

# Culminating Learning Project

## 1. Engage the workgroup

Briefly describe the composition of your program improvement workgroup.

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I identified the number of staff on the workgroup.	The workgroup is comprised of all of the Education Staff:  Education Coordinator 2 full-time teachers 1 part-time teacher 1 Education Aide
2. ___ I described the positions of the staff on the workgroup	

## 2. Identify the program component to target for program improvement

List the program components that need attention that you identified from self-assessments, research review, and data analysis. Indicate the ONE program component that the workgroup selected to target in your pilot project.

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I listed the needs identified by the self-assessments.	Needs identified in self-assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing opportunities for student leadership within classroom.</li> <li>• Allowing student input into determining student goals and assessment plans.</li> <li>• Increasing student satisfaction within the classroom environment.</li> </ul> Needs identified in research review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assessing the strengths and needs of students in the four component reading skills</li> <li>• increasing the student achievement levels for basic skills students</li> <li>• knowing more about the contextualized approach to curriculum and instruction</li> </ul> Needs identified through data analysis:
2. ___ I listed the needs identified by the research review.	
3. ___ I listed the needs identified by the data analysis.	
4. ___ I listed ONE of those needs for us to use in the pilot.	

## LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMIES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to get gain more frequently among those students who do not earn a GED.</li> </ul> <p>Prioritized need or program component:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to get gain more frequently among those students who do not earn a GED (usually basic skills students).</li> </ul>
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Briefly describe the process used to select the targeted component, as well as the process used to identify the parts of the targeted program component that you want to keep and the parts that need new strategies.

Checklist	Response
<p>1. ___ I described the process the workgroup used to narrow the needs down to the one program component to be used in the pilot.</p> <p>I described how we examined the current program component to identify:</p> <p>2. ___ what we are doing now that we want to keep, and</p> <p>3. ___ what parts of the program component that need new strategies.</p>	<p>The workgroup met and reviewed the needs from the self-assessment, the research review, and the data analysis. We believe the one area where we could have the most profound effect was in improving our percentage of gain in those students who do not earn the GED. This is also an important focus of the facility and our Aspire partner.</p> <p>What we are currently doing well is our data collection and our tracking of who needs post-testing. In addition, our recently expanded orientation work and our two computer-based study programs (ITTS and GED Academy) are working well for us.</p> <p>We need new strategies for reading instruction and vocabulary development. We also need to remove the Language testing as we are not focusing on Language instruction in our classes. This is done only when needed for GED success. In addition, we need to add post-testing earlier for a measure of improvement and a guide for the instructors to choose instructional strategies and material.</p>

### 3. Set a vision and goals

Vision: Expanded reading instruction and earlier post-testing will be working well when...  
(Fill in the program component you are working on)

Checklist	Response
<p>1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in completing the vision statement.</p>	<p>The staff agreed after our discussion that these two changes will improve our overall gain.</p>

## LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE ACADEMIES

2. \_\_\_ I included the final vision statement.

Goals: When we are finished, we will have achieved the following...

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in anticipating achievements	The staff agreed the measure of our improvement will be when our post-test numbers improve as well as the percentage of students who make level gain.
2. ___ I included that list	

**Evaluation criteria:** What evidence will you collect to determine if you meet your goals? Identify each of the end user groups and the evidence each end user group identified as evidence they would need to convince them to use the new strategy.

End User	Evidence to Collect
Staff	Improved academic ability – improved TABE test scores
West Central Administration	Improved academic ability – improved gain for DRC reporting
Tolles Aspire Coordinator	Level gain achieved – improved gain for Aspire Desk Review
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction	Improved academic ability – improved gain for DRC reporting
Checklist	Response
1. ___ I identified each of the end users (e.g., teachers, tutors, aides, managers) who will be using the new strategies.	Overall, improved TABE test scores will meet the evidence needed by all groups listed. Annual reporting is required by Aspire and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. By improving post-test scores, all involved will see that the new strategy is working and is beneficial to West Central and Tolles Aspire.
2. ___ I solicited from each group the evidence they would need to convince them the new strategy worked, and I included each piece of evidence identified.	

