



## Central Office

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### 2016-2017 ABE Narrative – Minnesota Department of Corrections

#### Section Six: Program Partnerships and Collaboration

- 6.1 Explain the extent and nature of staff and program collaboration with other applicable organizations, such as the local K-12 system, WorkForce Centers, Workforce Development Board (WDB), MFIP employment counselors, post-secondary education/training institutions, local businesses, labor associations/organizations, industry and employment-training agencies or family education providers (excluding local and county corrections). This should also include participation of staff on Literacy Action Network committees, local boards or councils, or other statewide committees.**

Due to the nature of our unique “corrections” consortium, our staff and program collaboration with other applicable organizations differs a bit from most ABE consortia. These differences mostly have to do with the fact that we are not true members of any region or community in terms of our student population. For example, while offender students at our Faribault facility do, technically, live in Faribault, they are not able to work directly with county organizations while incarcerated, and when they get released from prison, the vast majority will not transition into the Faribault community. So, we have less involvement with K-12 systems, Workforce Centers, etc., but more involvement in corrections-related partners and internal DOC departments.

The MN DOC’s ABE executive team consists of the ABE Manager/Director of Adult Education, and the facility/site managers (education directors). The team, along with the DOC Director of Education and other managers who are housed at our agency Central Office, meets monthly to discuss program needs and issues. Periodically, representatives from the DOC’s Reentry, Information Technology, Case Management, wardens and commissioners attend these monthly planning meetings, and issues involving employment and other transitions topics, technology, facility operations, and big picture agency initiatives and the role Education can play, are discussed. As a result of this



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collaboration with other DOC departments, valuable resources are identified and used to support our education programming.

In addition, most of our ABE staff are members of the Correctional Education Association (CEA), the national organization that works directly to support the professional development of correctional educators. The CEA holds state, regional and national meetings, during which presentations and meetings regarding “best practices” are held. MN DOC staff make up the leadership of our state’s chapter of CEA and collaborates regularly with leadership from other states, region and the national office on best practices in correctional education, conference planning, etc.

As noted, due to our unique circumstances (incarcerated and not active in the general workforce), our program’s relationship with workforce centers is indirect. Our facilities do have “Transition Centers” where students are able to access current job postings, work on resumes and receive assistance with other issues related to their eventual transition back into the community.

The MN DOC’s Reentry Unit coordinates transitions fairs and events, reentry classes, community/government agency partnerships, and the processes for offenders to transition successfully from their prison sentence obligation to supervised release into their communities for successful reentry. In partnership, our consortium ABE site education staff work with eligible ABE offender students in providing effective contextualized instruction, integrating post-secondary and career readiness, including “soft skills” through ACES integration, to help prepare our students for successful transition into society upon release.

In our future plans and issues, we note that it is our intention to do presentations over the next three years, potentially at Workforce Development Board (WDB) and/or Workforce Center meetings, to share the education and job readiness instruction our students are provided. There are 10 Workforce Service Area Providers within the regions where MN correctional facilities are located. As noted, offenders who are released



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typically do not reside in the community where they were incarcerated but our former students do take up residence in communities throughout Minnesota. By sharing more information about our education program and transitions work, WDBs members will be better informed, and hopefully open to the message we work to convey to the community at large of the great potential our population represents in terms of being positive and contributing members of Minnesota's workforce.

Again, due to the nature of our organization, there is limited collaboration with K-12. In its role as adult male intake center and special education headquarters, our Saint Cloud facility works with numerous K-12 districts to access education records of incoming offenders. Saint Cloud offers a high school diploma program for adults and staff work with student's previous schools to establish the amount of credits needed to graduate. Typically, DOC students earn their diploma through Walter Maginnis High School, which is located inside our Red Wing juvenile correctional facility. Four facilities – Faribault, Saint Cloud, Shakopee and Stillwater – are currently pilot sites for the new MN State Adult Diploma (competency based) program and has had more than 40 graduates since its inception.

