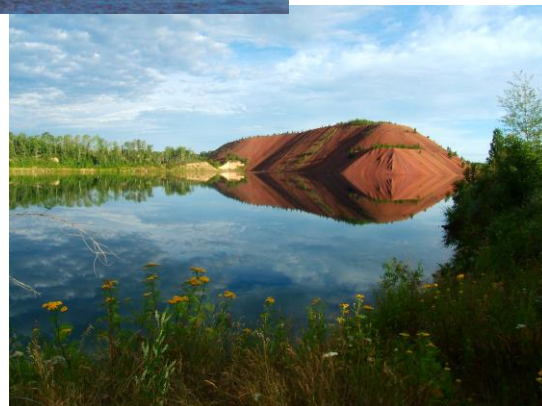




Program Narrative 2018



Section One Overview

"[The teacher] never assumed she knew where I was stuck. She did something the great teachers do, she inquired with me, her student. She was endlessly patient, kinder than necessary, and thoroughly knowledgeable. These qualities which she brought to our classroom every day were just [what] I needed."

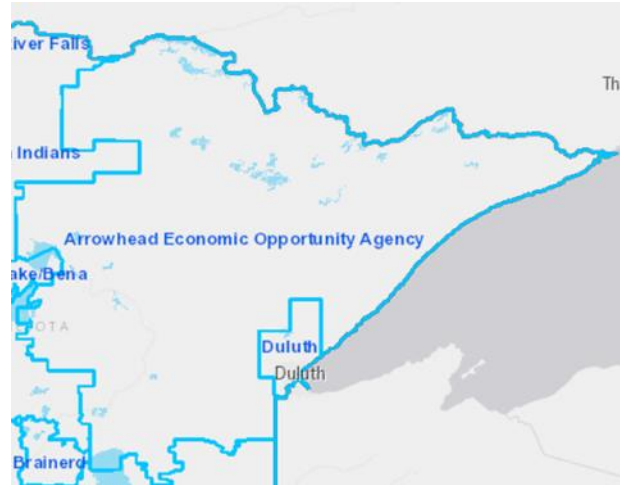
~LS, College Learning Community Student



1.1 General Overview of the Consortium

1.1.1 Geographic Area Served

The Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency (AEOA) seeks to continue to serve thirty school districts across nine counties in northeast Minnesota. Our service area covers roughly 19,600 square miles, an area larger than ten states. The total population is a mere 354,412 individuals. As the applicant,



AEOA, a large Community Action Agency, is well-positioned to implement and carry forward planned activities. AEOA provides a variety of services across a total of nine counties, not all programs serve all nine counties.

AEOA has provided adult education services in northern Minnesota for over 40 years. Our agency's mission is to strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges. AEOA's workforce development programming spreads across eight counties of northeastern Minnesota and the Agency has a long history of working with a broad range of people facing unemployment and underemployment both with job skills training as well as education.

AEOA's Adult Education program provides a myriad of learning options fashioned to increase the individual student's access to education and training. These include GED education, basic literacy and numeracy skills and computer training, basic job search skills, college and career preparation, English Language Learning, college-based learning

communities, and industry-specific training (i.e. carpentry pre-apprenticeship, ServSafe Food Manager certification, ParaProfessional certification).

AEOA provides services through distance learning, customized courses in itinerant locations, and permanent classrooms. Many of our classrooms run like one-room school houses. In addition, the Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCC) is a sub-grantee providing GED instruction, literacy, career pathways, and workplace skills to incarcerated males at their facility. NERCC's consortium membership acts much like our school districts, however, they are funded based on contact hours alone and do not receive formula funding.

Due to the specialized nature of services there, NERCC hires staff and manages their program separately, for the most part, from AEOA's ABE administration. Some NERCC students have previously been in AEOA's ABE programs and/or enter them upon completion of their sentences. NERCC and AEOA ABE instructors participate in some of the same training and planning sessions, and over the years a few have worked in both programs. This long-term partnership dates back to the late 1970s.

1.1.2 Target Population

Even though ABE eligibility does not include income limits, the program works to engage students most in need and performs outreach to high-barrier populations such as those experiencing homelessness, people of color, women seeking nontraditional careers, and students co-enrolled in public assistance and workforce programming. Our student population consists of individuals seventeen or older ranging from low-literacy to high-secondary functioning levels who may be a dislocated worker, displaced homemaker, or

other public assistance program participant. While we do provide English language services, we have a limited number of students who attend for that purpose.

Annually, the Agency touches the lives of over 35,000 people experiencing social and economic challenges and of that number, a little over 13% are from communities of color. That percentage is somewhat higher than the average percentage of people of color living in counties across the Northland which is 8.2% (2016). ABE serves far greater percentages of people of color than the Agency overall. Last year, twenty-nine percent (29.3%) of over 1,100 Adult Education students identified as a person of color.

