

**Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth
Office of Adult Education and Spanish Speaking Affairs**

**Curriculum Practitioners' Task Force
Minutes – January 28, 2005**

- ABE Content Standards Committee and Federal Consortium Update
- Definition of Basic English Proficiency
- Completion of Draft ESL Content Standards
- State Approval Process for Content Standards
- GED Content Standards Review and Update

Attendees: Karre Ballard, Linda Colagross, Mary Hemmen, Michelle Irwin, Jeff McNeal, Bob Rickard, Jane Rudisill, Sandy Thelen, Jo Pamment, Pat Walstra, Carole Wells, Bonnie Vondracek

Patricia Walstra welcomed everyone to the meeting. She provided the committee with information on the next meeting at the Amway Grand on March 11th.

Patricia had the committee review the minutes. Additions and edits were made to the minutes per the committee. These edits included:

- Change of date
- Addition of the following sentences: “Mary Hemmen reported that Literacy Councils in Detroit use 8.0 as their highest level, although most students function at the lowest level of ABE. It was discussed that 8.0 is used in various parts of the state as the highest level of functioning prior to referring the student to another educational entity.”
- Separation of paragraph 3 into two paragraphs.
- Addition of the ABE subcommittee members: Linda Colagross, Laura Gates, Mary Hemmen, Jo Pamment, Carole Wells

Jo Pamment made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Carole Wells seconded the motion. No further discussion. All voted in favor of accepting the minutes. Revised minutes will be sent to the committee.

Patricia reviewed the agenda for the day with the group. No additional items were placed on the agenda. She discussed that the meeting would be a working one with specific goals to achieve prior to the end of the day.

Linda Colagross reported on the ABE Content Standards Sub-Committee. She stated that the committee held their first meeting last evening. She discussed how the ABE Consortium is driving the progress for the ABE frameworks this year. She stated that the Consortium wants the standards completed within a year. Linda and Dianne Duthie will be attending a Consortium meeting in Washington D. C. in July. Linda reported that the committee will use the Michigan K-8 content standards, Laubach standards, and the CASAS standards as a basis for the frameworks. She stated that the committee has a good mix with two representatives from literacy-based organizations, as well as ESL and ABE representatives. She emphasized that the driving force will be objectives that are appropriate for the adult student. She is very excited about Michigan's progress and feels we are very much in the forefront. All of the standards will be posted on the content standards website for the federal consortium.

Jo reviewed the definition of Basic English Proficiency and how at the last meeting the committee discussed using the CASAS top score. Claire Valier, consultant, has recommended that CASAS add a speaking portion to their test. Jo stated that she would like a speaking piece to be eventually added to the definition and that this request be kept as an awareness piece at the state level. Carole stated that oral and written scores could be added to the definition as an assessment tool is developed.

Linda stated that a professional development piece will need to be developed for content standards in each of the areas.

Jo requested information on how the content standards will be approved by the state. Linda discussed that the state office will identify a group of teachers and students who will review the standards. If specific areas are seen as needing changes by a large number of individuals, then these areas will be edited and revised. If the requests are only by a few people, then change will probably not occur. Linda also discussed using the content standards in a pilot study next year prior to their acceptance. Michelle Irwin offered to be a pilot site since she will be starting a new ESL program in the upcoming year. Jane Rudisill asked what Linda thought the state's role or process would be in the approval of content standards. Linda stated that she has been pleased with the federal government's approach to such things as standards. She feels that the federal officials want content standards in place but are not dictatorial. She further stated that curriculum guidance is governed by the Office of Adult Education and Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs. Concerns were expressed by whether or not Workforce Boards could dictate academic curriculum. Mary Hemmen asked whether a feedback process would be developed for the pilot project. Linda stated that having formal and informal feedback is the way she envisions the process. It was requested that the draft of the completed ESL standards be sent to the committee via electronic file. Linda was in agreement with this process.

Jeff McNeal made a motion that we send the completed draft of the ESL content standards to the DLEG. Bob Rickard seconded the motion. No additional discussion. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Bob continued the discussion on the need for educators to identify what needs to be taught and that how it is taught is specific to individual agencies. Thus, different agencies, such as Workforce Development Boards, may teach the skills differently, but the skills should continue to be developed by educators.

Jane talked about what is occurring in Michigan with the 107b funds. Michigan Works has been given the charge to draft the RFP for pilot sites to apply for state funds. Jane said she'd like to have some input into the RFPs before they go out.

Pat and the committee discussed how monies to fund these pilot sites will be removed from the targeted areas' school districts' 107 funds and go to a 107b funding source that will go to Michigan Works. Michigan Works will then put out an RFP and determine who will provide adult education services in these areas.

Michelle Irwin discussed the need to do content standards for employability to add to the frameworks and grade level content standards in order to provide better services for students. The possibility of developing a subcommittee to address career and employability standards will be further discussed at the next meeting. Jane supported the need to work collaboratively with area agencies such as Michigan Works. Jeff stated his concern regarding the last time a mini-grant was put out for funding with the result being that urban areas received more services than the less-populated ones. Pat summarized the conversation.

The committee reviewed and edited the GED Writing, Reading, and Mathematics Content Standards. Changes will be made and sent to the state.

Pat recommended one Technical Assistance paper for GED. Jo made a motion to create one GED Technical Assistance paper that encompasses all the GED components. Bob seconded. All voted in favor. Pat also stated that in their group they discussed the term "mastery" being used as opposed to the term "minimum." Jeff discussed minimum scores in GED being 410 which does not allow a student to pass the Official GED Tests, thus, the curriculum is inclusive rather than minimal. The group approved the change of terms. The committee also recommended a paragraph on assessment and programmatic score requirements. Pat will meet with Gary Tweddle and Kathleen Sullivan to draft paragraph on assessment.

The committee divided into two groups and worked on the GED Social Studies and Science Content Standards. These standards will be edited and sent back to the original subcommittees for review prior to sending them to the state.

Sandy Thelen reviewed the progress with the ALP pilot project. The next meeting for participants from the pilot project is March 7th. At that time final input will be provided to the department. The department will then look at all of the information provided, revise the form as needed, and bring the completed ALP to the Curriculum Task Force for a final review. The targeted date for review by the task force is the April meeting.

The GED and ABE subcommittees requested time to work on their curriculum frameworks/content standards.

Bob made a motion to adjourn the formal meeting. Michelle seconded the motion. Discussion included topics for the next meeting's agenda. Topics included: ABE Content Standards/Subcommittee (Linda Colagross) and career and employability standards (Michelle Irwin). All voted in favor of adjournment. Meeting adjourned.