

## **Professional Issues Focus Group Feedback**

ABE Regional Professional Development Event

### Session Basics

- Friday, October 12, 2007
- West Metro Regional Conference
- 1 focus group
- An estimated 70 participants

### Main Issues

- Testing
- "Transitions" to post-secondary
- Learner retention: revolving door attendance
- Materials and Resources
- Teacher compensation
- Multilevel classes
- Teacher collaboration
- Security

### Additional Issues

- Learner retention: revolving door attendance
- What to do with waiting lists
- What to do with non-progressing learners, especially older learners
- Unrealistic student expectations
- Resources (how to use, especially with volunteers)
- Finding appropriate materials
- Student age ranges
- Funding for materials (especially texts, food, etc.)
- Facilities
- Curriculum, especially test and NRS alignment
- Multiple levels in a class
- Teacher compensation: Paid teacher preparation time, pay scales, benefits, Qcomp
- High staff work load
- Networking with organizations and businesses for referrals
- Need more professional development
- Too many meetings
- Not enough time
- Staff relations, especially between administrators and teachers
- Top-down management
- Equity with K-12 education
- Student transitions to post-secondary (how do ABE teachers prepare students for success?)
- Not serving the "transitions" group (is this "Basic Skills" with a post-secondary goal?)

- Lack of professional development and training, especially for workforce education
- Too much paperwork
- NRS
- State limits on ELL learning
- Lack of compensation for increasing paperwork
- Standardized test changes
- The test says to advance but the student's skills are not yet there
- Level completion pressure (especially with CASAS), this is extremely difficult for learners with limited education
- Too much testing: Constant testing does not reflect wants and needs of students
- CASAS: inadequate for classroom placement
- TABE: does not inform instruction, eliminate as official test and develop new ABE exam
- CE not recognized or supported
- Not heard by the union, even though we pay union dues and are certified and full-time

#### How can Literacy Minnesota help?

- Teaching multilevel groups
- Networking: what are others doing?
- Eliminate TABE; develop new assessments
- Create more respect for hourly ABE staff
- More local administrative communication on state issues
- Create lists of resources available by topic
- Newsletter
- More PD and trainings: online and with diverse times and topics (open enrollment, multilevel) for staff and volunteers
- Develop site visits to exchange ideas
- More tolerant of time frames
- Lunch sessions
- Business links
- Promote lifelong learning
- Create ABE management requirements
- More sharing
- More test training
- Ways to support non-progressing students
- Child care and transportation
- Student grants
- College prep. courses
- MNSCU collaboration
- Technology funding
- More funding
- Site-by-site equity