According to the American Community Survey, 7.06% of the service area population aged 25 and older have no high school diploma or equivalency. This nearly mirrors the statewide average of 7.38%. Hispanic individuals are disproportionately represented in this population, with 11.4% of the area’s Hispanic/Latino population having no high school equivalency. In addition, a large disparity exists if we examine the number of individuals without a high school equivalency by race, as seen in the table below:

| | Asian | Black or African American | Native American/ Alaska Native | Some Other Race | Multiple Race | White | Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander |
|---|--------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------|----------------------------------|
| % without HS equivalency in region | 23.4% | 17.45% | 16.41% | 16.04% | 12.07% | 6.48% | 1.41% |
| % without HS equivalency statewide | 20.41% | 18.85% | 17.5% | 43.43% | 10.58% | 5.54% | 11.85% |
| % of total population of region | 0.08% | 1.18% | 3.3% | 0.26% | 2.57% | 91.85% | 0.04% |

Just under 36% of those aged 25 years and older have obtained an Associate’s level degree or higher while just over 24% have obtained a Bachelor’s level degree or higher. This is far below the statewide percentage of 45% and 34% respectively.

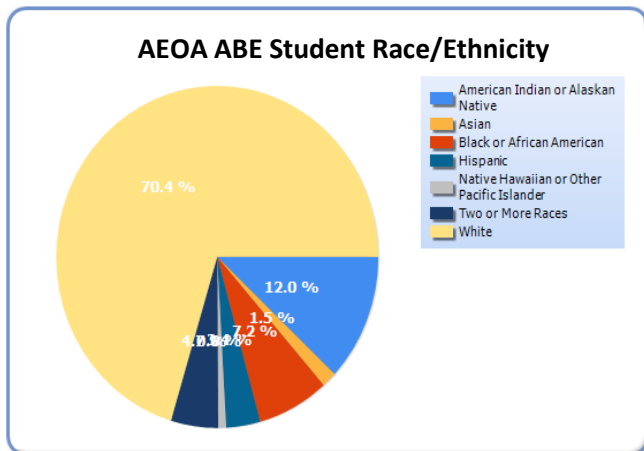
Again, the American Community Survey states, 0.27% of those living in AEOA’s service area are considered linguistically isolated while 0.79% over the age of 5 have a limited English proficiency. The statewide average is drastically higher at 2.59% and 4.49% respectively. According to the MN Department of Education, there are 34 households with limited English proficiency within the thirty school districts served by AEOA.

1.1.3 Description of AEOA ABE Students

We primarily serve a middle-aged population-39% of last year’s students were between the ages of 25 and 44. Another 28.7% were between the ages of 19 and 24. This was bracketed by the older (55 and older) and the younger (16-18) populations at 11% each.

| Age | Percent served |
|-------|----------------|
| 16-18 | 11.5% |
| 19-24 | 28.7% |
| 25-44 | 39.4% |
| 45-54 | 10.3% |
| 55-59 | 4.6% |
| 60+ | 5.5% |

As previously mentioned, our student population remains very white with limited engagement from new Americans or other immigrant populations.



Last program year, 3% of our students had an 8th grade equivalency or under, 40% had attended 9-12th grade, 21% had a high school diploma or equivalency, 10% had a secondary or professional degree, and 19% had

attended some postsecondary training without earning a degree. This breakdown is typical of our student make up.

The tables provided below depict the goals that are most common for our students. Obtaining the GED was the most commonly-selected goal with 147 students identifying it. Entering employment or postsecondary education were both at about half that number. Some students had multiple goals, however.

AEOA ABE Student NRS Goals 2016-2017

| Goal Type | Goal | # of Students | Set |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| NRS Primary Goal | Enter Employment | 74 | 65 |
| | Enter Postsecondary Education | 72 | 51 |
| | GED 2014 Passed - MDE Match | 42 | 0 |
| | Obtain a GED | 147 | 123 |
| | Postsecondary Training | 9 | 5 |
| | Retain Employment | 4 | 3 |
| | State Competency Based Diploma | 3 | 1 |
| Total | | 277 | 215 |

AEOA ABE Student Personal Goals 2016-2017

| Personal Goal | # of Student with goal |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Improve Basic Literacy Skills | 286 |
| Other Personal Goal | 85 |
| Obtain a GED | 74 |
| Enter Employment | 52 |
| Gain Computer Related Skills | 23 |
| Get a Better Job | 20 |

1.1.4 Staffing

AEOA ABE falls within the Employment & Training Department, one of five service departments of AEOA. The Agency also has a Central Service Department that consists of the Executive Director, Fiscal Services, Human Resources, Information Technology Services, and a Planning Department. Staff within these infrastructure divisions support and interact with the ABE program on a limited and ad hoc basis.

