

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**Basic Skills Revised State Plan**

**Request**

The State Board is asked to approve changes to North Carolina's Basic Skills State Plan.

**Rationale**

The North Carolina Community College System is the lead state agency for the administration of grant funds under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 Title II-Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) awards grant funds under this Act contingent on state's having an approved State plan on file with their department. Section 422 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1226a) provides for the automatic extension of current program plans for one year if current federal law expires and a reauthorization is anticipated, but not yet available, to take its place. Since 2004, North Carolina has been submitting revisions to their 2004-2008 state plan.

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which reauthorizes the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. As a result of the new law, program year 2015-2016 will be deemed a transition year for states to move from WIA to WIOA. Per instructions from OCTAE, North Carolina must submit revisions to their current state plan to include transition activities necessary to prepare for the full implementation of WIOA in 2016. Also, state agencies must submit performance targets for 2015. These revisions will enable OCTAE to extend our current state plan for one year, thus making North Carolina eligible to receive federal adult education funds on July 1, 2015.

**Contact Person**

Barbara Boyce  
Associate Vice-President, Workforce Continuing Education  
919-807-7158



**The Workforce Investment Act (WIA)**

**Title II: ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT**

**North Carolina Basic Skills State Plan  
2015 Transition Plan**

For more information, contact:

North Carolina Community College System  
Programs and Student Services Division

**Career and College Readiness Unit**

[adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu](mailto:adulthoodliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu)

919-807-7158

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**Background**

The North Carolina Community College System is the lead state agency for the administration of grant funds under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 Title II-Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) awards grant funds under this Act contingent on state's having an approved State plan on file with their department. Section 422 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1226a) provides for the automatic extension of current program plans for one year if current federal law expires and a reauthorization is anticipated, but not yet available, to take its place. Since 2004, North Carolina has been submitting revisions to their 2000-2004 state plan.

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed into law the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which reauthorizes the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. As a result of the new law, program year 2015-2016 was deemed a transition year for states to move from WIA to WIOA. Per instructions from OCTAE, North Carolina must submit revisions to their current state plan to include transition activities necessary to prepare for the full implementation of WIOA in 2016. Also, state agencies must submit performance targets for 2015. These revisions will enable OCTAE to extend our current state plan for one year, thus making North Carolina eligible to receive federal adult education funds on July 1, 2015.

Below is an overview of the revisions to the State Plan for North Carolina:

Chapter/Section	Summary of Revisions
1.0	Included required annual certifications and assurances.
3.1	Updated the plan to include transitional plans to meet the revised definition of adult education and literacy activities under WIOA.
3.3	Included the current organization chart for the Career and College Readiness Unit.
5.3	Updated the plan to include the proposed performance measures per instructions from the U.S. Department of Education.
6.1	Updated the plan to include the procedures for extending funding to the current eligible providers.
7.1	Updated the plan to acknowledge that the revised plan was submitted to the State Board of Community Colleges for their review.
7.2	Updated the plan to acknowledge that the revised plan was submitted to the Governor's Office for their review.
12.1	Updated the plan to include transitional plans to meet the four new requirements for State Leadership Activities.
13.1	Updated the plan to include transitional plans for the newly codified Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education activities.

What follows is the detailed description of the revisions.

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## Chapter 1: Eligible Agency Certifications and Assurances

### 1.1 Certifications

### 1.2 Assurances

### 1.3 Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424

Note: Required certifications and assurances will be attached when the report is submitted to U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) on April 1, 2015.

## Chapter 3: Description of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

### 3.1 Description of Allowable Activities

North Carolina will build on a solid foundation of current programming and innovative initiatives to implement the three new requirements included in the definition of Adult Education and Literacy activities--- 1) Integrated Education and Training, 2) Workforce Preparation Activities, and 3) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. Below are proposed activities:

- **Expand the Framework of Basic Skills Plus.** Basic Skills Plus is a program that provides workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster to students concurrently enrolled in an Adult High School or High School Equivalency program. The framework includes strategies for contextualized and accelerated instruction designed to reduce the amount of time a Basic Skills Plus student is enrolled in an eligible instructional program while providing the student with the skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment. A study will be conducted to expand this program to all students enrolled in a Basic Skills program.
  - **Develop Content and Models.** System Office staff will conduct a survey to identify current curriculum resources and materials used to teach workforce preparation activities. This information will be used to develop a series of technical assistance workshops.
  - **Disseminate Best Practices.** A total of 42 providers received grants to pilot innovative models in one or more of the following categories: Innovations in Transitions, Pathways to Employment, Project IDEAL (distance learning), Comprehensive Family Literacy, and Contextualized Family Literacy. System Office staff will work with these providers to disseminate best practices, project deliverables, and curriculum materials to other providers.
  - **Use Internal and External Partnerships.** North Carolina has a unique program administered at all 58 community colleges called Human Resources Development. The purpose of this program is to provide skill assessment services, employability skills training, and career development counseling to unemployed and underemployed adults. These courses address six core components: 1) assessment of an individual's assets and limitations; 2) development of a positive self-concept; 3) development of employability skills; 4) development of communication skills; 5) development of problem-solving skills; and 6) awareness of the impact of information technology in the workplace. Providers will use this resource as a means of providing employability skills to students enrolled in an Adult Education program. Providers will also use as a resource, the programs and services available at local NCWorks Career Centers (one-stops).
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### **3.3 Descriptions of New Organizational Arrangements and Changes**

On November 30, 2014, Dr. Randy Whitfield retired leaving vacant the position of State Director of Adult Education. Barbara Boyce, Associate Vice-President for Workforce Continuing Education is currently serving as the interim State Director.

