FY20-FY22 Massachusetts

Policies for Effective

Adult Education

in

Community Adult Learning Centers (CALCs)

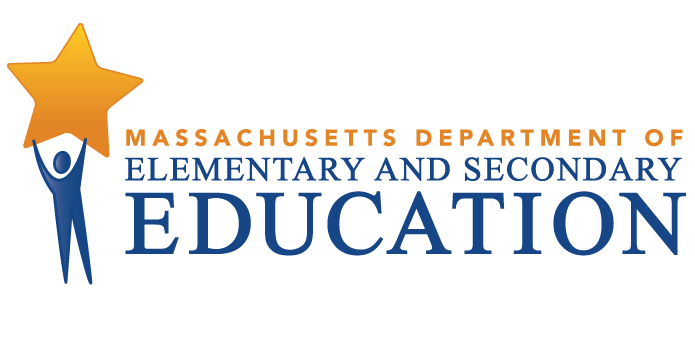
and

Correctional Institutions (AECIs)

**EXCERPTS SELECTED FOR THE ART OF ADVISING**

**SPRING 2020**

The Entire Document can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeprogram/>



[Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS)](http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls)

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Malden, MA 02148-4906

May 2019

## **Chapter 2:** [**Indicator 2: Access and Equity**](#_Toc468698121)

### Eligibility (State requirement)

ACLS requires that enrolled students:

1. are at least 16 years of age;
2. are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law; and
3. do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or are basic skills deficient; or are English language learners.

Students under 18 must provide a letter of withdrawal from the local school district in order to enroll in the program. Students who are home schooled must provide a letter from the local school district stating that they are not enrolled.

### Prioritization (State requirement)

ACLS requires that:

* there are regional opportunities for all eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, to improve their literacy skills. Programs are required to serve all eligible adults and may, based on their mission, prioritize certain subpopulations (e.g., out-of-school youth, homeless, families).
* programs prioritize students in good standing who are transferring from another program. Students enrolled in programs who move, change jobs, are released from correctional settings, or otherwise relocate, must have priority to enroll in another program or the DL Hub without returning to the waitlist.  If there are no available seats, these students must go to the top of the waitlist.
* programs prioritize adults who are parents of infants, toddlers, preschool, and school-age children.
* programs prioritize adults without a high school credential and shared customers who meet Title II eligibility criteria as defined in the local Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with WIOA partners. Based on regional priorities, programs are required to serve eligible individuals actively engaged in partner services and who require other partners’ services to advance along a career pathway.

WIOA also requires that programs using funds to carry out a program for criminal offenders in a correctional institution give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five (5) years of participation in the program.

For more information on shared customers and corrections education, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/wioa.html>.

### Waitlist (State requirement)

ACLS requires that programs:

* maintain an active waitlist for applicants who are unable to enroll in instructional classes due to capacity constraints;
* contact students placed on the waitlist at least annually to determine whether they are still interested in services;
* remove the names of individuals who cannot be contacted or are no longer interested in services; and
* verify in the annual Data Quality Checklist (DQC) that the waitlist is accurate and up-to-date. The DQC is required as part of the annual continuation application.

### Intake and Orientation

WIOA requires that programs identify those adults who, in addition to being eligible for services, face one or more barriers to employment. This requirement is intended to shed light on how well students with barriers are being served by the workforce system. Programs may use whatever intake forms they wish as long as the forms solicit and collect all the information needed to do data entry in [LACES](https://laces.literacypro.com/laces/).

Programs enrolling students in HSE preparation classes (i.e., pre-ASE and ASE levels) must enter student information in [LACES](https://laces.literacypro.com/laces/) (i.e., student name and DOB) as it appears on the government issued picture ID the student will be using to register for the HiSET® and/or GED® exam. This policy is to ensure proper data matching with HiSET® and GED® records. Programs may wish to keep a photocopy of the ID on file or scanned into [LACES](https://laces.literacypro.com/laces/).

At the beginning of each fiscal year, programs are expected to complete new intakes for all students, including those who are continuing from the previous year.

Programs are encouraged to give students program information, including program completion requirements, so that they can make an informed decision about whether they are able to pursue participation in the program.

For the ACLS Student Intake form, see <link TBD>.

#### **Confidentiality**

ACLS requires that confidential student records be kept in locked files. Students’ education records, including student data in [LACES](https://laces.literacypro.com/laces/) and records regarding students’ disabilities, are to be treated with the same confidentiality as medical records. ACLS requires that programs protect the privacy of students’ education records and seek consent for any disclosure of personally identifiable information in students’ education records.