Overall program oversight is provided by the Employment and Training Director with the bulk of the program management falling to a full-time Adult Education Manager and one full-time Lead Instructor, who also provides instruction. There are two part-time program support staff and thirteen ABE Instructors. Of these thirteen, only seven are employed 32 hours or more a week. Staff that are employed 31 hours or more a week receive healthcare coverage, those at 32 hours or more receive life insurance, short-term disability, retirement benefits, and dental coverage. The Agency contributes to the retirement plan on behalf of the employee after two years of employment. All staff earn paid time off prorated on years of service and hours per pay period worked. The Agency also provides limited tuition assistance to those attending college courses relevant to their positions.

Most classrooms are staffed year-round and programming is offered during the business day; a few staff teach in the evening. There is no programming available on weekends. Staff are provided prep and professional development time as part of their work days. In general prep time is allocated one hour for every four hours of teaching and rounding of hours occurs. For instance:

- 40 hour per week employee instructs 32 hours and preps 8 hours.
- 36 hour per week employee instructs 29 hours and preps for 7.

- 32 hour per week employee instructs 26 hours and preps for 6.
- 31 hour per week employee instructs 25 hours and preps for 6.
- 20 hour per week employee instructs 16 hours and preps for 4.
- 12 hour per week employee instructs 9 hours and preps for 3.

Instructors are also expected to attend program-wide professional development webinars on a monthly basis during their prep time. At the beginning of each program year the Program Manager works with the Lead Instructor and Department Administration to set designated all-staff in-person training days that are mandatory.

An overview of AEOA ABE’s staff as of the submission of this narrative is provided in the following table. It is important to note all staff perform marketing, intake and orientation, and data entry.

