

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

ABLE's History

Today's Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) system has a rich and varied history with roots stretching back four hundred years; from the religious instruction, vocational apprenticeships, and common schools of the original thirteen colonies and the first federal involvement in adult literacy education during the Revolutionary War. One of the more significant events during the later eighteenth century was the first commitment of government resources for teaching literacy skills to troops of the Continental Army. General Washington's desire to communicate with his troops in writing led him to direct chaplains to teach basic literacy skills to the soldiers at Valley Forge.

Moonlight Schools

Among the many individuals who helped the adult education and literacy system emerge was Cora Wilson Stewart who played a major role in focusing attention on the problems facing non-literate and semiliterate adults in the early 1900's. She created programs of instruction for adult literacy education, mobilized tens of thousands of volunteers as teachers and tutors for adult literacy programs, and advocated strongly for public support of educational opportunities for adult literacy learners.

Cora started the first Moonlight School so men who were going off to war could learn to read and write to send letters back home. It was called a "moonlight school" because classes were held on nights when the moon cast enough light for students to see the footpaths and wagon trails that they often followed for miles to reach the school.

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Module Overview

With the passage of the Manpower Act of the 1960's, funding was provided to train unemployed adults and make them marketable. This is what opened the door for the adult education programs we know today. So let's begin our investigation to find out what ABLE in Ohio is like today.

In this module, we will address the following questions:

- How is literacy defined in the 21st century?
- What state agency oversees ABLE in Ohio, and how is it organized?
- What types of adult education services are offered in the state?
- How is ABLE funded at the federal, state and local levels?
- What other supports are in place for Ohio ABLE?

After completing this module, you will be able to answer all of these questions, and you will understand the structure of Ohio ABLE.

Defining Literacy

According to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998, literacy is defined as:

“An individual’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.”

At one time, people were considered literate if they could simply write their name. Later, literacy meant the skill of reading, and it was measured by grade-level equivalents. Now, in this age of technology, the skills needed to function successfully have gone beyond reading to reflect WIA’s 1998 definition of literacy.

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Ohio ABLE's Vision and Goals

In order to help Ohioans achieve this definition of literacy, Ohio ABLE is guided by the following **Vision**:

To create and maintain the nation's best state delivery system to provide basic skills to adults.

In addition to this vision, Ohio ABLE has the following **Goals**:

1. *Define and raise expectations of what ABLE students should know and be able to do.*
2. *Establish and maintain an effective state leadership system, provide support and build capacity.*
3. *Ensure state and local program accountability and continuous improvement.*
4. *Become a high-performing department within the Ohio Board of Regents.*

ABLE's Purpose and Objectives

What is the Purpose of ABLE ?

ABLE is intended to provide basic skills instruction to students who lack at least one of the following:

- Sufficient mastery of basic skills
- A secondary credential
- Ability to speak, read or write English well

Note: You will learn more about adult students in Module 2.

ABLE's Objectives

ABLE's main objectives are to help students acquire:

- Basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics
- English language skills

It is expected that outcomes resulting from improvement in basic skills will result in ABLE learners:

- obtaining the GED, and/or
- obtaining or retaining employment, and/or
- enrolling in postsecondary education and training.

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

The ABLE System in Ohio

Now that you know the guiding principles behind Ohio ABLE, let's take a look at our ABLE system.

From 1966 to 2008, ABLE services were managed through the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). When ABLE's federal authorization shifted from the Adult Education Act to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in 1998, the emphasis in ABLE classrooms was expanded from helping students to improve their basic skills and get a GED to include employment and postsecondary goals.

In 2006, Governor Ted Strickland introduced his TurnAround Ohio plan which sought to better connect education and jobs with the goal of upgrading the skills of the workforce. Ideally, a better-educated workforce will attract more jobs to Ohio. ABLE soon became an integral part of the state's new workforce development initiative.

Board of Regents

Under Ohio House Bill 119, ABLE was transferred to the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) effective January 1, 2009.

The Ohio Board of Regents is the coordinating body for higher education in Ohio. It consists of a nine member board led by the Chancellor who is a direct appointee to the Governor and a member of the Governor's cabinet. The current Ohio Board of Regents' Chancellor is Eric Fingerhut.

To see an organizational chart of Ohio ABLE, click here.
(http://jupiter.educ.kent.edu/community/file.php/5/Jenny/Ohio_ABLE_Organizational_Chart_-_June_09.pdf)

To learn more about the Board of Regents, visit <http://regents.ohio.gov>

To read Chancellor Fingerhut's 10-year Strategic Plan for Higher Education, visit <http://www.uso.edu/network/workforce/able/index.php>

Ohio ABLÉ New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLÉ System

The University System of Ohio

One of the first major initiatives to realign higher education in Ohio came in 2007 when Governor Strickland directed Chancellor Fingerhut to create the University System of Ohio. The System is composed of the state's 14 public universities, 24 branch campuses, 23 community colleges and more than 100 adult workforce education centers and ABLÉ programs.

