



**Quality Assurance and Compliance  
Onsite Monitoring Visit  
for  
Adult Education and Family Literacy**

**Palm Beach County School District  
December 2-6, 2013**

**Final Report**

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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January 15, 2014

Mr. E. Wayne Gent, Superintendent  
Palm Beach County School District  
3300 Forest Hill Blvd.  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406-5869

Dear Mr. Gent:

We are pleased to provide you with the final report of monitoring of the adult education programs from our visit. The report will also be placed on our website at <http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/compliance.asp>.

We appreciate the leadership and professionalism demonstrated by your staff during the review process. If we can be of any assistance, please contact Ellen McCarron, director of Quality Assurance and Compliance, at 850-245-9033 or via electronic mail at [Ellen.McCarron@fldoe.org](mailto:Ellen.McCarron@fldoe.org).

Thank you for your continuing commitment to improve services for Florida's students.

Sincerely,

Rod Duckworth

RD/shm

Enclosure

cc: Mary Barrett, manager, Workforce Development and Adult Education  
Gloria Spradley-Brown, bureau chief, Grants Administration and Compliance  
Ellen McCarron, director, Quality Assurance and Compliance  
Dr. Shahrokh Massoudi, program specialist, Quality Assurance and Compliance

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Florida Department of Education  
Division of Career and Adult Education

**Palm Beach County School District  
Adult Education and Family Literacy  
Quality Assurance Monitoring Report**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Division of Career and Adult Education, in carrying out its roles of leadership, resource allocation, technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation, is required to oversee the performance and regulatory compliance of recipients of federal and state funding. The Quality Assurance and Compliance section is responsible for the design, development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive system of quality assurance including monitoring. The role of the quality assurance system is to assure financial accountability, program quality and regulatory compliance. As stewards of federal and state funds, it is incumbent upon the division to monitor the use of workforce education funds and regulatory compliance of providers on a regular basis.

## **II. AUTHORITY**

The FDOE receives federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education for Adult Education and Family Literacy under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998. FDOE awards subgrants to eligible providers to administer local programs. FDOE must monitor providers to ensure compliance with federal requirements, including Florida's approved state plans adult education/family literacy. Each state shall have procedures for reviewing and approving applications for subgrants and amendments to those applications, for providing technical assistance, for evaluating projects, and for performing other administrative responsibilities the state has determined are necessary to ensure compliance with applicable statutes and regulations (34 CFR 76.770). The Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education is required to oversee the performance of subgrantees in the enforcement of all laws and rules (Sections 1001.03(8) and 1008.32, Florida Statutes).

Additional citations noting pertinent laws and regulations and authority to monitor are located in the 2012-2013 Quality Assurance Policies, Procedures, and Protocols, Module A, section 1.

## **III. QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROTOCOLS**

The Quality Assurance Policies, Procedures, and Protocols manual was revised in the 2012-13 program year. The manual was provided to each provider prior to the monitoring visit. The manual provides a summary of each facet of the monitoring design and the process. It also contains protocols that may be used as agencies are monitored or reviewed. References may be made to the manual in this document; it is located on the division's website at <http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/compliance.asp>.

## **IV. PROVIDER SELECTION**

Various sources of data are used throughout the implementation of the quality assurance system. The monitoring component of the system is risk-based.

Risk assessment is a process used to evaluate variables associated with the grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the FDOE and the division. A risk matrix, identifying certain operational risk factors, is completed for each provider. The risk matrix for each program monitored is located in Appendix A.

The results of the risk assessment process and consideration of available resources are used to determine one or more appropriate monitoring strategy(ies) to be implemented.

The monitoring strategy for the district was determined to be an onsite visit. Notification was sent to Mr. E. Wayne Gent, superintendent, on August 12, 2013. The designated representative for the agency was Ms. Mary Barrett, manager, workforce development and adult education.

