3.8 Description of Continuous Program Improvement for Local Programs – Monitoring, Technical Assistance and Staff Development

Effective Date: July 1, 2007; titles updated July 1, 2008; policy and procedures rewritten September 15, 2012.

Revises Previous Effective Date: N/A

I. Policy:
Local eligible programs are accountable to the Office of Adult Education (OAE) to meet the standards of quality for administration and instruction as outlined by OAE. In addition, the performance outcomes of each local program will meet or exceed the established performance level for each core measure each fiscal year to ensure the highest quality service to adult learners who participate in programs in Georgia.

Program monitoring includes self-assessments, formal on-site program reviews, desk monitoring, monitoring visits, and fiscal audits.

II. Applicability:
This applies to all Adult Education offices and employees associated with the Technical College System of Georgia.

III. Related Authority:
P.L. 105-220 Section 212

IV. Definitions: N/A

V. Attachments: (Use the back button on your browser to return to this section after viewing an attachment).
VI. Procedure:

Performance Accountability
Performance Accountability assesses the effectiveness of grantees in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities. The performance outcome measures shall consist of the following core indicators:

1. Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading, writing, and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills.
2. Placement in, retention in, or completion of, postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement.
3. Receipt of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

Setting of Targets
Each fiscal year Georgia negotiates proposed target percentages for each of the core indicators of performance with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE). Each local eligible program is responsible for meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance targets. Each program shall analyze progress towards meeting the targets on an ongoing basis. Each program must utilize the approved standardized assessments which provide the framework needed to measure program effectiveness.

Data Collection and Analysis
Local programs are required to collect data on the program’s performance and are required to analyze it to determine progress towards meeting the targets and areas of improvement. Analysis should include a review of academic, employment, secondary credential, and postsecondary measures. Local programs must assure that National Reporting System of Adult Education data quality standards are met.

Mid-Year Performance Comparison Report
At the mid-point of the fiscal year, OAE produces a data report that compares each program’s outcomes to the negotiated performance targets and to the prior year’s performance. Deficient areas must be addressed through an action plan.

Monitoring
OAE engages in the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, improvement in, and in the effectiveness of achieving continuous program improvement of adult education and literacy activities. Local programs are evaluated throughout the program year using a comprehensive monitoring system.
**Self-Assessment**
Each year local program administrators complete a self-assessment of program functions and performance. They rate their program against standards of performance in a variety of categories. Self-assessment data is analyzed for commonalities across regions and the state. Deficiencies are remedied through technical assistance and/or staff development. The Self-Assessment corresponds to the areas that are reviewed by the On-Site Program Review.

**On-site Program Review**
OAE has established a formal On-site Program Review process with assistance from the University of Georgia, Athens (UGA). The program review is conducted by a team of adult education peers, OAE staff members, and a facilitator from UGA. The review takes place over several days and consists of a fiscal review; interviews with program staff, students, and stakeholders; program records review; instructional observations, and an examination of administrative records.

**Desk Monitoring**
Desk Monitoring is conducted monthly, at a minimum, by OAE staff members. OAE’s statewide database, the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS), is the primary tool used to examine individual student, teacher, site, and program data. The system is able to produce a series of reports that allow OAE staff to examine demographic, assessment, and academic information. Reviews occur to determine grant compliance and areas of excellence or unevenness.

**Monitoring Visits**
OAE staff members, primarily the Grant Program Support Coordinators, conduct on-site monitoring visits at least quarterly. Visits can focus on program administration, instructional quality, program records, or financial checks. Findings are shared with the program administrator, who is responsible for correcting any issues.

**Fiscal Audits**
The OAE fiscal manager monitors local programs by reviewing budgets, approving funds requisitions, conducting desk audits and formal on-site audits of fiscal procedures and records.

**Corrective Action Plans**
Implementation of the programs as outlined in the RFA contract must be fully executed and if not, the program is subject to a corrective action plan and/or loss of funds.

**Program Improvement Plans**
Local programs who fail to meet or exceed negotiated performance targets are subject to a program improvement plan with clearly defined goals and actions.
**Technical Assistance**
Georgia has been divided into four distinct geographic regions with a Grant Program Support Coordinator (GPS) assigned to each. The GPSCs serve as subject matter experts providing day-to-day technical assistance and assessment of needs to meet established goals. GPSC activities includes, but are not limited to, programmatic observations, grant compliance checks, data analysis, and recommendations for improvement. The GPSCs work in partnership with peer team members to implement training and other solutions to meet identified needs.

**Staff Development**
One approach to correcting programmatic and performance issues is to provide staff development to the local program. Some examples of staff development include training on the National Reporting System, assessment tools, GALIS, and record-keeping.

**VII. Records Retention:**
Local eligible programs will adhere to the Record Retention Chart which is available in the attachment section of Policy 2.3.