



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
H. Martin Lancaster, President

August 1, 2000

To: Directors of Basic Skills Programs
Directors of Volunteer / Community Based Literacy Organizations

From: Mary Dunn Siedow, Ed.D.
Director, NC LRC

Subject: International Literacy Day

International Literacy Day is celebrated annually on September 8. The event began in 1966 and continues to be a way to promote literacy around the globe. For about ten years, North Carolina basic skills / literacy programs have promoted literacy during the entire month of September.

The following materials may be of assistance to you as you plan International Literacy Day and NC Literacy Month observances.

- “NC Basic Skills / Literacy Program Fact Sheet” – this new information sheet has figures from the 1998 – 98 program year. You are welcome to duplicate the sheet for use in your community.
- A photocopy of Governor Hunt’s “Literacy Month” proclamation. Official copies are available for a small cost from the Office of Citizen Affairs (919-733-2391). Call for information.
- “Twenty Ways to Celebrate Literacy.” This new information sheet contains ideas that you can use to promote literacy in your community during September.

We encourage you to use International Literacy Day and North Carolina’s Literacy Month as an opportunity to work in partnership with other basic skills / literacy organizations in your community. Contact your local media soon to suggest ways to feature your accomplishments and those of others in your community. Help us follow the effectiveness of literacy awareness activities by sending copies of publicity from your community to NC Literacy Resource Center.

c. Community College Presidents

CC00-178



International Literacy Day 2000 Twenty Ways to Celebrate Literacy

Celebrated annually since 1966, International Literacy Day calls attention to the global effort to promote literacy, and education as a central mission of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Here are twenty ways you – and your basic skills / literacy program – can enhance your observation of International Literacy Day 2000.

1. Use your newsletter to spread the word about the importance of literacy.
2. Sponsor a book fair, using the proceeds to enhance your program's outreach to learners.
3. Give a book as a gift. Include a note about the importance of literacy in adult life.
4. Establish a book discussion group with adult learners.
5. Form a reading promotion partnership with a nearby public library or another basic skills / literacy program.
6. Learn about and support local literacy projects of other programs in your area.
7. Sponsor book awards.
8. Organize an essay contest about "a book that changed my life."
9. Compile a calendar of community book and reading events. Share it with local media.
10. Sponsor a book-collecting drive. Give books to nursing homes, schools, adult literacy programs.
11. Create a library for adult literacy students to use.
12. Make a video that promotes literacy in families, at work, and in community life.
13. Contact your local newspaper with a story idea about your program. Provide enough detail that they are eager to write about you.
14. Sponsor book readings with local authors or local celebrities reading from their favorite books.
15. Attend readings at your local library or bookstore.
16. Publicize and distribute lists of recommended books for readers of all ages.
17. Take a field trip to a local literary landmark.
18. Make a collection of student writings. Get your local newspaper to review it.
19. Bring teachers, volunteers, and learners together to talk about favorite books.
20. Read books aloud with adult learners.

LITERACY MONTH

2000

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the need for a highly literate citizenry increases as North Carolina moves toward an increasingly technological future; and

WHEREAS, more than 20 percent of North Carolina's adults experience literacy issues that impact severely on their lives and families, their ability to work productively, and their full participation as citizens and residents of our state, and

WHEREAS, North Carolina's community colleges, volunteer and community-based organizations and libraries provide basic skills / literacy services to over 149,407 adults each year, including 15,016 who receive adult high school credentials, 30,000 who learn English as a second language, 12,537 who participate in literacy programs in workplaces, and 3,516 parents who attend family literacy classes with their children; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Community College System, North Carolina Literacy Resource Center, and North Carolina Literacy Association work with local media to sponsor observances of *Literacy Month* by inviting newspapers, television and radio stations to join in highlighting the economic and societal importance of literacy;

NOW, THEREFORE, I JAMES B. HUNT JR., Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim September 2000 as **LITERACY MONTH** in North Carolina, and urge my fellow citizens to learn more about the importance of literacy and to become involved with literacy in their communities.

NC Basic Skills/Literacy Program Fact Sheet

In North Carolina, basic skills/literacy services are provided by public and private organizations. North Carolina's 58 community colleges enroll adults in a full range of basic skills classes, from adult basic education through adult high school / GED. More than 40 volunteer and community-based organizations work with adults in one-to-one tutoring and small group instruction.

Need . . .

- ◆ According to the 1990 Census, 1.4 million adults -- or 30 percent of North Carolina's adults -- had not completed high school.
- ◆ According to the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), 22 % of North Carolina's adult population perform at the lowest literacy level, and another 30 % perform at a "below adequate level" in information processing skills.
- ◆ North Carolina ranks below the national average in skills level of the population, with skills levels equal to or less than those of adults in all but ten other states.

(Source: *Literacy in North Carolina*, NC Literacy Resource Center, 1998)

Key Facts . . .

- ◆ 149,407 adults were enrolled in basic skills/literacy programs in 1998-99.
- ◆ 15,016 adults earned Adult High School diplomas or GED's in 1998-99.
- ◆ Community colleges formed partnerships with business and industry to provide basic skills instruction for 12,537 employees at work sites.
- ◆ English as a Second Language enrollments increased nearly 11% percent in 1998-99, to a total of 31, 634 adults.
- ◆ Family literacy programs reached more than 3,516 parents and their children during the 1998-99 program year.
- ◆ Over 6,000 adults were enrolled in Compensatory Education classes.

Descriptions of Basic Skills/Literacy Programs . . .

Adult Basic Education (ABE): A program of basic skills for adults, 16 years of age or older and out of school, who function at less than a high school level.

English Literacy / English as a Second Language (ESL): A program of instruction to help adults with limited or no English language proficiency.

Compensatory Education (CED): A program to compensate mentally handicapped adults who have not had an education or who have received an inadequate one.

General Educational Development (GED): A program of instruction designed to prepare adult students to pass the GED tests that lead to a high school diploma equivalency.

Adult High School (AHS): A program of instruction offered cooperatively with local public school systems to help adults earn an Adult High School Diploma;

Workplace Literacy: A program designed to help adults improve basic skills, especially skills needed in the workplace.

Family Literacy: A program designed to help adults improve basic skills with an emphasis on parenting and parent and child interaction.