The purpose of the University System of Ohio is to focus on stimulating economic growth in Ohio while continuing to build the highest quality, student-centered system of higher education in the country.



The University System of Ohio

Basic tenets of the University System of Ohio include:

Knowledge and innovation are the core “drivers” of economic success for individuals, families, communities and the state.

Advanced learning is no longer an option.

Upgrading adult workers' knowledge and skills is the key to Ohio's future economic growth and prosperity.

More education and training is good for....

- Individuals
- Families
- Communities
- Ohio's economy

To learn more about the University System of Ohio, visit <http://www.uso.edu/>

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Role of Transitions

What does the increased emphasis on postsecondary education and training mean for ABLE programs and services?

- ABLE students should be encouraged to go beyond the GED
- Curriculum for advanced level students should prepare students for postsecondary education or training
- More contextualized curricula should be used to connect ABLE instruction with career pathways
- Contextualized curricula is important at all educational functioning levels

This background information can help you understand why there is so much emphasis today in ABLE to help students improve their basic skills in order to transition to work and/or postsecondary education and training.

Ohio ABE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABE System

State Program Staff

The state is divided into four ABE service regions:

- Region 1 - Northeast
- Region 2 - Central/Southeast
- Region 3 - Southwest
- Region 4 - Northwest



The structure of the State ABE Program includes:

- State Director Denise Pottmeyer
- Administrators Jeff Gove
 Cindy Zengler
- Consultants Donna Albanese
 Karen Scheid

One consultant/administrator oversees the grantees in each service region. Their role is to provide you with technical assistance and support in delivering quality adult education services. In addition, they ensure that local programs are in compliance with state and federal regulations.

Click here to access the contact information for State Program Staff.

(http://jupiter.educ.kent.edu/community/file.php/5/Jenny/Ohio_Board_of_Regents_Contacts.pdf)

Ohio ABE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABE System

Economic Development Regions (EDRs)

Economic Development Regions (EDRs) are another state structure that impacts ABE programs. These twelve regions were established by the Ohio Department of Development to recognize the regional diversity in the state. Each EDR consists of businesses, industries and educational programs that share a common goal to align workforce programming (includes ABE) with economic development goals for the region. To learn more about each region, visit:

<http://www.odod.state.oh.us/Regionals.htm>

You will get to know your partners in your Economic Development Region through various collaborative projects and initiatives.



Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Ohio ABLE Funding

Funding for Ohio ABLE is provided by both the state and federal governments in accordance with a multi-year State Plan approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Some programs also receive local dollars that support their adult education program.

Federal Legislation

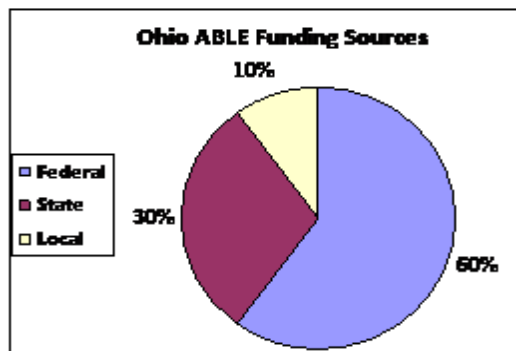
Approximately 60% of funding for Ohio ABLE comes from the U.S. Department of Education. Funding is provided through Title II of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). Multi-year ABLE grants are awarded to local eligible providers on a competitive basis.

State Legislation

Approximately 30% of funding for Ohio ABLE comes from the Ohio General Assembly. As stated earlier, funding is distributed through a needs formula which takes into account population, literacy rates, employment rates, and other related factors in each Economic Development Region.

Local Funding

Approximately 10% of funding for Ohio ABLE comes from local sources, e.g. grants and donations. In addition to monetary support, in-kind services from local agencies and organizations round out a system of comprehensive services available to adult and families to help them achieve self-sufficiency.



Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Local Providers

Ohio ABLE services are offered through a variety of organizations and provide easy access to students in all 88 counties. As of July 1, 2009, there are 68 ABLE programs in Ohio. Click here to see a current listing of ABLE programs throughout Ohio. (http://jupiter.educ.kent.edu/community/file.php/5/Jenny/AB-S1-2010_Funded_Programs.pdf)

These programs provide literacy services to people over 16 who are not otherwise enrolled in high school. Because all ABLE programs follow the same policies and use the same database, a learner who moves from Cleveland to Hillsboro enjoys an easy transition from one program to another. By providing easier access for learners, Ohio ABLE removes some of the barriers to participation and helps more people to succeed.

Program Components

Local ABLE programs are required to offer students these Program Components:

- **Adult Basic Education (ABE)** – instruction for those performing up to 8.9 grade equivalent on reading, writing and problem solving/computing.
- **Adult Secondary Education (ASE)/GED** – instruction for those performing between 9 and 12.9 grade equivalent on the above subject areas.
- **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)** – instruction for individuals of limited English proficiency to achieve competence in the English language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- **Transitions** – instruction and activities that will assist students' success in postsecondary education, training and employment. Transitions services help students move beyond basic skills and the GED.