Note: Included in the final document will be the current organizational chart.

## **Chapter 5: Performance Measures**

### **5.3 Levels of Performance**

The federal performance measures for North Carolina are listed on the next two pages.

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**North Carolina Basic Skills Program  
2015-2016 Federal Performance Measures**

<b>Core Indicator #1:</b> Demonstrated Improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy problem solving, English Language acquisition, and other literacy skills.	
<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>
<b>Beginning Literacy ABE</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Literacy ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	19% of beginning literacy enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the level.
<b>Beginning Basic Education ABE</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Beginning Basic ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	34% of beginning ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the level.
<b>Low Intermediate ABE</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Intermediate ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	35% of low intermediate ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the level.
<b>High Intermediate ABE</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in High Intermediate ABE who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	34% of high intermediate ABE enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the level.
<b>Low Adult Secondary Education</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Adult Secondary Education who complete the level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	23% of low ASE enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of basic skills needed to complete the level.
<b>ESL Literacy (ESL)</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in ESL Literacy who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	33% of beginning literacy ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English Language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.
<b>Low Beginning ESL</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Beginning ESL who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	35% of low beginning ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.
<b>High Beginning ESL</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in High Beginning ESL who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	37% of high beginning ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.
<b>Low Intermediate ESL</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Low Intermediate ESL who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	30% of low intermediate ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.
<b>High Intermediate ESL</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in High Intermediate ESL who completed that level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	29% of high intermediate ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.
<b>Advanced ESL</b> The percentage of adult learners enrolled in Advanced ESL who completed the level. (# completed level ÷ # enrolled = completion rate)	13% of advanced ESL enrollees will acquire (validated by standardized assessment) the level of English language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) needed to complete the level.

<p><b>Core Indicator #2:</b> Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.</p>	
Performance Measures	2015-2016
<p><b>Placement in Postsecondary Education or Training.</b> The percentage of adult learners (with a goal of postsecondary education or training) who exited the program and entered postsecondary education or training.  (# entered postsecondary education/training ÷ # with goal of advanced education/training that exited program = postsecondary placement rate)</p>	<p>38% of adult learners with a goal of postsecondary education or training and exit from the program will enroll in postsecondary education or training.</p>
<p><b>Placement in Unsubsidized Employment</b> The percentage of adult learners not employed at program entry, with an employment goal, who entered unsubsidized employment by the end of the first quarter after program exit quarter.  (# adults obtaining unsubsidized employment in the first quarter after program exit quarter ÷ # not employed adults, at entry, with an employment goal = employment rate)</p>	<p>33% of adult learners not employed at enrollment (with an employment goal) will obtain unsubsidized employment by the end of the first quarter after program exit quarter.</p>
<p><b>Retention in Unsubsidized Employment</b> The percentage of relevant adult learners who retained unsubsidized employment in the third quarter after exit quarter from the program. Note: Relevant adults are defined as: 1) Those enrolled adults employed at program entry with a job retention goal; and, 2) those enrolled adults not employed at program entry with an employment goal who obtained employment by the end of the first quarter after exit quarter.  (# relevant adults still employed in an unsubsidized job in the third quarter after program exit quarter ÷ # of relevant adults = job retention rate)</p>	<p>60% of the relevant enrollment will retain unsubsidized employment in the third quarter after the program exit quarter.</p>

<p><b>Core Indicator #3:</b> Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.</p>	
Performance Measures	2015-2016
<p><b>High School Completion</b> The percentage of adult learners, with a high school completion goal that exited the program, who earned a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.  (# adult obtaining high school credential ÷ # adults with high school completion goal that exited program = high school completion rate)</p>	<p>70% of adults with a high school completion goal that exit the program will earn a high school diploma or recognized equivalent.</p>

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**Chapter 6: Procedures for Funding Eligible Providers****6.1 Application**

For the 2015-2016 program year, North Carolina will not hold an open application process for funding local programs. Instead, the System Office will provide continuation funding to the colleges and community-based organizations who received funding in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. As a part of the 2015 application process, eligible providers were asked to respond to the following WIOA-specific transitional planning strategies.

**Basic Skills Program Application**

1. Before submitting your 2015 Continuation Basic Skills Plan, all providers should have an introductory meeting with the appropriate staff from their local Workforce Development Board/NCWorks Career Centers. Please attach an agenda/meeting notes of that meeting.
2. What are your strategies (current/future) for aligning your Basic Skills program with the programs and services at your local NCWorks Career Centers (formerly JobLink Career Centers)? Please include strategies for aligning your program with the new WIOA requirements for out-of-school youth.
3. What are your strategies (current/future) for implementing workforce preparation activities into your program that are designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, workforce training, or employment.
4. What are your strategies (current/future) for developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways? If available, please attach sample documents. Please list any internal and external partnerships and the roles they play in support of your pathways.