The DDOC currently has two staff participating on LAN committees and an additional staff whose application is submitted. As committee positions open, all education staff are encouraged to apply. Current representation:

- Professional Engagement Committee – Theresa Luther-Dolan, Chair
- Professional Development Committee – Jonathon Weiss
- Summer Institute Committee (application submitted) – Randall Bergman

**6.2 Describe the resources, other than state and federal aid, that you use to supplement ABE programming (excluding local and county corrections). This should include coordination with external partners to provide support services to meet students' needs, such as transportation, convenient class locations and childcare.**



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As noted above, our agency's Reentry unit supplements ABE programming by providing ABE and former ABE students with valuable information and resources as they are within six months of release. In addition, our agency provides the DOC Education unit with "General Fund" money that is used to cover costs associated with non-ABE education programming, but also supports ABE to a degree, as most of our education directors/site managers are paid through General Fund budgets. In recent years, the DOC's internal work/business entity, called MINNCOR, directs funds (approximately \$200,000) that is used partially to support ABE programming.

Also, as noted, we get support from MNIT staff in the form of keeping our staff and offender network and computers operating. We pay for materials but for the most part, the labor costs are assumed by the agency. Our ABE students benefit from participating in contracted enrichment and life skills classes such as the Minnesota Prison Writer's Workshop (MPWW, sponsored by Hamline University) and Parenting/Family skills classes (multiple partners including the Council on Crime and Justice, Saint Cloud School District, and Parenting with Purpose), although these are not considered to be ABE in terms of instructional hours

### **6.3 How do you collaborate with local and county correctional facilities?**

This is mostly not applicable to the DOC, as we are the state department of corrections. Local and county facilities are not part of the agency, and we are unable to have much official contact with them. At times, other consortia or, specifically, education staff from local or county jails will contact us for consultation services on curriculum or GED testing processes and we are able and very willing to assist.



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**Describe or include the instructional content and schedule(s) if ABE programming is occurring in local and county correctional facilities (can refer to course descriptions in Section 4 Document N).**

Not applicable.

**Describe the type of support received from the correctional institution, including financial.**

Not applicable.

### **6.4 Describe your consortium's role in developing and implementing your regional Transitions 3.0 plan.**

Our "Transitions to Post-Secondary and Career" (TPSC) Coordinator has primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the regional Transitions 3.0 plan. Note that the DOC, by itself, makes up one of the state's ABE transitions regions.

At the monthly DOC Education management/supervisor meetings, the TPSC Coordinator provides updates of the regional Transitions 3.0 activities as a standard agenda item. The Coordinator is responsible for the implementation of ACES and professional development related to transitions education, both of which are included in the goals of our DOC Master Academic Plan. ***See Attachment 3B.2: Map Goals, which includes the following: Promote Transitions from Prison to Community Philosophy through Targeted Interventions.*** Embedding ACES into all levels of ABE programming is one of the four Objectives attached to this goal. The TPSC Coordinator also represents the DOC at MDE/ABE quarterly regional transitions coordinator meetings.

Components of the Transitions 3.0 plan include college and career readiness skills, student career pathways, career advising, digital literacy and preparation for a National Career Readiness credential. The activities of the plan are based on consortium needs determined during discussions at the monthly meetings mentioned above, in consideration of state mandates and WIOA initiatives, and it addresses the Minnesota Correctional Education Center (MCEC) mission and vision: To provide opportunities that



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advance academic achievement and successful reentry. The vision of MCEC is students will be recognized as valuable contributors to Minnesota's developing workforce. MCEC values student success, collaborates and leverages partner resources and uses data-driven practices in decision making such as evidence-based practices.

**Documents** – Provide the following:

- P Most recent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local Workforce Center**
- Q Attach a list of your local Workforce Development Board (WDB) members**
- R Current year regional aid plan for Transitions 3.0**