| Staff Person | Position Title | Experience | Programming Overview | Full-time Equivalency |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|
| Julie Greenly | Department Director | 42 years of experience as the Department Director, Assistant Director, Finance Director and Management Information Systems Director. | General program direction and financial management. | N/A |
| Tracy Chase | Manager of Adult Education | 26 years with AEOA; B.S. in education and holds Adult Education, K-12, and Early Childhood teaching licenses. ServSafe certification. EBRI trained. CCRS Cohort. | General program management for Adult Education and financial oversight. Instruction of itinerant programming. ServSafe certified instructor. | 1.0 |
| Kristy Dobson | Program Specialist II | 2 years with AEOA; 25 years in Administration & data entry; 7 years Accounting AR/AP | General program data oversight, AR/AP, and program support | 0.2 |
| Joel Carlson | ABE Program Aide | 2 years with AEOA; B.S. in Accounting | GED Testing Center monitor | 0.4 |
| Terri Ferris | Lead ABE Instructor | 25 years with AEOA as an ABE Teacher, Vocational Evaluator and MFIP Case Manager; BAS in Elementary Education, K-12 Learning Disability certificate. MNI and EBRI trained. CCRS Cohort. | Provide staff oversight and support. Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. College Learning Communities in career fields of law enforcement, nursing, and liberal arts. | 1.0 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|--|--|-------|
| Kelly Bahen | ABE Instructor | 7 years with AEOA; BAS in Health Education; MN Teaching License. MNI and EBRI trained. ACES train-the-trainer certified. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. College Learning Communities in career fields of law enforcement, healthcare, and liberal arts. Regional ACES trainer | 0.35 |
| Melissa Brusacoram | ABE Instructor | 3 years with AEOA; Bachelor's degree in Communications Arts and Literature; Certified Four Cornerstones of Financial Literacy Instructor; 2 years' experience 7-12 Language Arts; 7 years' experience as Instructor Lead for Adults with Disabilities. MNI and EBRI trained. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer skills, and Financial Literacy. Is the Distance Learning Admin. ABE Workforce Center representative. Admin for 3 Distance Learning platforms. Admin for ABE State Schoology account. | 1.0 |
| Jill Carlson | ABE Instructor | 20 years teaching experience, 17.5 years with AEOA. BS in Education grades 1-6. MN teaching license. MNI and EBRI trained. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. College Learning Communities in career fields of healthcare and liberal arts. | 0.8 |
| Steve Johnson | ABE Instructor | 19 years of teaching experience; 3 years with AEOA. 10 years of small business management, BAS in Elementary education & AA in business. MN teaching licensed. ServSafe certification. MNI and EBRI trained. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Entrepreneurship. YouthBuild instructor. ServSafe certified instructor. | 1.0 |
| Doug Lowthian | ABE Instructor | 1 year with AEOA; Over 30 years' experience in non-formal education, alternative education, and professional development. Currently pursuing an Ed.D. ServSafe certified. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning and Financial Literacy. | 0.5 |
| Denise Rogers | ABE Instructor | 2.5 years with AEOA; 3 years' teaching high school; 2.5 years' with Literacy Interventions. MN teaching license. ServSafe certified. EBRI trained. CCRS cohort. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, Financial Literacy. College Learning Communities in career fields of healthcare and liberal arts. ServSafe certified instructor. | 0.775 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| John Praxmarer | ABE Instructor | 14 years of experience teaching ABE; less than 1 year with AEOA; B.A. in English | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. | 0.162 |
| Anitra Saddler | ABE Instructor | 2 years with AEOA; BA in Health Science with emphasis in Social Work; Currently pursuing a MSE, Guidance and Counseling- Human Relation Track. TESOL certification. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. College Learning Communities in career fields of corrections and liberal arts. | 1.0 |
| Sean Scarbrough | ABE Instructor | 1.5 years with AEOA; B.A. in Linguistics with a minor in TESL; 6 years of experience in education. CCRS cohort. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, and Financial Literacy. | 1.0 |
| Angela Smith | ABE Instructor | 20 years with AEOA; Adult Education Coordinator of Volunteer Tutors; Instructor Trained in Dollar Works II, Positive Parenting, and Rent Wise with the University of Minnesota Extension. STAR Reading certified. EBRI trained. CCRS cohort. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. Parenting Sessions for specialized chemical dependency population. | 1.0 |
| Karin Smith | ABE Instructor | 10 years with AEOA; 15 years at U of MN in the former Minnesota English Center; M.A. in TESOL. EBRI trained. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. | 0.625 |
| Mary Woodlock | ABE Instructor | 10 years 7-12 Math Teaching experience; 4.5 years ABE teaching experience; 7 months with AEOA; B.S. in Mathematics, 7-12 Math Teaching License; MN teaching license | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning. College Learning Communities in liberal arts. | 1.0 |
| Traci Laughlin | Guidance Counselor - ABE | 14 years with NE Regional Corrections Center as a guidance counselor; Nine years as a researcher in microbiology and virology; B.S. in Biology; M.A. Counseling Psychology. EBRI trained. ServSafe certified. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED Prep, Transition to College, and Job and Life Skills, Provide transition planning/service for corrections residents. ServSafe instructor, GED administrator. Resident Counselor. | 1.0 FTE (NERRC employee) |
| Deann Dahl | ABE Instructor | 12 years' experience elementary and college teaching; 2 years with NE Regional Corrections Center; BS in Business Administration, and MS in Education; MN K-6 teaching license. EBRI trained. | Instruction in Basic Skills, GED Prep, Transition to College, and Job and Life Skills. | 1.0 FTE (NERRC employee) |

1.1.5 Overview of Sites

AEOA ABE provides services at sixteen permanent sites and develops itinerant locations as needed for specialized programming. Such sites might include public libraries, community centers, local employer locations, or alternative learning settings.

AEOA's classrooms are mostly rural with one-teacher. The amount of space at the permanent sites varies. In the past, the program has struggled to secure ample space for holding classes, sometimes ending up in closets or wide spots in hallways. Over the last five years AEOA ABE has worked diligently to "raise the bar", securing permanent locations in more professional and dignified settings. Such classroom locations are limited due to the rural nature of our service area and confines services provision to larger population centers.

The permanent sites have staff and student computers available, along with printers for copying, faxing and scanning. They are stocked with textbooks and teaching materials like science kits, globes, manipulatives and real-world resources, plus office supplies, white boards and bulletin boards.

The classroom sites are dispersed throughout our service area and many are a considerable distance from the main AEOA ABE office in Virginia. The Grand Marais classroom, for example, is 130 miles away, International Falls is over 100 miles, and from the south, Aitkin is 111 miles. Grand Marais and International Falls are 196 and 170 miles from Aitkin respectively. These geographic limitations cut into the program transportation budget for gas, meals and lodging, and the travel time affects available staff hours when face-to-face meetings are needed. Webinars and online trainings have been welcome, cost-

effective innovations that keep staff on track with administrative requirements, up-to-date on new course content, and connected with one another across the miles.

