



Preparing Adult English Language Learners for Rigorous College and Career Readiness Standards

Background

For over a decade, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has been engaged in efforts to support standards-based education reforms in adult education (AE). However, none of OCTAE's earlier investments in standards-based education has explicitly addressed the application of rigorous academic standards for English language learners (ELLs). And, while the demands of rigorous standards for college and careers present new challenges for all adult students, they present special challenges for ELLs. To fully and successfully participate in AE programs that are based on college and career readiness (CCR) standards, ELLs must simultaneously acquire English language proficiency (ELP) and achieve across multiple content areas. When it comes to providing instruction, two sets of standards must work together—academic content standards and ELP standards. For this reason, many states' K-12 systems have developed or have adapted ELP standards to align with their CCR standards. States are using this alignment of rigorous academic content and ELP standards as the basis for helping to promote high levels of content and language learning among adult ELLs.

Overview

This project will develop products and services that support the development of educational programs that enable adult students to achieve competency in English language acquisition as well as rigorous academic content. States and programs will benefit from the project's development of tools designed to help them improve the CCR-alignment of their ELP standards and instructional resources. This initiative will also contribute to the upgrading of the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education for English as a Second Language (ESL).

Preparing Adult ELLs for Rigorous CCR Standards is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research, under contract to the U.S. Department of Education. The project concludes in September 2018.

Project Milestones

- Identify a set of CCR-aligned ELP Standards for AE
- Produce a CCR ELP standards report
- Review the alignment of the CCR ELP Standards for AE and the NRS for ESL
- Develop tools to assess the CCR alignment of ELP standards and instruction resources

Outcomes and Products

- A set of CCR ELP standards useful to AE programs as a framework for developing or updating their own ELP standards
- A set of revised NRS Educational Functioning Level descriptors for ESL
- Set of virtual trainings to improve CCR-alignment of standards and instructional resources

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