#### **Release of Information (ROI)**

ACLS requires that programs ask each student to provide his/her social security number (SSN)[[1]](#footnote-1) and sign an ROI form. Declining to provide a SSN and/or sign an ROI will not impact students’ eligibility for services. The purpose of the ROI is twofold:

* to inform the student that his/her data will be matched with wage records; and
* to authorize the release of wage record matches to the program.

ACLS also requires that individuals applying for or receiving services be informed, in writing, that their personal and confidential information:

* will be shared only among the WIOA core program partner staff, subcontractors, and the National Student Clearinghouse; and
* will be used only for the purpose of conducting a data match and that further disclosure of personal confidential information or records is prohibited.

For the ROI form, see <link TBD>.

### The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The federal ADA places affirmative duties on public and private organizations to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access and have equal opportunities to participate in public services provided by adult education programs. Programs signing the Statement of Assurances (SOA) as part of their grant applications are assuring ACLS that they are aware of and in compliance with their ADA-related obligations.

#### **Accommodations**

The ADA requires that programs make reasonable accommodations for students. To ensure that programs are responsive to learners with disabilities, the ADA requires, among other things, that programs designate an ADA Coordinator whose primary role is to ensure that the program is accessible and in compliance with the ADA.

For more information on accommodations, see the Massachusetts Adult Education Assessment Policies at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/assessment/>. For more information on the ADA, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/disability/default.html>, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>, and [ADA.gov](https://www.ada.gov/).

#### **General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)**

In order to meet the requirements of [Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www2.ed.gov_fund_grant_apply_appforms_gepa427.doc&d=DwMFAg&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=-ZBU5MgghKp4FgaC73jJ7o9KwWoYWkYpvj2q13F6tlU&m=DxfJSGIlvPK-fGXU9lY8iv8DbqRUwY4mMBXPRtdDsKg&s=6Q7SMw_X0kNuamLhYYr6xx0rtG8YHIRfeg8SYzpaH8E&e=), all grantees must complete and submit a GEPA statement in order to receive funding. GEPA requires that all providers funded by the U.S. Department of Education or Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education stipulate how they will ensure equitable participation in their programs. It is not meant to be a duplicate of the civil rights statement, but instead a description of the efforts the provider will make to ensure that barriers to participation by students, teachers, and others will be removed to allow participation.

Six statutory barriers are listed: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, programs should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent students, teachers, or others from such access or participation in the adult education program. The description of steps to be taken to overcome such barriers in the GEPA form need not be lengthy; programs may provide a clear and succinct description of how they plan to address the barriers that are applicable to their circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative. The U.S. Department of Education requires that programs submit a GEPA statement annually. ACLS requires programs submit their GEPA statements during the annual refunding process.

For examples of GEPA statements, see [Grant Experts: GEPA Examples](https://www.grantexperts.info/gepa_examples.php) and the [GEPA notice](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www2.ed.gov_fund_grant_apply_appforms_gepa427.doc&d=DwMFAg&c=lDF7oMaPKXpkYvev9V-fVahWL0QWnGCCAfCDz1Bns_w&r=-ZBU5MgghKp4FgaC73jJ7o9KwWoYWkYpvj2q13F6tlU&m=DxfJSGIlvPK-fGXU9lY8iv8DbqRUwY4mMBXPRtdDsKg&s=6Q7SMw_X0kNuamLhYYr6xx0rtG8YHIRfeg8SYzpaH8E&e=).

### Mandated Reporting (State requirement)

Adult education staff are considered mandated reporters and are required by law to report cases of suspected abuse. Mandated reporters:

* include public and private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or adjustment counselors, psychologists, attendance officers, social workers, day care providers, health care professionals, and court and public safety officials;
* are immune from civil or criminal liability as a result of making a report; non-mandated reporters are also protected providing the report was made in good faith;
* are protected from retaliation, and identities will be kept confidential; and
* who fail to file a report are subject to a fine of up to $1,000.

For more information on mandated reporting, see the following table.

| **Age** | 0-18 years old | 18-59 years old | 60+ years old |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Population** | Children | Disabled Adults | Elderly |
| **Reporting Agency** | [Department of Children and Families](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dcf/) | [Disabled Persons Protection Commission](http://www.mass.gov/dppc/) | [Executive Office of Elder Affairs](http://www.mass.gov/elders/) |
| **Statute** | 51A | 19C | 19A |

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## **Chapter 6:** [**Indicator 6: Advising and Student Support Services**](#_Toc468698125)

The importance of advising should not be underestimated. DeSouza[[2]](#footnote-2)states that “Academic advisors can play an integral role in promoting student success by assisting students in ways that encourage them to engage in the right kinds of activities, inside and outside the classroom.” Light[[3]](#footnote-3) supports that notion, noting further that “Good advising may be the single most underestimated characteristic of a successful college experience.”