#### 4. Gather and select promising practices

Briefly describe where you looked for models or strategies that would address your targeted component.

Checklist	Response
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I identified all of the sources we explored to find models and strategies that address our program improvement component.	<p>I looked to the Aspire desk review to determine the areas where the program’s success is measured – primarily gain from one Education Functioning Level to a higher EFL. I determined that gain can only be achieved is post-testing is done; therefore, I confirmed the procedures of post-testing in the Aspire Assessment Policy.</p> <p>In addition, I learned that the Aspire Professional Development Network was offering a 4-month course on Reading Foundations. As reading is the component we would focus on for our lower-level students, this seemed an appropriate resource for our staff.</p>

Briefly describe the strategy, procedure, or practice that the workgroup selected to pilot. Include a description of any adaptations that were made to make the strategy “fit” your program.

Checklist	Response
2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of the new strategies selected to pilot test.	<p>The Education Coordinator took responsibility to review class hours each month to determine when post-testing could be done in accordance with the assessment policy. Staff members are responsible for performing the post-testing in a timely manner. This includes the students who are not GED candidates, but we also adapted the plan to include students who are in the midst of GED testing since our students are more apt to be unsuccessfully discharged from the facility for behavioral issues.</p> <p>All staff registered and completed the Reading Foundations course through the Aspire PDN.</p> <p>The Education Coordinator developed and taught additional reading classes outside of the regular GED class schedule for those male students who showed a lack of reading skills. The books from the Critical Reading Series were purchased and used as the main focus of the classes. The men’s instructor then took over the reading classes in addition to teaching the GED classes.</p>
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of the adaptations we made to the new strategy and the rationale for those adaptations.	

### 5. Develop a pilot testing plan

Describe the process that was used to select the pilot sites - what characteristics did you consider in the selection process?

Checklist	Response
I included a description of: 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> who was involved in selecting the pilots 2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the criteria and rationale we used for selecting the pilots.	The plan was piloted with men's side as the instructor for the women's class retired mid-year and a new instructor needed to be hired. Originally, the Education Coordinator taught the reading class for the men, but as the new instructor was hired and training was needed, the men's instructor took over. This instructor was well-established and had time available to focus on the reading course and teaching additional classes while the Education Coordinator trained the new women's instructor.

What type of training was necessary for the pilot sites? Describe how this was provided.

Checklist	Response
I included a description of: 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the training that was necessary to get the pilot sites up to speed 4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> who delivered the training	The Reading Foundations course through the PDN met the need for training the staff in reading instruction and the components of reading. In addition, the Education Coordinator was familiar with the Critical Reading Series books and online lesson material. The men's instructor was trained by the Education Coordinator in use of this material.

Complete the chart outlining your interim benchmarks, activities, timeline, and responsible parties for planning, implementing, and evaluating your pilot project.

Interim Benchmarks	Activities	Completion Date	Lead Person Responsible for the Activity
Planning	Education workgroup	9/7/18	Education Coordinator
	Sign up for Reading Foundations	Fall 2018	Education Coordinator
	Curriculum and schedule for men's reading classes	October 2017	Education Coordinator
Implementing	Reading course	1/26/18	Education Coordinator
	Tracking for post-testing	On-going	Education Coordinator

	Weekend post-testing	On-going	Weekend Instructor
	Men’s reading classes	On-going	Education Coordinator/Men’s Instructor
Evaluating	Comparing level gain for FY16, FY17, and FY18	3/23/18	Education Coordinator
	Comparing GED attainment for FY16, FY17, and FY18	3/23/18	Education Coordinator
	Post-testing of reading students	On-going	Education Coordinator/Men’s Instructor/ Weekend Instructor

What were your primary financial expenditures for the pilot project?

Expenditure Category	Cost
Critical Reading Series books	\$159.19
Headset for webinars	\$24.99
Mileage to reading workshop	\$24.08
Additional TABE post-tests (\$11 per test) – addition of approx. 20/year	\$220

**6. Select and prepare the pilot sites**

Briefly describe the process you used to prepare the pilot sites to implement the new strategy or procedure.