The onsite visit to the agency was conducted on December, 2-6, 2013, by four representatives of the Grants Administration and Quality Assurance and Compliance section of the division: Ms. Ellen McCarron, director, Quality Assurance and Compliance section and Program Specialists Ms. Jakita Jones, Mr. Tashi Williams and Dr. Shahrokh Massoudi.

## **V. PALM BEACH COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **ENROLLMENT:**

Fiscal Year: 2011-12

Adult General Education 10,853

The provider was awarded the following grants for FYs 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14:

### **2011-2012**

#### **ADULT EDUCATION GRANTS**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unexpended Funds</u>
EL/CIVIC Education	\$726,625	\$40,474.70
Adult General Education	\$1,672,244	\$79,110.66

### **2012-2013**

#### **ADULT EDUCATION GRANTS**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unexpended Funds</u>
EL/CIVIC Education	\$726,625	\$35,706.30
Adult General Education	\$1,672,244	\$82,253.34

### **2013-2014**

#### **ADULT EDUCATION GRANTS**

<u>Type</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Unexpended Funds</u>
EL/CIVIC Education	\$726,625	\$ ?
Adult General Education	\$1,962,418	\$ ?

Additional information about the provider may be found at the following web address:

[www.palmbeachschools.org](http://www.palmbeachschools.org)

## **VI. MONITORING ACTIVITIES**

The monitoring activities included pre-visit planning conference calls; an entrance conference; interviews with administrators, teachers, and students; observations; record reviews; and an exit conference.

### Onsite Visits

Members of the team made onsite visits to the following locations:

- District office
- First Baptist Church

- Boca High School
- Boca Housing Authority
- Delray Full Service Center
- Bridges at Lake Worth
- Lantana Middle School
- Atlantic High School
- Bridges at Highland

#### Entrance and Exit Conferences

The entrance conference for the district was conducted on December 2, 2013; the exit conference was conducted on December 6, 2013. The participants are listed below:

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Entrance Conference</b>	<b>Exit Conference</b>
Mary Barrett	Manager	X	X
Dr. Jane Bravo	Supervisor	X	X
Brook Engethauopt	Sr. Budget Technician	X	X
Lisa Anderson	Audit Compliance Specialist	X	X
Wendy Quincy	Secretary	X	X
Jane Kim	Manager	X	X
Lisa Helfrich	Teacher	X	X
<b>FDOE Monitoring Team</b>			
Ellen McCarron	Director	X	X
Jakita Jones	Program Specialist	X	X
Tashi Williams	Program Specialist	X	X
Dr. Shahrokh Massoudi	Program Specialist	X	X

#### Interviews/Observations

Interviews were conducted with the administrative staff, instructional staff and students. A minimum of two interviews and observations were completed at each site. All interviews and observations were held during the course of the visit.

#### Records Review

Program, financial and administrative records were reviewed. A complete list is provided in section VII, item G. A minimum of 10 student records were reviewed. Some policies and procedures were reviewed at the agency's website and discussed at various times during the onsite visit.

## **VII. RESULTS**

- A. ADMINISTRATION** refers to the management and/or supervision of programs, structure of programs and services, grants oversight, and other administrative areas.

- District administration is supportive of adult education programs.
- Extensive staff development is provided to teachers and administrators and links to the ongoing district plan for staff development.
- The level of knowledge and commitment by teachers and staff is impressive.

- Advisory committees are in place and provide significant input and support for adult education programs.
- Administrators take the time to visit the programs in the schools and satellite sites.
- Career specialists visit with students in each site and assist students with their future plans for continuing education.
- There is an extensive marketing effort to promote adult education programs.
- The district currently offers adult education programs in 26 community high schools and 10 satellite sites.
- The presentation by the program manager provided much insight of the adult education programs county-wide.

**B. DATA AND ASSESSMENT** refers to all the components of the data and assessment system, including test administration, test security, data collection, entry, and reporting, as well as procedures. The use of data in program decision-making is also explored and commented upon.