### Advising (State requirement)

ACLS requires that advising be available to all students. At a minimum, advising services must address:

* development of career pathways that allow students to make informed decisions regarding postsecondary education, training, and/or employment;
* barriers to participation by referring students to outside social service agencies; and
* collaboration among advisors and instructors to create a culture of student self-efficacy and persistence.

### Advising for Out-of-School Youth

ACLS requires that adult education staff, typically the education and career advisor, meet with all students aged 16 to 22[[4]](#footnote-4) to discuss the students’ educational options (i.e., adult education, return to K-12) prior to enrolling. In the event that a student wishes and is eligible to return to K-12, the advisor will work with the school to facilitate the student’s re-entry into the K-12 system.

For students age 16-24, the education and career advisor will provide students with up-to-date written information about the Title I youth programs and services offered by partners in the local area. In the event that a student expresses an interest, the advisor will work with the partner(s) to facilitate access to programs and services.

### Advising for Parents and Family Members

Adult education students who have education and career goals may also want to set goals in their roles as parents and family members. A young mother, for example, may have a goal of obtaining her high school equivalency credential and going on to community college at the same time she wants to help her daughter be ready for kindergarten, communicate effectively with her daughter’s teacher, and/or attend parent-teacher conferences. Programs may integrate family goals into advising materials and tools they are already using or provide separate materials and tools.

Students who choose not to set education and career goals may wish to develop a family education plan focused on their goals as parents or family members. These students must still have the option to add education and career goals to their family education plans at any time.

## **Appendix A: Indicators of Program Quality (IPQ)**

The IPQ, recently updated to align with the Workforce and Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), were influenced by research in curriculum and instruction, program administration, and advising, informed by an extensive review of indicators from other states, and developed in consultation with the field. The overarching goal of the IPQ is to guide the planning, delivery, and evaluation of adult education programs in Massachusetts in order to improve services for all learners.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Community Adult Learning Centers and Correctional Institutions** | | |
| **Alignment to WIOA** | **Student Success** | **Indicator 1: Program Design:** The program implements the key design elements articulated in its funded proposal. |
| **Indicator 2: Access and Equity**: The program is responsive to the education and employment needs of the region and to individuals most in need of services. |
| **Indicator 3: Career Pathways Collaboration:** The program takes concrete steps toward implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) vision as expressed in the Massachusetts state and local plan for a seamless system of education and workforce services that supports career pathways. |
| **Indicator 4: Curriculum and Instruction:** The program delivers high quality standards-based instruction that meets the academic needs of all students. |
| **Indicator 5: Student Progress:** The program consistently meets or exceeds state student performance targets for academic growth, and for postsecondary education, training and employment. |
| **Indicator 6: Advising and Student Support Services:** The program ensures effective and equitable delivery of advising and support services. |
| **Capacity** | **Indicator 7: Organizational Support:** The agency/institution (e.g., Community Based Organizations, Local Education Agency, Community College) actively builds and supports the capacity of the program and maintains quality working conditions to ensure its success. |
| **Indicator 8: Educational Leadership:** The program leadership (e.g., executive director, director, program manager, program coordinator, principal) ensures that the vision for academic success is shared by staff and students and that the program engages in a continuous improvement planning process with the goal of improving student outcomes. |
| **Indicator 9: Professional Culture:** The program promotes a culture that is ethical, culturally proficient, and collaborative that builds the expertise and experience of staff to grow in their career and assume leadership roles. |
| **Indicator 10: Fiscal and Data Accountability:** The agency/institution maintains a stable financial condition operating in a financially sound and publicly accountable manner. The program has a system for collecting and reporting data that ensures its integrity. |

For more information on the IPQ, including the standards under each indicator, a crosswalk of the IPQ with the 13 WIOA Considerations, and an explanation of how the IPQ inform program quality review and site visit protocols, see <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/pqrsv/>.

1. The program must do follow-up when the student does not provide a SSN. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. DeSousa, D.J. (2005). *On course: Strategies for creating success in college and in life* (4th ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Light, R. (2001). *Making the most of college*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 22 is the maximum age limit to which free education must be offered. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)