| AEOA ABE Mileage Between Class Locations 2018 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----|--|
| Aitkin | 130 | 66 | 68 | 159 | 152 | 196 | 55 | 86 | 87 | 170 | 88 | 113 | 110 | 111 | 111 | |
| Carlton | | 2 | 5 | 115 | 87 | 130 | 74 | 73 | 45 | 165 | 21 | 48 | 65 | 65 | 64 | |
| | Cloquet - FDLTCC | | 3 | 113 | 89 | 131 | 72 | 71 | 72 | 163 | 23 | 49 | 63 | 63 | 61 | |
| | | Cloquet - US Bank | | 110 | 88 | 130 | 70 | 69 | 70 | 161 | 21 | 48 | 61 | 61 | 59 | |
| | | | Ely - VCC | | 56 | 106 | 105 | 73 | 72 | 120 | 102 | 71 | 50 | 49 | 50 | |
| | | | | Finland | | 53 | 123 | 92 | 123 | 180 | 84 | 42 | 80 | 80 | 79 | |
| | | | | | Grand Marias | | 174 | 142 | 144 | 231 | 127 | 84 | 131 | 131 | 130 | |
| | | | | | | Grand Rapids - ICC | | 32 | 33 | 118 | 71 | 108 | 56 | 57 | 57 | |
| | | | | | | | Hibbing - WFC | | 2 | 104 | 60 | 89 | 25 | 25 | 25 | |
| | | | | | | | | Hibbing - HCC | | 103 | 62 | 90 | 23 | 24 | 24 | |
| | | | | | | | | | Int'l Falls - RRCC | | 152 | 178 | 100 | 101 | 101 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | NERCC - Saginaw | | 45 | 52 | 53 | 51 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Two Harbors | | 78 | 78 | 76 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Virginia - MRC | | 1 | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | Virginia - WFC | | 2 | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Virginia Admin | | |

ABE Staffing and Location Chart

| County | City | Facility Name & Office Address | Types of Programming Offered | Days of Operation | Hours of Operation |
|-------------|---------------------|---|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Aitkin | Aitkin | Aitkin Office Birch Street Center 20 Third Street North East Aitkin, MN 56431 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | T, Th | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| Carlton | Cloquet | Cloquet Workforce Center 14 North 11 th Street Ste 140 Cloquet, MN 55720 | Job and Life Skills, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | W Intermittent | 12:00 – 4:30 |
| | | Fond Du Lac Technical Community College 2101 14 th Street Cloquet, MN 55720 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills. College Learning Communities. | M - F | 8:00 – 6:00 |
| | | US Bank Building 715 Cloquet Avenue, Suite 2 Cloquet, MN 55720 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills. College Learning Communities. | M, W, Th | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | Carlton | CARE 810 3 rd Street, #102 Carlton, MN 55718 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, Financial Literacy, and Parenting Skills. | T F | 7:00 – 6:00 7:00 – 10:00 |
| Cook | Grand Marais | Grand Marais Office 15 North Broadway Avenue Box 331 Grand Marais, MN 55604 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | Intermittent | Intermittent |
| Itasca | Grand Rapids | Itasca Community College 1851 Highway 169. Library Grand Rapids, MN 55744 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, and English Language Learning. College Learning Communities. | M - F | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| Koochiching | International Falls | Rainy River Community College 1501 Highway 71, Library Room International Falls, MN 56649 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | M - F | 12:30-4:30 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|--|--|--------------|-------------------------|
| Lake | Finland | Claire Nelsen Center 6866 Cramer Road Finland, MN 55603 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, and English Language Learning. | Intermittent | Intermittent |
| | Two Harbors | Two Harbors AEOA Office Norden Industrial Park 2124 10 th Street Two Harbors, MN 55616 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | M T-Th | 11:00-4:30 9:30-4:30 |
| St. Louis | Ely | Vermilion Community College 1900 East Camp Street, ARC CS107 Ely, MN 55731 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, and English Language Learning, | Intermittent | Intermittent |
| | Hibbing | Hibbing Community College 1515 East 25 th Street, Room F26 Hibbing, MN 55746 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, and Computer Skills. College Learning Communities. | M – F | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | | Hibbing Workforce Center 3920 East 13 th Avenue Hibbing, MN 55746 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | M - Th | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | Saginaw | Northeast Regional Corrections Center 6102 Abrahamson Road Saginaw, MN 55779 | Basic Skills, GED Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | M - F | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | Virginia | AEOA Central Office 702 Third Avenue South Virginia, MN 55792 | Program administration and professional development sessions. | M - F | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | | Mesabi Range College 1001 Chestnut Street West Virginia, MN 55792 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, and English Language Learning. | M - F | 8:00 – 4:30 |
| | | Virginia Workforce Center 820 North 9 th Street Virginia, MN 55792 | Basic Skills, GED and Accuplacer Prep, Transition to College, Job and Life Skills, English Language Learning, Computer Skills, and Financial Literacy. | M - F | 8:00 – 4:30 |

1.1.6 Key Initiatives and Partnerships

AEOA's Adult Education program has a variety of learning options designed to increase access to education and training. These include GED education, basic skills and computer training, developing a career pathway, making the transition to college, English Language Learning, college-based learning communities, and industry-specific training (i.e. carpentry pre-apprenticeship, ServSafe Food Manager certification, ParaProfessional certification).

