



Nebraska Adult Education

What is Adult Education?

Adult Education is primarily a federally funded educational program serving adults, 16 years of age and older, withdrawn from school and who lack a high school diploma or who lack the basic skills to function effectively in the workplace and in their daily lives. Adult Education (AE) is currently administered through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. In July 2014, a new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was passed and will be fully implemented by July 1, 2016.

Instructional services are offered in three main program areas:

Adult Basic Education – basic skills instruction below the high school level (0-8 grade)

Adult Secondary Education – high school instruction level (9-12 grade)

English as a Second Language – instruction in learning the English language

There is also additional federal funding for the EL/Civics program, which provides English language learning and a required civics/government component for immigrants functioning below an eighth-grade level.

Upon entry into an AE program, all students are given an assessment (pre-test) to determine academic ability and placement in the program. After a defined number of hours, a post-test is given to determine next steps, depending upon the individual's goals for being enrolled. If a person is studying for the GED tests, the official GED Ready practice test is given when the student reaches the appropriate level of post-testing. Since there are many variables that come into play, a defined number of hours needed to complete an individual's course of study is not expressed to the student.

Adult Education assists students who seek to:

- Complete high school by successfully completing the GED® testing program
- Enroll in post-secondary education or training
- Learn the English language, understand US culture, become contributing members of the community
- Get a job or retain a job, and for
- Personal reasons – help children with schoolwork; learn to read/compute; personal satisfaction

Who Provides Adult Education in Nebraska?

Currently, Nebraska has fourteen AE programs. Program sponsors include: public schools, community colleges, corrections, and a community-based organization. Nebraska AE is basically a part-time program. Local and state match is required. Approximately 1/3 of the programs charge an annual registration fee, \$20 or \$25. Classes and instructional materials are free. Individual tutoring is available in most programs.

Need:

- According to different sources, anywhere from 8% to 10% of Nebraska's adult population lack a high school diploma. In actual numbers, **the range is 140,000 to 163,000 persons.**
- Approximately 2% of Nebraska's adult population do not speak English well or at all.
- In a 2008 report from the Working Poor Families Project, entitled **Working Hard Still Falling Short:**
 - 22% of Nebraska families living below the poverty level have parent(s) who are not high school or GED® graduates, and

- 44% of Nebraska families living below the poverty level have parent(s) without any post-secondary education/training.
- Approximately 40 million American adults are in need of improved educational foundation skills. Who are the low-skilled adults in America? One-third are below 35 years of age; more than one-half are African-American or Hispanic; two-thirds are employed; one-third are immigrants; and two-thirds of age 16-24 low skilled adults are men.

Students Served:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Total Students Served</u>	<u>12+ hour students</u>	<u>Contact Hours</u>
FY 2012	9,728	7,946	649,413.50
FY 2013	9,242	7,260	556,626.25
FY 2014	9,959	7,021	543,876.00

Student Demographics for FY 2014:

- Employment Status: 43% were employed; 26% were unemployed; and 31% were “not in the labor force”
- Corrections: 18.6% of students were in correctional or other institutionalized programs
- Upon entry into the program: 48% were ABE level; 11% were ASE level; and 41% were ESL students

Performance Standards:

State standards are negotiated with the US Department of Education each year. Each local program is expected to meet/exceed the standards, which increase each year. The performance standards include:

- Five ABE/ASE and 6 ESL educational functioning levels (EFL), based on movement into the next EFL
- Four core goals of: obtain a job; retain a job; high school completion; and entry into post-secondary education/training

Current Challenges for Nebraska AE Education:

- During a given time during a program year, approximately 1/3 to 1/2 of the Adult Education programs have waiting lists to enter classes. Current class offerings do not meet the need or demand.
- Changing the mindset that Adult Education goes beyond earning a high school diploma or learning the basics of the English language; it is essential to help our students prepare for employment and/or post-secondary education.
- Technology – for both staff and students. (The top ten corporations in America require an on-line application.)
- Increasing use of distance education for both GED® preparation and ESL students.
- Utilize Career Connections, NE Works, and other free on-line resources in assisting the students in planning their future college and/or employment opportunities.
- Expansion of Bridge Program.

Nebraska GED® Testing Program

The GED® Testing Service, part of the American Council on Education, and in partnership with Pearson Vue, administer the GED® Testing Program.

Fact: By 2018, 63% of jobs will require some education beyond a high school diploma.

Fact: Nearly 4 million jobs in America are unfilled today simply because there are not enough skilled workers to fill them. Most of these jobs require some college or training beyond high school.

Fact: The 40 million adults without a high school diploma lack the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in today's job market.

Fact: Fraudulent on-line diploma mills have increased over the past few years. Consequently, many spend hundreds of dollars on a fraudulent diploma.

Nebraska Information:

- 28 GED® testing centers in Nebraska
- Funded by sponsoring institution and/or with testing fees paid by GED® examinees
- The GED® testing program receives no federal grants to operate the testing centers (is not part of the federal Adult Education grant).
- Successful completion of the GED® tests is a major avenue by which home-schooled students can verify completion of high school and qualify for financial aid for post-secondary education.

Numbers Receiving the GED® Credential:

From the CY 2013 Nebraska statistical report:

3,805 persons took part or all of the GED® test battery. Of this number,

- 2,652 completed all five tests, and
- 2,544 achieved scores high enough to qualify for a Nebraska High School Diploma.
- Nebraska's pass rate is 81%. The national overall pass rate is (available in 9/2014).

From the CY 2012 Nebraska GED® statistical report:

3,654 persons took part or all of the GED® test battery. Of this number,

- 2,347 completed all five tests, and
- 1,874 achieved scores high enough to qualify for a Nebraska High School Diploma.
- Nebraska's pass rate is 80%. The national overall pass rate is 69.1%.

In 2014, GED® Testing Service initiated a new series of GED® tests.

- The tests will, along with measuring high school completion, also assess readiness for employment and/or post-secondary education.
- The four test modules (Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Math) are delivered via computer-based testing (CBT); the tests are not delivered on-line; the tests still must be taken at an official GED®/PV testing center.
- The 2014 test series required extensive training for teachers and students alike, as well as an increased need for computers for the testing centers and the Adult Education (AE) classrooms.
- Mobile site testing will be available for addendum sites: city/county jails, small communities, etc.
- GED® 2014 is a program, not just a test, from helping adults prepare for the tests, take the GED® tests, and learn about college and job opportunities.
- When examinees score at the GED® with Honors level, they will have demonstrated the skills and abilities needed to succeed in college-level classes and many jobs.
- The tests will measure critical thinking and problem-solving skills identified as critical for success in college and careers. Students will be required to demonstrate basic computer skills, the same skills now considered fundamental to basic literacy.