**English Literacy and Civics Education**

1. What are your strategies (current/future) for implementing contextualized literacy instruction in the four English language skills, math and financial literacy?
  2. What are your strategies (current/future) for developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways? If available, please attach sample documents. Also, list any internal and external partnerships and the roles they play in support of your pathways.
  3. What are your strategies (current/future) for preparing adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations?
  4. What are your strategies (current/future) for assisting English language learners who are professional with degrees and credentials in their native countries that enables the learner to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the skills needed to transition to post-secondary education or employment? Please include your assessment strategies.
  5. What are your strategies (current/future) for aligning your English Literacy and Civics Education program with the programs and services at your local NCWorks Career Centers (formerly JobLink Career Centers)?
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**Chapter 7: Public Participation and Comments****7.1 Description of Activities**

North Carolina requires that state plan revisions be sent to the State Board of Community Colleges for information. The revised plan was submitted to the North Carolina State Board for its approval in March 2015.

The levels for suggested levels for 2015-2016 were set with the goal of increasing the levels met during the 2013-2014 program year. These levels will be renegotiated after all state performance outcome measures have been assessed by the United States Department of Education.

**7.2 Governor's Review**

The state plan revision and performance measures have been sent to the Honorable Pat McCrory, Governor of North Carolina, for his comments. If we receive comments from the Governor, his comments will be added to the appendix of the State Plan.

**Further Information****Requirements of Current Legislation and State Plan Revisions**

North Carolina's current State Plan meets all requirements of the current legislation, The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and all current state requirements.

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**Chapter 12: State Leadership Activities****12.1 Description of Activities**

North Carolina will build on a solid foundation of current programming, key partnerships, and innovative initiatives to implement the four new requirements for State Leadership Activities --- 1) Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs in NCWorks Career Centers (one-stops), 2) Operation of a high quality professional development program, 3) Provisions for technical assistance to eligible providers, and 4) Monitoring and evaluation of adult education and literacy activities. Below are proposed activities:

- **Convene Advisory Workgroups**. The System Office will convene current and new workgroups to develop strategic and operational plans to meet the new requirements. The following are the tentative names of these groups: Basic Skills State Leadership Advisory Board (current), Professional Development Advisory Committee (current), Basic Skills Focus Area Team (current), Core Program Alignment Workgroup (new), Integrated Education and Training/Career Pathways Workgroup (new), and Program Accountability Workgroup (new).
  - **Actively participate in the state's Unified State Plan Workgroup**. The NC Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions is convening various workgroups to develop North Carolina's State Unified Four Year Plan. The State Director for Adult Education will have a seat on multiple workgroups.
  - **Actively participate in the #Align4NCWorks initiative**. This initiative focuses on key partnerships among community colleges, business/industry, workforce development boards, public schools and economic development entities. The overarching goals are:
    - ***Alignment*** – Develop an integrated seamless system of education and workforce development programs, initiatives and resources. The system should be focused on the integration of business needs and worker preparation and include a comprehensive approach to career exploration, career development, education and job training that begins in middle school and continues throughout an individual's career path.
    - ***Responsiveness*** – Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy and that increases North Carolina's competitive advantage by further developing and enhancing career pathways that provide students the skills to create, make and build things and provide the basis for desirable, thriving careers for North Carolinians.
    - ***Engagement*** – Develop and implement a coordinated and seamless approach to engage business and respond to business needs. Use that engagement to increase the education pipeline, competency-based credentials and work-based learning opportunities in critical career clusters and to better connect people to jobs and jobs to people.
    - ***Accountability*** – Target statewide resources to enhance programs and enrollment in critical career cluster areas that compliment key targeted growth industries; integrate economic, workforce and community development functions; develop measures of success through conducting an annual review of metrics and a benchmarking of competitors; and measure and report on the effectiveness of North Carolina's workforce development system.
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**Chapter 13: English Literacy/Civics****13.1 Description of Activities**

North Carolina will build on a solid foundation of current programming and key partnerships to implement the newly codified English Literacy and Civics Education program. Below are proposed activities:

- **English Literacy and Civics Education Strategic Plan.** The System Office will develop an official strategic plan for this program.
  - **Convene Advisory Workgroups.** The System Office will convene current and new workgroups to develop strategic and operational plans to meet the new requirements. Below are the tentative name of these groups: Basic Skills State Leadership Advisory Board (current), English Literacy and Civics Education Advisory Workgroup (new), and Integrated Education and Training/Career Pathways Workgroup (new).
  - **Disseminate Best Practices.** A total of 33 providers received grants to pilot innovative models in one or more of the following priorities: 1) Increased proficiency in English language acquisition; 2) Core content on civics education and citizenship; 3) Integrating technology into the core content, and 4) Transitions: Bridge programs and career pathways. System Office staff will work with these providers to disseminate best practices, project deliverables, and curriculum materials to other providers.
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