- The district has written policies for data collection and reporting.
- Data required verifying student information was provided and is complete.
- Data is used for program improvement purposes.
- Staff attends Workforce Education District Data Advisory Committee (WEDDAC).
- District offers TABE and CASAS for the student testing.
- There is a process in place to ensure data quality that includes review of data by program staff.
- Data is readily available to program staff upon request.
- Student records are standard across the district. The district uses TERMS software for data collection.
- Adult education program manager participates in the district's Management Information System (MIS) team meetings.
- Assessment procedures follow state guidelines for adult education testing.
- Adult education programs follow the test administration guidelines in each test administration manual furnished by the assessments publisher.
- Test administrators are properly certified.
- Accommodations are in place for students with disabilities, such as providing additional time for testing, and providing an interpreter and large computer screens.
- Strong communication exists between and among data and program administrators.
- Administrators have access to reports.

#### **CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Concern:** Students at the Delray Full Service Center mentioned that they did not understand the purpose of the assessment test prior to taking the test.

**Recommendation:** Encourage assessment staff to properly inform all students about the nature of assessment testing prior to the test being administered.

**C. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION** refers to those elements which contribute to student learning and skill acquisition. It also addresses student and instructor observations.

- There are a large number of experienced and well-qualified teachers who are obviously committed to their students.

- A number of adult education students were familiar with the postsecondary career and technical education program that offers students an opportunity to enroll in postsecondary programs before earning a diploma.
- Adult education students were aware of the Florida CHOICES career development website.
- Teachers were observed using technology to enhance instruction.
- The district offers the GED® online.
- The district offers the virtual education program online.
- The GED® program exhibits innovative instruction through implementation of a “Math-a-thon” for students.
- A student at Delray High School would like math and physics to be added to level five adult education curriculums.
- Teachers at Delray High School and Boca High School requested child care for the students.
- A teacher requested child care for teachers’ children during the teacher work days. A teacher requested field trips for his students so they will have greater exposure to real life experiences.
- Intake information is provided in English and Spanish languages.
- Teaching strategies are varied.
- Family literacy provides learning and support for parents.

#### CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Concern: Textbooks at Boca Housing Authority are not current.

*Recommendation:* The district may want to review the existing textbooks and purchase new textbooks.

**D. TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT** refers to a review of the technology and equipment used by students and teachers in the classroom; addresses access, availability, innovation, use and condition.

- Inventory was available for the sites visited.
- The monitoring team reviewed inventory and located tagged equipment purchased with grant funds.
- The agency tracks computers and laptops from remote areas by the vendor.
- Most equipment is up to date.
- The district has a technology replacement plan.
- There is a need to expedite the process to set up network access in the classroom.
- Staff development related to technology is readily available.

#### CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Concern: Students at the Bridges of Lake Worth, Boca Housing Authority and the Bridges at Highland need additional computers.

*Recommendation:* The district needs to review the existing equipment inventory and purchase additional equipment for the above sites to meet the needs.

Concern: Equipment tracking by administration personnel at Delray Full Service Center and Lantana Middle School needs improvement.



*Recommendation:* Develop procedures for tracking locations of equipment at Delray Full Service Center and Lantana Middle School.

Concern: Atlantic High School has limited technology and teachers would like additional technology.

*Recommendation:* The district needs to review existing technology and purchase additional equipment for Atlantic High School as needed to meet the needs.

**E. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** encompasses all aspects of the physical environment where classes are held. Describing the learning environment may also attempt to capture the vision, philosophy, and character that is observed on the campus or in the classroom.

- Buildings are well maintained, even many buildings that are old (i.e., Boca Housing Authority and the Bridges of Lake Worth).
- The district vision for adult education program was evident in observations at the schools and satellite sites and in interviews with students, teachers and administrators.
- Students have access to tutors when they are needed.
- Classroom space is adequate.

#### **CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Concern: The classroom walls were basically barren (Computer Labs) at Delray Service Center.

*Recommendation:* The classroom walls need to contain appropriate rules and also other visual enhancements to facilitate learning for students.

**F. ACCESS AND EQUITY** refers to compliance with the requirements of federal non-discrimination laws as relating to recruitment, enrollment, participation, and completion of programs.