AEOA ABE has the experience and flexibility to address needs as they arise and customize programming to respond to situations such as the mass layoffs on the Iron Range and in Carlton County during the past two years. This ability to adapt our offerings and incorporate our agency and community resources makes it possible to compete successfully for grants and build partnerships as opportunities become available.

AEOA ABE meets regularly with workforce development partners, industry leaders, and social service providers to identify areas of growth and demand for programming across our region. Examples of recent initiatives include:

- Partnering on career pathways models at several community college institutions on FastTRAC, Adult Worker, and now Pathways to Prosperity grants. Targeted industries have ranged from home health aide, corrections, commercial truck driving, construction, HVAC, paraprofessional, welding, and beyond.
- Performing the classroom portion of two youth programs: YouthBuild and Youth at Work in conjunction with AEOA's employment services. These programs target construction and hospitality skills and ABE provides contextualized instruction prior to hands-on training and work site placements.

- Partnering with five county agencies to administer a young parent program under the Department of Health and Human Services Innovation Fund. This program allowed for intensive outreach, goal setting, and support services for MFIP parents who attended GED classes throughout our service area.
- Assisting in the St. Louis County Equity Project through DHS funding aimed at serving African American and Native American families on MFIP in a culturally-specific manner to increase their employment outcomes. Our work in this program created a great partnership with the Bois Forte Tribal Government which has allowed us to expand our impact in those rural communities.
- Providing personal budgeting and financial literacy programming at Bois Forte utilizing culturally-specific curriculum provided by the Tribe.
- Providing financial literacy programming across the Northeast Workforce Development Area for universal clients at each workforce center.
- Advocating for and applying a gender lens to workforce development through targeting programming and funding with the Minnesota Women's Foundation aimed at moving more girls and women into the trades and other non-traditional careers.
- Receiving a direct appropriation under the Women's Economic Security Act (WESA) to perform work with the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund (the Fund) training low-income women in the Core Four Business Course and connecting them with the Fund for further assistance in starting their businesses.
- Creating a pre-apprenticeship bridge with the Carpenter's Local #606 to help underrepresented populations move into the trade.

- Performing SNAP outreach as part of our intake process utilizing Bridge to Benefits online screening tool to ensure that students who are food insecure could access needed services.
- Providing SNAP 50/50 employment and training services to ABE students enrolled on SNAP services.
- Coaching FAIM (Family Assets for Independence in Minnesota) participants in financial literacy and asset-specific topics such as educational and career planning.

ABE has been co-located on community college campuses for over 10 years, participating in career pathways and learning community programming across the region. AEOA is also co-located in two of the five workforce centers in our region and the affiliate location. Instructors work closely with the other three workforce centers to have a direct referral pipeline, often providing workshops or TABE testing on-site. Ad hoc services are provided at numerous libraries, community centers, and other community-based locations and we have a long-term classroom at the Northeast Regional Corrections Center (NERCCC). Program partners include AEOA's Employment & Training, Housing and Senior Services Departments; the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT); CARE Liberalis; Northland Recovery Center; Hibbing Community College; Itasca Community College; Mesabi Range College; Rainy River Community College; Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College; Carpenter's Local #606; Northeast Entrepreneur Fund; Two Harbors Area Chamber of Commerce; and local school districts.

1.2 Past Effectiveness in Improving Skills for ABE Students

AEOA has provided adult education services since the 1970's. In the late 70's twenty-nine school districts and the local corrections work farm (Northeast Regional Corrections Center) came together to create one consortium. This allowed for greater service reach and a more diverse array of services. South Koochiching School District was added to the consortium in 2015 by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Provided below are charts documenting AEOA ABE's NRS performance over the last two program years. While we have fallen short in some areas, we are working to address those challenges related to recent federal guideline shifts around testing, rigor, content standards, and student retention.

