ABE NRS Levels 4-6

- ***If you "ruled the world" – what initiatives would you implement in order to improve the overall performance of learners in NRS levels 4-6? What steps do you think are absolutely necessary to make improvements in this area—both locally and statewide?***

Resources:

- [CA statewide performance rates for ABE levels 4-6 from PY 2017-18 to PY 2020-21](#)
- [Statewide persistence rates from the same timeframe](#)
- [Contrast performance in levels ABE 4-6 with the other 9 NRS levels](#)
- [Comparison of ABE levels 4-6 with national averages](#)
- [Comparison of ABE 4-6 to other "large states" such as NY, FL, TX](#)

History:

Since the inception of WIA in 1998, the higher levels of ABE and ASE have always been a weak spot for CA performance statewide, with pre/post-test performance and persistence rates for these three levels consistently below that of other educational functioning levels, and below the national average. This is in comparison to (for most of the past twenty years) average level performance on the three lower levels of ABE, and above average performance for most levels of ESL.

This trend became an "official issue" around PY 2005-06. At that time, the NRS began to hold states more accountable for their statewide performance rates, and actively encouraged all states to develop NRS performance goals. The NRS also changed the definitions of the levels, both at the lower levels of ESL and higher levels of ABE. That in turn generated more emphasis on better meeting assigned statewide goals for all 12 NRS EFL's.

In 2008, CA introduced the original ABE Initiative. This was in response to CA showing improvement in meeting statewide NRS goals overall -- but with an emerging disparity between the performance in ESL versus performance in ABE/ASE. The original ABE initiative focused on improving pre/post-test persistence, and working with a small number of large WIA II agencies that contained the majority of ABE learners statewide. This initiative went well for about a year, but quickly lost focus during the era of budget cuts and "flexibility."

Over the last 10 years, this data trend has continued, with CA consistently performing much better in the 6 levels of ESL than ABE/ASE, and ABE levels 4-6 performing lowest by a significant margin. This trend was noted in the most recent OCTAE visit to CA in 2018, and the state has worked closely with NRS (and OCTAE) staff in recent years to once again start actively addressing performance issues with ABE levels 4-6. A new plan for ABE/ASE was developed, and "was ready for primetime" and to be re-launched at the 2020 CA consortium… that is at the Summer Institute, and CA consortium, that wasn't! So "ABE Initiative 2.0" begins in earnest in 2022!

Questions for Consideration:

- Does your agency have a number of higher level ABE students – or HSE or HS diploma – that fit into ABE levels 4-6?
- Have you been aware of this performance trend– that is that ABE/ASE students have more challenges than others with persistence and performance – or is this "news to you?"
- How does your agency compare with the statewide numbers? Are you better, worse, or about the same?
  - If worse, or about the same – what is it about high level ABE (or ASE) students at your agency that make it more difficult to achieve strong performance?
  - If better than the state average – are there any practices at your agency that contribute to your strong performance? What practices should other agencies that are not performing as well consider?
  - In terms of "trends" – has your agency always been above average (or below average)? Or has your agency fluctuated from year to year? How would you explain your agency's trends?
- How well does your agency do with persistence – that is completing a pre/post-test pair for each student? Does that contribute to successful (or unsuccessful) performance at your agency for these three levels?
  - If your persistence rate contributes to successful performance in ABE 4-6– what strategies do you employ at your agency that creates this success?
  - If not – what issues get in the way of pre and post-testing these (ASE and high level ABE) students?
  - Either way – why do you think these higher level ABE and ASE students have a more difficult time completing data and testing requirements than most other students?
- How has COVID -19 affected your data in these areas the past few years?
- Does your agency have any other metrics or outcomes – besides NRS performance data and pre/post-testing – that provide valuable data points for measuring the success of higher level ABE and ASE learners?
- ***If you "ruled the world" – what initiatives would you implement in order to improve the overall performance of learners in NRS levels 4-6? What steps do you think are absolutely necessary to make improvements in this area—both locally and statewide?***

Future Forecast Activity

- It's 2032
- You're receiving top honors from the National Center for Best Practices Across All Sectors (NCBPAEO)
- There is an award ceremony
- You must present a brief verbal or visual acceptance presentation

Work in your teams to develop your acceptance presentation.

- What were some key barriers you overcame to achieve this success?
- Who is responsible for your success in addressing these challenges?