- Most notices covered all protected classes, although the genetic identity protection (GINA) was lacking in some instances.
- Accommodations were provided when needed.

#### **CONCERNS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Concern: Non-discrimination notices were not broadly posted.

*Recommendation:* Non-discrimination notices should be broadly posted.

Concern: Some printed materials need to have revised non-discrimination notices added as they are reprinted.

*Recommendation:* Revise printed materials to cover all protected classes, including genetic identity, as they are reprinted.

Concern: Some teachers and administrators who were interviewed were not aware of whom to contact regarding reports of discrimination or sexual harassment.

*Recommendation:* The district needs to provide staff development training to teachers and administrators that include topics on discrimination and sexual harassment.

**G. RECORDS REVIEW** refers to a review of the records and documents that evidence compliance with federal and state rules and regulations. Samples of financial and programmatic records are reviewed.

- Financial and board policies and procedures
- Completed adult education grants and budget pages
- Final disbursement reports
- Student records
- Program brochures
- Non-discrimination statements and policies
- Personnel activity reports and certifications
- Travel
- Inventory
- Websites
- National reporting system report
- Registration form (in Spanish, Creole and English)
- Recruitment policy
- Equipment management
- Instructional data
- Virtual student handbook
- Student oral interview form

**H. FINANCIAL** refers to aspects of the federal fiscal requirements that providers must meet when expending federal funds, including financial management, procurement, inventory management, and allowable costs.

- Procedures and policies are appropriate.
- Travel documentation was comprehensive and well documented.
- Approval processes are in place and were documented for grant purchases.
- Equipment purchases were tracked from purchase request through tagging and inventory.
- Program staff in the adult education program meet as a team on a monthly basis regarding grant and contract deliverables. Discussions are held regarding adequacy of the budget relative to ongoing operational needs.

**I. COLLABORATION** refers to the collaborative agreements, partnerships, or memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that are in place to benefit an agency's programs and students.

- The district collaborates with Bridges Inc. in three locations.
- The Palm Beach Literacy Coalition offers tutors for students in the adult education program.
- Palm Beach County Action will provide students with a fee waiver for GED®.
- Mandel Library provides the location, classroom space, testing and tuition for students.
- The district and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office established the procedures for providing educational services to inmates who are eligible to enroll in the GED® program.

**J. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE** – The team meets with groups of students; their perspective is presented as a portion of this report.

- Students represented diverse cultures and ages.
- Students were complimentary of teachers, counselors, and administration.
- Students like the individual attention they receive from instructors.
- Students are happy about receiving free childcare at the Bridges of Lake Worth.

## **VIII. REQUIRED RESOLUTION ACTIVITIES**

Resolution Plan – The district is required to complete an action plan to address the concerns noted in focus areas B, C, D, E, and F as documented in Section VII above.

## **IX. REMARKS or POSITIVE PRACTICES**

The following are additional comments made by the quality assurance and compliance team regarding the monitoring visit:

The district is commended on having a purchasing policy that assures strong fiscal accountability for grant funds. This policy states that all purchases will be completed by March 31 of each fiscal year and, furthermore, that all items must be received no later than June 30 of the same fiscal year in order to be paid using grant funds. Such a policy reflects strong fiscal accountability.

## **X. SUMMARY**

Once the field work, including receipt of requested information is completed, a draft report is forwarded to the provider for review. Comments are accepted and considered. The final report is completed and forwarded to the agency head with a copy to the appropriate parties. Finally, the division issues a closure notice to the agency head and designated contact person. This notice indicates all outstanding items have been completed.

We want to extend our appreciation to all participants in the Palm Beach County School District onsite monitoring visit. Special thanks is offered to Mary Barrett for her participation and leadership in this process.

