaborates with multiple partners in the community to expand the services available to adult learners. The program actively seeks and responds to input from local stakeholders in planning for local services.
9. The program maintains a high-quality information management system to report participant outcomes and monitor program performance.

How are Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs funded?

AEFLA specifies percentages for distribution of grant funds to eligible providers (including programs for corrections education and other institutionalized individuals), state leadership activities, and administrative expenses of the state agency. For fiscal year 2000, federal funding is \$2.7 million. Of available federal funds, 90.5% are allocated to subgrants to local programs (flow-through). Programs meeting grant review criteria receive funding through a formula that incorporates factors of size and quality of services, as well as a base level of funding. In addition, 8% of federal funds in Kansas are designated for local professional development activities. The remaining 9.5% of federal funds include 5% for state administration and 4.5% for state leadership activities.

In addition to federal funds, states share requirement at 25 percent of the total amount expended for adult education in the state. In Kansas these matching funds amount to \$1.1 million annually; 100% of matching funds are allocated to subgrants to local programs. Programs are expected to contribute a 10% local match to further leverage federal and state funds.

For more information about adult education programs or the state plan, contact Kansas Board of Regents Adult Education at 785-296-7159 or e-mail dglass@ksbor.org.