AEOA Level Gains and Post-Test Rates
Program Year 2016-2017

| <u>Pre Test</u> EFL | Number of Students | Hours* | Has PostTest | % Post tested | Completed a Level | % Level Gain | NRS Target (2016/17) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| ABE Level 1 | 5 | 424.3 | 1 | 20.0% | 1 | 20.0% | 78% |
| ABE Level 2 | 29 | 2,183.3 | 8 | 27.6% | 5 | 17.2% | 67% |
| ABE Level 3 | 128 | 9,747.8 | 53 | 41.4% | 34 | 26.6% | 50% |
| ABE Level 4 | 143 | 8,749.2 | 58 | 40.6% | 32 | 22.4% | 34% |
| ABE Level 5 | 83 | 3,756.3 | 31 | 37.3% | 22 | 26.5% | 26% |
| ABE Level 6 | 141 | 5,882.5 | 9 | 6.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 0% |
| ESL Level 2 | 1 | 79.8 | 1 | 100.0% | 1 | 100.0% | 58% |
| ESL Level 4 | 3 | 115.5 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 39% |
| ESL Level 5 | 1 | 38.0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 35% |
| ESL Level 6 | 1 | 40.0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 16% |
| Total (All) | 535 | 31,016.5 | 161 | 30.1% | 95 | 17.8% | |
| Total (excluding "None" and ABE 6) | 394 | 25,132.95 | 152 | 38.6% | 95 | 24.1% | |

AEOA Level Gains and Post-Test Rates
Program Year 2017-2018

| Pre Test EFL | Number of Students | Hours* | Has PostTest | % Post tested | Completed a Level | % Level Gain | NRS Target (2016/17) |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| ABE Level 1 | 6 | 252.5 | 3 | 50.0% | 1 | 16.7% | 78% |
| ABE Level 2 | 28 | 2,560.0 | 13 | 46.4% | 8 | 28.6% | 67% |
| ABE Level 3 | 124 | 9,150.0 | 57 | 46.0% | 42 | 33.9% | 50% |
| ABE Level 4 | 154 | 9,184.3 | 48 | 31.2% | 33 | 21.4% | 34% |
| ABE Level 5 | 94 | 4,303.3 | 26 | 27.7% | 19 | 20.2% | 26% |
| ABE Level 6 | 117 | 5,064.8 | 12 | 10.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 0% |
| ESL Level 1 | 1 | 34.5 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 48% |
| ESL Level 3 | 3 | 193.5 | 1 | 33.3% | 1 | 33.3% | 51% |
| ESL Level 4 | 2 | 26.0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 39% |
| ESL Level 6 | 1 | 15.5 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 16% |
| None | 1 | 18.8 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0% |
| Total (All) | 531 | 30,803.0 | 160 | 30.1% | 104 | 19.6% | |
| Total (excluding "None" and ABE 6) | 413 | 25,718.50 | 148 | 35.8% | 104 | 25.2% | |

Since the post-testing policy changed to 40 hours of instruction, AEOA has struggled to prove student outcomes via post testing measures. We anecdotally know that more of our students are personally successful than are shown in the above Level Gain Table from SIDS. Our program's ultimate goal is to move students toward self-sufficiency as quickly as possible, which may mean they achieve their goals before forty hours of instruction. The provided data shows we are improving our post-test rate and overall level gain outcomes as we implement various interventions with our instructors and for our students. With SID, admin and now instructors run reports and check individual records to determine which students have forty hours and haven't tested, as well as determine how many hours remain for students who are getting close to needing post-testing and monitor their progress more carefully.

AEOA ABE gauges our program effectiveness not only on NRS performance outcomes set in federal law, but by individual student and specialized program successes. Professional development is provided to instructors on an ongoing basis to assist staff in honing their

skills of gathering student data and securing it in the Statewide Information Database (SID).

The table below provides additional student goals and their achievement for program year 2016-2017, in order from the highest to lowest number with that goal.

| Personal Goal | # of Student with goal | # of Students Achieving Goal |
|---|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Improve Basic Literacy Skills | 286 | 287 |
| Other Personal Goal | 85 | 69 |
| Obtain a GED | 74 | 29 |
| Enter Employment | 52 | 33 |
| Gain Computer Related Skills | 23 | 53 |
| Get a Better Job | 20 | 2 |
| Improve English Language Skills | 15 | 10 |
| Enter Postsecondary Education | 13 | 5 |
| Increase Life Skills | 12 | 9 |
| Write Resume/Increase Job Search Skills | 9 | 16 |

The table below outlines performance outcomes for numerous programs we have run over the last several years. Program descriptions are provided in Section 4.

