

Minneapolis Adult Education Consortium
Student Attendance Policy

Document 2.D

Effective Date: 5/1/2014

Policy Purpose and Rationale – The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) – Adult Basic Education (AE) office requires that:

AE programs use State and Federal AE funds to provide efficient and effective-services to the eligible AE population within their consortium boundaries. To meet that requirement, programs must implement effective outreach activities and, once students are enrolled, engage students in programming that is of sufficient intensity and duration for students to achieve their goals.

Local Consortium Plan

- **Evaluate Current Trends**

We use Table A and NRS Table 4, 4b, 4c, 5 and MABE Hidden Reports to review and evaluate:

- Historical enrollment trends for our consortium
- Enrollees versus participants
- Contact hour trends

- **Recruitment and Outreach Methods**

Our most successful recruitment strategy is through word of mouth by current and past learners, volunteers, and staff. In addition, staff and volunteers are involved in networking with other professionals, providing outreach to community agencies, and a presence at community events. We will continue to provide information regarding AE and the Minneapolis AE Consortium through distribution of several printed documents, public service announcements on local radio stations and by keeping the Minnesota Literacy Council Hotline information updated.

Attendance Policy and Student Attendance Contract

Learners may not enroll in the program unless they can attend the full number of hours each class meets per week. We communicate our attendance policy during the initial contact with people interested in enrolling, at registration, in orientation class, on the syllabus for each class and throughout the learner's attendance. We do understand emergencies arise but this usually happens infrequently and we expect a phone call to let us know about any absences. We provide the learner with a number to call to report absences.

A maximum of four absences per month are allowed and Attendance Notifications (noted with a message in MABE) are issued each month the person falls below this

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requirement. Three consecutive months of Attendance Notifications or falling below 50% attendance will result in an immediate exit from the program. Referrals to other programs with more lenient attendance policies are available if requested.

- **Retention Strategies at Registration**

At registration or during the Orientation Class staff provides information to learners about the AE program and what strategies the student will need to implement to be successful in the program. The information provided includes:

- Informing students of our policies and procedures surrounding attendance and the importance of calling to report absences.
- Talking with learners about their personal and academic goals to determine which program/classes might best meet their needs.
- Helping the student develop an understanding of short and long term goals.
- An explanation of how progress towards personal education goals will be achieved through regular attendance.
- Let enrollees know we understand sometimes adult students need to “stop-out” for periods of time. If this need should occur, we ask the student to talk to the staff and we will work to assist them, or welcome them back when they are ready.
- Encouraging learners to examine possible barriers to regular attendance and explain the importance of addressing these barriers before beginning to attend. Refer the person to AE support staff or an offsite community resource for assistance, if available and desired.
- Informing learners that promotion is tied to achieving course benchmarks, progress in multiple areas, assessment scores, and teacher recommendation.
- Informing students that if they were to leave the program, they may need to be placed on a waiting list to re-enter the program.

- **Retention Strategies in the Classroom**

- Remind learners that regular attendance is necessary to reach their personal goals.
- Follow-up with learners regarding their attendance practices.
- Review classroom practices to encourage learner persistence.
- Build a sense of community within the classroom structure and develop student leadership.
- Provide instruction that meets learner academic goals, needs, and learning styles. Align student focus with classroom instruction.

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- Increase the availability of computer instruction through classes and open labs.
- Explore learner attendance recognition and incentive possibilities in the classroom or program.
- Speak with learners who have not been attending regularly to determine why and encourage them.
- Meet with the learner on a regular basis to assure that all attendance patterns, progress (reading, writing, listening, speaking, soft skills, and individual readiness), and testing information is communicated to the learner. We use the MABE printable “report card” that includes; historical assessment and attendance information, as well as, teacher evaluation of strengths and areas for improvement.

- **MDE Learner Progress Policy**

Minneapolis AE Consortium will comply with the Learner Progress Policy to ensure AE funds are being used appropriately. Our consortium has decided to use fall of 2007 as the date we began the Learner Progress Policy implementation. We have incorporated an explanation of the Learner Progress Policy in our registration materials to make students aware of the policy.

- **Regularly Review Data with Consortium Partners and Stakeholders**

Each of our Minneapolis AE Consortium members have access to their own MABE data and reports. We will share the aggregate Minneapolis AE Consortium Table A, NRS Tables 4, 4b, 4c and 5 report reports with partners and stakeholders at:

- Minneapolis AE Consortium Meetings
- Monthly Community Advisory Council Meetings (Consortium Governing Body)
- Staff Meetings
- With other stakeholders as appropriate

- **Update Agreements with Workforce Centers and Partners-Build Referral Networks**

Our staff works hard to make individuals, agencies/organizations, and the community aware of the importance of AE and the services that the Minneapolis AE Consortium provides in Minneapolis. The partnership we have at MCTC helps facilitate the movement of AE students to post-secondary education. Other consortium members provide workforce education and employment placement. We are currently developing an innovative partnership in North Minneapolis with the local Workforce Centers to assure we are providing employment focused services and to connect with the services they can provide to our learners to help them

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achieve their goals. Networking and community collaboration is an ongoing process that is always evolving.

- **Using the MABE Data to Monitor Learner Retention**

Administrators will use MABE data to:

- Ensure that all staff knows the program goals and objectives and is aware of current goal expectations and trends.
- Provide staff with the tools (training, time, materials, etc.) to accomplish program goals.
- Review current program data and anticipate future needs.
- Guide program attendance and retention strategies.
- Facilitate changes that will allocate AE resources most effectively.
- Influence program decisions, policy, and processes.
- Communicate program performance to teachers/staff, including the direct correlation of attendance to continued funding.
- Develop a strategy for starting classes each session with the maximum number of learners and communicate this expectation with the staff.

Teachers/Staff will use MABE data to:

- Assure attendance data is being accurately entered into MABE by comparing daily sign-in sheets to actual daily student attendance (including accuracy of late arrivals and early departures and whether the number of people signed-in is equal to the number enrolled).
- Teachers will enter the attendance for their classroom/s into the MABE data system by 4:30 on Friday (or the negotiated time for the program).
- Exit non-attending learners.

Support, Registration and Testing Staff will use MABE data to:

- Enroll new learners to keep classrooms at maximum capacity.
- Make phone calls to enrollees who do not show-up for the first class when scheduled to begin and record the results of these contacts in MABE.
- Assure that Counseling and Testing time has been accurately entered in MABE for each learner.
- Exit non-attending learners if assigned this task.
- Monitor and run MABE reports as assigned.
- Assure attendance data is being accurately entered into MABE by comparing daily sign-in sheets to actual daily student attendance

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