

Adult Education and Literacy

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2017

MINUTES NO. 2

A duly posted open meeting of the Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, September 20 7, 2017, at 1:30 p.m. at the Texas Workforce Commission Main Building located at 101 East 15th St., Austin, Texas, 78778, Room 244.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Wanda Garza

Mary Jo Ochoa Hernandez

Tiffany Johnson

Joyce Delores Taylor

Nancy Crawford

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Lisa Hembry

Ken Treviño

Agenda

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks

Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Director Anson Green called the meeting to order.

2. Information and Updates

Mr. Green started with impacts of Hurricane Harvey and went over a handout which showed the impact to AEL providers. The handout was provided to the U.S. Department of Education to show inoperable sites and which sites remained open. Overall, there were 10 inoperable sites. One site in Beaumont was heavily impacted and most of those services were moved to other locations. Mr. Green stated the Commissioners will be meeting the next week with other agencies to discuss a training plan in response to the Governor's Call to Action.

Mr. Green asked Tiffany Johnson to provide insight on her program's Harvey experience. Ms. Johnson said they were lucky and was very inspired by seeing the community come together. Laredo Community College went to Victoria College to help with clean up. Many students and staff did not have power or water. Some staff lost everything, including homes. Ms. Johnson continued to say that

many people are feeling the impact now after not having wages for a few weeks. There was also an immediate switch in the high-demand industries. Heavy equipment operators, roofing, construction certifications have become high-demand, Ms. Johnson said Victoria College is looking to see how quickly they can respond to those needs as an AEL program. They are still working on housing some evacuees.

Joyce Delores Taylor, from Houston, described how areas in Houston were completely submerged and completely devastated.

Mr. Green introduced the second item, which are the vacancies in the Committee. Two members have resigned and three members will have terms end in December 2017. Mr. Green is getting recommendations from the Commissioners.

The following item was a presentation on the Distance Learning Call Center (DL Call Center) by Sunpreet Sarang. Mr. Green provided the background on how the project came about.

Mr. Sarang introduced himself and went over the purpose of the DL Call Center, an overview of the DL Call Center services, and the lessons learned from this pilot project. Those lessons learned included student use of the call center, such as getting more in-depth instruction as opposed to homework assistance, students' request for receiving instruction in Spanish, instead of English, and student's use of whiteboard and internet to receive math support instead of just phone-in assistance. Mr. Sarang thanked TWC and the Commissioners for providing the funding and support for this pilot project.

Wanda Garza described a similar project she had worked on, and asked if these users were only for ESL students. Mr. Sarang went over the eligibility criteria for users. Ms. Garza asked what percentage of users are AEL students and Mr. Green responded. Nancy Crawford asked how many unique students there are and Mr. Sarang said about 180 students and went over how they verify students are in the AEL database, Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS). Ms. Garza agreed that this was a great test pilot project. Mr. Sarang said when they have callers which are not AEL eligible, they refer them to other sites where they can receive services.

Mr. Green introduced Cindee Tonnesen from Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide an update on the TxCHSE. Ms. Tonnesen stated she'd be happy to link to the DL Call Center on the TEA website.

Ms. Tonnesen provided data on the number of test-takers for the TxCHSE with the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), HiSET, and GED, with 29,126 this year, as compared to last year with 29,075 through August 31. For test-takers that completed all five tests, or four if GED, 14,494 passed, making that a 73.9% pass rate. This includes the 2014 GED series. She went on to say HiSet has had 96 certificates issued. Ms. Tonnesen stated when there's a high unemployment rate, there are more test-takers.

There are more testing centers than ever. GED has 182 testing centers that are public, not including corrections. HiSet has 53 total public testing centers. And TASC has 25. Ms. Johnson asked if those locations are posted online somewhere. Ms. Tonnesen said there are some centers that provide all three centers. Ms. Garza asked what she is seeing on the AEL side, as to which counties serve students. Ms. Tonnesen said TEA didn't used to capture the county information. The state board changed the rule on who can administer the tests to include Workforce Development Boards and AEL-funded programs.

Mr. Green pointed out the TCALL Quarterly in the Advisory Committee Members' packets, which includes an article on the DL Call Center.

3. Discussion

Mr. Green introduced the Leadership Excellence Academy (LEA) in order to get input from the Committee. He went on to say that it will be an instructional leadership academy and administrator leadership academy, and opened the discussion to what items might be beneficial for leaders and administrators of AEL programs to see in this academy. Ms. Crawford recommended grant management instruction. Mary Jo Ochoa-Hernandez said performance accountability and how to analyze data at a local level. Ms. Garza said the Human Resources element is important, as well as financial planning. Ms. Garza recommended a deliverable applied to what administrators are doing in their work which includes different tiers. Ms. Johnson said she was a former LEA user and has feedback from personal experience. She added that there is a lot of expertise needed in today's AEL programs, which includes expertise in curriculum development. She stated the LEA program she participated in was two years long, very intense, but very good, as networking was key in that program. She added grant writing is another element AEL leaders must be experts in.

Mr. Green asked Ms. Garza about the tiers; she said they'd determine their level with an assessment, then they could progress to the next level or tier. He asked for input on curriculum. Ms. Ochoa-Hernandez added data analysis would be helpful in the LEA.

Mr. Green concluded the discussion by stating he'll be getting more input for the LEA.