



Preparing Adult English Language Learners for State-Adopted Challenging Content Standards

Background

For over a decade, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) has been engaged in efforts to support standards-based educational 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 content standards 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 state-adopted challenging content 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 correspond with their academic content standards. States are using this coalition of rigorous academic content standards and ELP standards as the basis for helping to promote higher levels of content and language learning among adult ELLs.

Overview

This project will develop resources that support the development of educational programs that enable adult ELLs to achieve competency in English language acquisition as well as rigorous academic content. States and programs will benefit from the project's development of online training modules designed to help adult educators use ELP standards in conjunction with state-adopted content standards. This initiative will also contribute to the upgrading of the National Reporting System for AE in English as a Second Language (ESL).

The American Institutes for Research is conducting *Preparing Adult ELLs for State-Adopted Challenging Content Standards*, under contract to OCTAE. The project concludes in September 2018.

Project Milestones

- Production of a ELP standards report
- Development of online training materials
- Alignment review of ELP standards and the National Reporting System for AE

Outcomes and Products

- ELP standards with correspondences to academic content standards
- Revised NRS Educational Functioning Level descriptors for ESL
- Three online training modules

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