Checklist	Response
<p>I included a description of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial meetings I had with pilot sites to explain their roles and responsibilities</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> consultants or other staff used as a resource to support the pilot staff</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> any incentives you provided to pilot staff to encourage and/or reward their</li> </ol>	<p>As all of the staff were part of the workgroups and our site is in-house, so there wasn’t much preparation needed. Email communication was sent and the Education Coordinator and the Men’s Instructor met to develop a list of students who would best be served with additional reading instruction.</p> <p>The Reading Foundations facilitating staff was informed that all of the West Central Education staff would participate in the course.</p> <p>All staff received a positive performance memo in their personnel file for completion of the Reading Foundations course.</p> <p>The Education Coordinator is responsible for collecting the data. She and the Men’s Instructor discussed evidence of improved reading performance on post-testing and as witnessed within the reading class and the regular GED class.</p>

participation  4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> how you made sure that pilot staff knew the evaluation criteria and data they would need to collect to determine impact.	
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### 7. Conduct the pilot, measure the impact, and develop/fine tune PD and resources

Briefly describe the results of your pilot project based on your evaluation criteria for each end user group.

Checklist	Response																		
1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included an overall narrative of the results of the pilot.  2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included results based on the end users' evaluation criteria.	<p>Overall, the pilot brought about positive results. We achieved our goal of increasing level gain. The staff has noticed improved skills from TABE testing, GED testing, and through working with students – particularly the low level readers. It's not clear if the increase in GED attainment is in any way related to the efforts of the pilot.</p> <p>We now have more complete TABE post-test scores to report to the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. When Aspire no longer required post-test scores for those who obtained a GED, these scores were collected much less often.</p> <p>Our Aspire partner will benefit from our increase in level gain. See statistics below as of March 8, 2018:</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>FY 16 - overall gain in EFL</td> <td>--</td> <td>68.28%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY 17 - overall gain in EFL</td> <td>--</td> <td>74.53%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thus far in FY 18</td> <td>--</td> <td>83%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY 16 – GED attainment</td> <td>--</td> <td>26.67%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FY 17 – GED attainment</td> <td>--</td> <td>44.97%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thus far in FY 18</td> <td>--</td> <td>51.6%</td> </tr> </table> <p>FY 16 - 38.46% of unsuccessful discharges did not receive a post-test; 46.15% did not make gain (because of no level gain or no post-test).</p> <p>FY 17 – 64.28% of unsuccessful discharges did not receive a post-test; 75% did not make gain (because of no level gain or no post-test).</p>	FY 16 - overall gain in EFL	--	68.28%	FY 17 - overall gain in EFL	--	74.53%	Thus far in FY 18	--	83%	FY 16 – GED attainment	--	26.67%	FY 17 – GED attainment	--	44.97%	Thus far in FY 18	--	51.6%
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Thus far in FY 18	--	51.6%																	



	Thus far in FY 18 – 45% of unsuccessful discharges did not receive a post-test; 45% did not make gain (because of no level gain or no post-test).
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What changes, if any, would you make before you implement the new strategy program-wide?

Checklist	Response
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of specific changes I needed to make before implementing program-wide.	I can think of no changes to make. We will continue to do post-testing as soon as assessment policy allows, and the addition of reading instruction is a welcome addition to our course offerings. We will always have the issue of students being unsuccessfully discharged, but we will continue to stay on top of testing needs.

### Final Reflection

Briefly describe what you learned from this program improvement project that will help you in future work.

Checklist	Response
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included an overview of what I learned from this project.	<p>I have learned that the students, though incarcerated and required to attend, respond well to instruction that they find practical and helpful in reaching their personal goals. Those students who are not candidates to complete the GED while at West Central appreciate improving their reading skills and enjoy being successful by improving test scores and monitoring their own progress within the reading class.</p> <p>In addition, I have learned to be aware of students who are in danger of unsuccessful discharge and to post-test earlier for the benefit of our Aspire program.</p> <p>The process of using assessment, research, and data interpretation is a workable plan when considering methods to improve the function of the program.</p>