## APPENDIX A

### Palm Beach County School District Adult Education Risk Matrix

Risk Factor	Criteria Scale	Value	Risk Factor Weight	Total Points
Total amount of agency funding from grants 2011-12	\$ 2,000,001+	8	x 6	48
	700,001 – 2,000,000	6		
	300,001 - 700,000	5		
	< 300,000	4		
Number of grants per agency 2011-12	Number of grants (2)	x 2	x 6	24
Number of grants with <b>10%</b> or more of unexpended funds 2011-12	Number of grants (2)	x 5 =	x 4	0
Audit findings relevant to internal control weaknesses during three (3) previous fiscal years for targeted agency.	16 + findings	10	x 10	100
	11-15 findings	8		
	5-10 findings	6		
	1-4 findings	4		
Change in director within the last two (2) fiscal years.	Yes = 1	x 10	x 4	0
	No = 0			
TOTAL Level of Risk Score				172

## APPENDIX B

### Palm Beach County School District Adult Education Resolution Plan

Action Plan Concerns	Strategies	Person Responsible	Projected Date of Completion
1. Students at the Delray Full Service Center mentioned that they did not understand the purpose of the assessment test prior to taking the test.	Create video for the registration process which explains the purpose of the assessment. Video will be posted online and at the testing lab.	Jane Kim	4/1/2014 Ongoing
2. Textbooks at Boca Housing Authority are not current.	In alignment with the Review Team's recommendation, the Assistant Principal and staff will be given the opportunity to purchase textbooks and instructional resources, utilizing Adult General Education funds.	Lydia Carreiro Dr. Jane Bravo	4/1/2014 Ongoing
3. Students at the Bridges of Lake Worth, Boca Housing Authority and the Bridges at Highland need additional computers.	The assistant principal and instructional specialist will evaluate the need to purchase equipment at these sites. They will create an action plan to identify the equipment to be upgraded/replaced and work with the department of adult education to meet the needs.	MaryLisa Stimmler Dr. Wanza Sermons-Lee Dr. Jane Bravo Lisa Anderson	6/30/2014

4. Equipment tracking by administration personnel at Delray Full Service Center and Lantana Middle School needs improvement.	Equipment spreadsheet will be updated on a weekly basis and will be stored in SharePoint for the Delray site. Lantana Middle School will create an internal process.	Yolanda Campbell Christine Osin	4/1/2014
5. Atlantic High School has limited technology and teachers would like additional technology.	The assistant principal and department staff will evaluate the need to purchase equipment at Atlantic High School. They will create an action plan to identify the equipment to be upgraded/replaced and work with the department of adult education to meet the needs.	Mary Powers Patricia Grunwald Art Heyman Jane Kim	6/30/2014
6. The classroom walls were basically barren (computer labs) at Delray Service Center.	Research relevant and age appropriate posters. Collaborate with teachers to determine poster themes. Purchase and/or design posters.	Lisa Anderson	4/1/2014
7. Non-discrimination notices were not broadly posted.	Based on this recommendation, posters have been created and posted in prominent locations within the sites. The department has randomly reviewed adult education programs for the presence of the mandated notice in areas, as required. In addition, staff will check twice a year to ensure posters are visible in their designated locations.	Mary Barrett Jane Kim Athena Yannitsas Christopher Binnix	6/30/2014 Ongoing

8. Some printed materials need to have revised non-discrimination notices added as they are reprinted.	Adult education publications have been updated. Department staff will ensure that all future publications include non-discrimination notices covering all protected classes. Create procedure to ensure all printed materials contain mandated information.	District Equity Coordinator Athena Yannitsas	6/30/2014
9. Some teachers and administrators who were interviewed were not aware of whom to contact regarding technical assistance needed and/or provided reports of discrimination or sexual harassment.	Work with district personnel to ensure staff development is provided for adult education administrators, faculty and staff.	Mary Barrett	6/30/2014 Ongoing
<p>Plan submitted by: Mary <u>Barrett, manager of Workforce and Adult Education</u> Date: <u>1/15/14</u></p> <p><b>Plan accepted by:</b> <u>Ellen McCarron, director, Quality Assurance and Compliance</u> Date: <u>1/13/14</u></p>			
<b>Status of Resolution Plan</b> (to be completed by DOE staff)			
Date	Status of Plan Completion		