| Program | Outcomes |
|--|--|
| Academic Excellence Academy (FDLTCC 1 semester program) | 11 students entered program in fall of 2015 11 students completed 10 students will enter either Intro to Statistics or Meds for Nursing (both are achievements outlined for the program) |
| Beginning Algebra Study Group (HCC, 1 year of data provided) | 5 entered the program 4 completed 2 enrolled in a higher math course |
| College Learning Community – Health Careers (HCC, 1 year of data provided) | 11 entered the program 11 completed 11 enrolled in another semester of college |

| | |
|--|--|
| College Learning Community – Law Enforcement (HCC 1 year of data provided) | 7 entered the program first semester 7 completed fall 6 completed spring semester and enrolled for next year |
| College Prep Integrated Instruction - Reading (HCC, 1 year of data provided) | 5 entered the program 5 completed 4 enrolled in Basic English |
| College Prep Integrated Instruction - Math (HCC, semester course, 3 semesters of data provided) | 24 entered program 21 completed 15 raised Accuplacer score 10 enrolled in higher level math course |
| College Success Strategies (HCC, 1 year of data provided) | 12 entered the program 8 completed 3 moved to English skills in another ABE location 11 enrolled in another semester of college |
| Computer Training (Virginia, in-house) | 22 enrolled 11 completed 6 students completed workforce goals |
| Degree Me (FDLTCC, 2-yr program) | 17 entered program in fall 2016 3 students transferred mid-program to new college 8 achieved an AA degree (2 will be Fall 2018) 4 transferred to a four-year institution |
| Empower Bridge Instruction (Hibbing Community College, learning community) | 23 entered the program 21 completed fall semester 16 completed spring semester (1 drop for health issues) 3 graduated 1 graduate is already employed in her field of study 13 have enrolled for fall semester |
| FastTRAC – Paraprofessional (Mesabi Range College, 1 yr program) | 12 entered program 8 completed 4 passed ParaPro certification 1 enrolled in further education in elementary education 2 employed at local school district as Paras |
| Lives in Transition (ongoing programming, stats for 2 yrs) | 27 students enrolled 4 students transitioned to college 6 students have obtained employment |
| Paraprofessional Training (Aitkin and Grand Marais) | 6 students enrolled 3 students earned ParaPro certification 3 students employed as Paras at local school districts |
| Pathways to Prosperity: Corrections (FDLTCC 1.5 yr program) | 25 entered program in fall of 2015 16 students retained to fall 2016 18 students attended summer unpaid internship |
| Personal Care Attendant Certification (Two Harbors, in-house training) | 7 attended training 7 gained PCA certification |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 obtained or retained PCA employment 2 gained employment as CNAs 1 enrolled in further education at FDLTCC for AA in nursing |
| ServSafe Food Manager – NERRC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 attended training 12 obtained ServSafe certification 8 obtained at least one level gain in Math 1 student gained employment in the field once leaving the corrections facility |
| ServSafe (Two Harbors, in-house training) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 attended training 1 obtained ServSafe certification 3 obtained alternate certification in same field 1 attending college |
| Transition to College (HCC, 1 year of data provided) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 entered the program 12 completed 12 enrolled in another semester of college |
| Youth at Work: Pathways to Employment Readiness for Youth (AEOA in-house, 1 yr program) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 attended training 15 completed program 4 retained employment at internship site past program completion |
| YouthBuild (AEOA in-house, 1 yr program, stats over last 5 years) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 attended training 6 completed Ged certifications 15 gained basic construction skills |

In addition to these outcomes, AEOA has provided targeted services for specific employers. For instance, we trained five Ulland Brothers employees on Excel when their business went from a paper based work order system to an electronic system. We also trained all AEOA’s staff on Microsoft Office 365 when the agency transitioned to the new software as well staff at Mesabi Academy and White Community Hospital. Specific outcomes were not gathered for these trainings, but anecdotally the employers have noted increased employee productivity. Our program staff continue to be available as a resource to other AEOA staff when questions arise, assisting with everything from how to calculate a percentage in a report to help with a troublesome feature of a computer application.

1.3 Ability to Serve Eligible Adults with Disabilities

Due to the high number of impoverished individuals with a disability, the agency provides training for all staff to better serve a wide variety of individuals. Agency-wide, last year 56% of surveyed clients reported a diagnosed disability. In ABE nearly 13% of students identified as having a disability. Most often ABE students present with ADD, ADHD, and mental health struggles.

Our teachers are trained on engaging with students with perceived and documented physical and learning disabilities. Instructors provide multi-modal classroom instruction and have access to services from the State disability experts at PANDA. PANDA provides staff with knowledge and resources to increase opportunities for students through the incorporation of Universal Design for Learning principles and practices and assists with services for accommodations. With the opportunity for one-to-one interactions in our small classrooms, instructors can get to know an individual's needs. Instructors assist students who will need accommodations for the GED test with navigating the complex Educational Testing Service requirements for documenting their need and eventually scheduling their test. This process can be time consuming and difficult for students to navigate on their own.

Moreover, we have had a project with Minnesota Diversified Industries, an employment agency for individuals with a range of abilities. Our partnership includes GED and contextualized skills for their employees. MDI covers the cost of the GED test for those students who successfully complete classroom instruction. For these students, as well as any others in our program, we also have connections with Minnesota's Vocational Rehabilitation Services for ongoing support.