

Sound Bytes, #1-2010

Background Rationale

Many students in Texas cannot take advantage of adult education services for a variety of reasons: the learning center is too far away; transportation is not available; there is no childcare; work schedules conflict with class times; a student has a physical disability.

As a result, Texas LEARNS developed a state plan for distance education. This plan guides program implementation of distance learning classes.

Overview

Adult education programs in Texas officially started implementing distance education programs on July 1, 2007. Local service providers can now offer instruction in ABE, ASE and ESL. Approved curricula are available at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels.

Adult Education and Literacy Providers who want to implement distance education classes are required to:

- **Complete *DL 101*, an online professional development course offered through the GREAT Centers;**
- **Select a distance education curriculum from the *Texas LEARNS Approved List of Distance Curriculum*;**
- **Set-up specific distance learning classes in TEAMS and monitor and report on distance education class data.**

Texas LEARNS also receives professional development training support from Project IDEAL, a national consortium of states working together to explore new innovative ways to utilize distance education to positively impact ABE and ESL learners.

Distance Learning Data Update, 2010

- In 2009, 15 Texas adult education programs were offering distance learning classes; in 2010, there are now 27 programs;
- In 2010, 3,951 students are enrolled in Texas distance learning as compared to 855 in 2009;
- Emerging 2010 data suggests that students who have a percentage of proxy hours are doing slightly better than students receiving pure classroom or distance education hours.

Distance Learning Best Practices Initiative

The Distance Learning Best Practices Initiative is a multi-GREAT collaborative research-based professional development effort to capture best practices in distance learning throughout the state of Texas and incorporate these findings into a standardized professional development series. The three 3-hour modules that are being developed include:

- Exploring Texas Distance Learning Curricula
- Best Practices for Texas Distance Learning
- Using Distance Learning as a Tool for Transition

**2010 Data Results – Percent of Students
Completing Level
(baseline plus 12+ hrs, Regular Adult Ed, ELC
& Corrections)**

	All Students	Distance Learners	Participants with Proxy Hrs
ABE	51%	50%	56%
ASE	56%	74%	67%
ESL	57%	64%	79%

All Students: includes regular students, participants with proxy hours, and participants that are defined as distance learners.

Distance Learners: a subset of participants with proxy hours and includes students that have 50% or more of their total hours identified as proxy hours.

Participants with Proxy Hours: a subset of all students and includes students with at least one proxy hour.

Distance Learning Objectives, 2011

- **Continue to support and encourage program implementation of distance learning classes across Texas;**
- **Re-evaluation and re-design of DL 101 which will incorporate the results of the *Distance Learning Best Practices Initiative*;**
- **Expand the number of reports in TEAMS that report on distance learning performance;**
- **Encourage the use of technology and online resources to support distance learning professional development training for adult education practioners.**

Timeline

Distance Education is an ongoing statewide initiative.

Contact and Website Information

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Distance Education Website:

<http://wwwtcall.tamu.edu/texaslearns/initiatives/distlearn.html>

The **Fact Sheet Series** highlights efforts currently underway at Texas LEARNS to support the principles of the President’s No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The principle(s) supported by this effort are checked.

- Increase Accountability and Raise Academic Achievement
- Increase Options and Involvement for Parents Students
- Increase Flexibility and Reduce Bureaucracy
- Focus on What Works