TO: ADULT EDUCATION COORDINATORS

FROM: DIVISION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
      BUREAU OF ADULT, CAREER AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION

SUBJECT: POLICY MEMORANDUM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DATE: MARCH 5, 2013

Effective: Immediately

POLICY STATEMENT
Each program must be staffed by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators to enable students to achieve substantial learning gains.

PURPOSE
Programs are charged with building a strong foundation of research and effective educational practice and will effectively employ advances in technology, as appropriate.

Coordinators will be trained in integrating research into teaching and learning, motivating and retaining adult learners and using data to guide program management. Instructors will be trained in using proven practices such as phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension that research has proven to be effective in teaching individuals to read, write, problem solve, and practice numeracy. Instructors will provide learning in real life contexts to ensure that an individual has the skills needed to compete in the workplace and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

GUIDANCE
The goal of professional development is quality programming and improved services to students. Effective professional development involves ongoing commitment to keeping knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant and up to date. Informed by research, professional wisdom, and data, participants realize the potential of learning communities while focusing on teaching and learning. Effective professional development is ongoing, job-embedded, integrated into organizational goals, and supported by the organizational structure.

Professional development includes formal and informal means of assisting practitioners:
- to acquire knowledge, skills, approaches, and dispositions
- to explore new or advanced understandings of content, theory, and resources
- to develop new insights into theory and its application to improve the effectiveness of their current practice and lead to professional growth.
The Adult Education and Literacy team supports programs ensuring that adequate time be allotted for lesson planning, professional development, leadership activities, and program improvement efforts. The State guidance suggests that up to 20% of paid time could be used for planning/training/professional development.

**Planning**

- Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) reflect an integrated planning process and are the result of a Local Programs’ Extension Plan and if a program chooses to submit a grant application to the Department of Education for the use of Adult Education and Family Literacy Act State Leadership funds. Both plans are to be aligned with Iowa’s Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Standards.
- Input into the plan is diverse and comprehensive, including review and coordination by the Adult Education and Literacy consultants, Leadership Committee and Program Coordinators.
- The local adult education and literacy program budgets time and resources for professional development in their local plan extension.
- Each staff member working in administrative, direct services or student support capacity must have an IPDP and must be provided with paid release time to participate in professional development activities.
- Each program must have a representative on the State Leadership Committee with time dedicated in their schedule to meet the duties associated with the committee.
- All plans must be monitored, revised, and evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

**Implementation**

- The local adult education and literacy program coordinator must play a lead role in participation in and support of professional development. Coordinators must ensure that program improvement efforts support quality instruction and that staff participation in professional development complements the Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and is put into practice.
- Program-specific staff orientation should be provided to new staff.
- Local adult education and literacy program staff members must participate in professional development that is related to their adult education job duties and improves the quality of the program. Funds used to pay for these activities must be aligned to budget costs. (For example, if a staff member is being paid out of administrative funds and their professional development relates to their administrative duties then their planning time and professional development activities should be paid out of administrative – same for EL/Civics and general AEFLA grant.) Professional development paid for from match funds and program income must be in line with an IPDPs, the local program Continuous Quality Improvement Plan and be AELFA allowable.
- All staff members could be provided with release time to participate in professional development activities, with payment commensurate with their status.
The local adult education and literacy program coordinator should work with staff members to ensure that knowledge and skills gained from professional development is implemented at the worksite, follow-up work is completed and the results are documented.

The local adult education and literacy program coordinator should prepare and submit an application to use State Leadership funds for additional professional development opportunities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Programs must maintain records of staff professional development.
- A percentage of IPDPs will be monitored by the Department of Education’s Adult Education and Literacy team during annual monitoring.
- Programs should assess the impact of professional development on the classroom activities and student outcomes through classroom observation.
- Programs should assess the quality of professional development services as well as their own learning through evaluations and self-assessment tools.
- IPDPs should be reviewed throughout the year and modified based on participant input and the program’s Continuous Quality Improvement Plan.