Note: Students can participate in more than one of these required components (for example, ASE and Transitions) as well as the Optional Components outlined on the following page.

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Optional Components

In addition to the required components, some Ohio ABLE providers also offer these optional components:

- **Family Literacy** - education services offering all of the following activities:
 1. Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children,
 2. Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children,
 3. Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency, and
 4. An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

Note: ABLE funds may be used to support Adult Basic and Literacy Education services for parents and, in some instances, parenting instruction. ABLE funds may not be used to support child education or parent and child time (PACT) activities.

- **Workplace Literacy** – education services offered in collaboration with business, industry, government and/or labor for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through improvement of literacy skills.
- **Corrections Education** – ABLE services provided in partnership with a correctional facility such as a halfway house, community-based correctional facility or jail.
- **Distance Education** – formal instruction provided by computer where students and instructors are separated by geography, time or both for the majority of the instructional period.

To quiz your knowledge on these components, please click here.
(<http://www.quia.com/jg/1615514.html>)

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Available Supports for Ohio ABLE Programs and Staff

Now that you know the structure of Ohio ABLE, we will explore some of the various supports available to you as an ABLE staff member.

From State Leadership

The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act allows the use of federal funds for State Leadership activities. You will be working with these different state leadership projects any time you are involved in professional development or participating on a state level committee or task force. The State Leadership Network consists, in partnership with the State ABLE Program, of:

- Ohio Board of Regents <http://regents.ohio.gov>

The Board of Regents serves as the governing state agency for higher education in Ohio, including ABLE. The State ABLE Program funds the projects below:

- Resource Center Network (RCN) www.ohioable.org
 - Ohio Literacy Resource Center
 - Northeast ABLE Resource Center
 - Northwest ABLE Resource Center
 - Central/Southeast ABLE Resource Center
 - Southwest ABLE Resource Center

The RCN provides professional development and support, sponsor lending libraries and technical support to ABLE practitioners.

- OSU ABLE Evaluation Design Project
<http://www.cete.org/projects.asp?ProjID=60003496>

This projects works in conjunction with the State ABLE Program and RCN to plan and evaluate the guiding policies, procedures and standards utilized by Ohio ABLE.

Click here to see the main responsibilities and specialty areas for each. You will learn more about the role of these agencies in Module 6 Professional Development.
(http://jupiter.educ.kent.edu/community/file.php/5/Jenny/State_Leadership_Network.pdf)

Ohio ABLÉ New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLÉ System

Additional Supports from the Board of Regents

As the governing body for higher education in Ohio, the Board of Regents offers other supports to ABLÉ programs.

- Ohio Resource Center (ORC) for Math, Science and Reading
<http://www.ohiorc.org>

The ORC identifies effective instructional and professional development resources and best practices, supports professional development for teachers and administrators, and fosters educational research and development in teacher preparation for Ohio's schools. (k-12)

- Ohio Learning Network (OLN)
<http://www.olin.org/>

OLN helps Ohioans find educational programs that meet their needs, works with colleges and universities using technology to improve teaching and learning, and helps build partnerships among higher education, schools, businesses and communities.

- Ohio Writing Institute Network for Success (WINS)
<http://www.ohiorc.org/ohiowins/>

The purpose of the initiative is to help college-bound students improve their English skills so they are better prepared for college level English coursework.

- eTech Ohio
<http://www.etech.ohio.gov>

As a state agency, eTech Ohio is dedicated to enhancing learning by developing programs and using best practices to serve learning organizations while acquiring, integrating and sustaining educational technology.

Ohio ABLE New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLE System

Summary

In this module, you learned that:

- Today's definition of literacy includes an individual's ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function in society.
- The State ABLE Program of the Board of Regents oversees the ABLE programs.
- There are four primary program components: ABE, ASE/GED, ESOL and Transitions.
- Federal funding for Ohio ABLE is provided by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. State and local funding further supports the ABLE system.
- The Ohio ABLE State Leadership Network is the primary source for professional development and technical assistance for ABLE administrators, teachers and support staff.

Ohio ABLÉ New Staff Orientation

Module 1 The ABLÉ System

Investigative Activity

Let's see how much the information you learned in this module connects to you and your local program. Here are some questions that can help:

1. In which Economic Development Region is your program located? In which ABLÉ service region is your program located? Who is the State ABLÉ Program Administrator/Consultant for your region?
2. What ABLÉ components does your program offer? If the program does not offer all the required components, who are your partner agencies?
3. What type of class will you be teaching (e.g., ABE, ESOL, GED)?
4. Can students be involved in more than one component at your program (e.g., ABE and Distance Education)?
5. Which Resource Center(s) serve your program?

If you don't know the answers to these questions or need assistance, ask your local program coordinator or director for help.

Now, you're ready for Module 2.

Use the "Jump to" drop down menu at the top of the page to access Module 2 ABLÉ Students. Good luck!