

2.1 Describe the governance and decision-making processes in place between the consortium fiscal agent and its members.

Indicate the fiscal agent and all additional members of the consortium.

The fiscal agent for Lakes Area Adult Education (LAAE) is Detroit Lakes Public School District ISD 22.

Additional members of the consortium are:

- Ada-Borup-West ISD 2910
- Frazee-Vergas ISD 23
- Lake Park Audubon ISD 2889
- New York Mills ISD 553
- Norman County East ISD 2215
- Pelican Rapids ISD 548
- Perham-Dent ISD 549
- Rothsay ISD 850
- Ulen-Hitterdal ISD # 914

LAAE also has collaborative partnerships with the following organizations to provide on-site services:

- Becker County Jail - Detroit Lakes, MN
- Brunswick New York Mills Operations (Lund Boat Company)
- KLN Foods - Perham, MN
- Waukon Dairy - Gary, MN

Which members are ABE providers? (ABE providers are members, including the fiscal agent, that receive funding to run ABE programming.

Detroit Lakes Public Schools serves as the fiscal agent, employer, and ABE provider, receiving funding to deliver ABE programming for the LAAE consortium.

Describe consortium meetings, including: frequency, typical agenda items, and invited/required participants with expectations for their attendance.

Lakes Area Adult Education classes are held at twelve locations throughout the consortium, covering over a 100-mile radius. Staff live in different cities or towns throughout the consortium. In addition, one teacher works as a full-time elementary school teacher and teaches ABE in the evening, one teacher works part-time for LAAE and is a substitute teacher, and one teacher works for two ABE consortia. This combination of commute time and work schedules makes it difficult for everyone to meet in person. Therefore, the majority of our all-staff meetings are held virtually.

Consortium staff meet every four to six weeks either in person or virtually. Typical agenda items include updates on recent graduates and successes, post-test rates, SSN collection, contact hour calculations, goals and program updates,

information about professional development, policies, procedures, and any other items that may arise.

How and when is the annual consortium agreement developed and signed by the consortium and its members?

The Lakes Area Adult Education Annual Consortium Agreements are reviewed and signed annually.

2.2 Describe the program quality and accountability plans, and procedures for consortium fiscal agents and all members.

How does the fiscal agent ensure that ABE providers in the consortium spend funding appropriately and exclusively for the purposes of running adult education services, and how does the fiscal agent ensure that caps on spending for administration are not exceeded?

ISD 22 Detroit Lakes Public Schools is the fiscal agent, and Lakes Area Adult Education is the sole ABE provider. Each spring, the ABE Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor creates a preliminary budget in consultation with the Community Education Director and the Finance Department. This budget is then reviewed and revised in the fall and continually monitored to ensure funding is spent appropriately and exclusively for ABE services, and that caps on spending for administration are not exceeded. All revenue and expenses are run through the ISD 22 Finance Department in accordance with the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards, which are used by school districts for automated state reporting purposes.

The ISD 22 Finance Department and the ABE Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor complete the Adult Basic Education Annual Final Fiscal Completion Report each December, along with all other required reporting throughout the year, and have always been in compliance.

Lakes Area Adult Education has successfully completed its federal budget each year and will be drawing through the new Minnesota Education Grants System (MEGS). Previously, this was done through the State Educational Record View and Submission system (SERVS). The annual grant application is due June 2, 2025, this year, along with our ABE Narrative.

Detroit Lakes Public Schools is audited annually by an independent audit firm following the close of each fiscal year. Audit results are presented to the Board of Education each fall and are included in the Annual Financial Report. ABE financial records are included in the annual audit.

How does the fiscal agent ensure that ABE providers in the consortium adhere to all federal and state ABE law, policy, and guidance for operating ABE programming?

The Community Ed Director, with guidance from the ISD 22 Finance Director, works together with the ABE Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor to ensure that Lakes Area Adult Education is in compliance with local, state, and federal law, policy, and guidance. The ABE Program Coordinator/Lead Instructor, the Program Assistant, and the Community Ed Director regularly review state policies and monitor for compliance of the program. Expectations are shared with staff, and staff attend a variety of MDE trainings and webinars to stay updated on all federal and state ABE law and policy changes, including WebChat with MNABE.

How is program performance data (especially information about attendance, pre- and post-testing, measurable skills gain, level gains, and other outcome achievement) monitored at the fiscal agent, provider, site, teacher, and/or class levels?

The ABE Program Assistant generates weekly reports in SID to track student attendance, participation, post-testing, Measurable Skills Gains, and more, and compares the results with past years and NRS targets. Results are shared with and by every staff member and discussed in staff meetings. Goals related to contact hours, testing, and other SID data are also discussed and reviewed with all staff members and during staff meetings.

Teachers are trained to review student assessment histories in SID to track which learners are eligible for post-tests and are then responsible for administering the correct post-test. Teachers also monitor other relevant data within their own classes and use it to adapt instructional practices, content, and/or student outreach. Any needed programming or schedule changes are made in response to data and trends as well.

In addition, SID data is monitored daily by the program manager, who shares relevant information with staff and the Community Ed Director in weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly meetings. Regular required reporting, such as the Annual Grant Application and the Narrative, serves as further opportunities to take a deeper dive into SID data.

How and when is program performance data shared and communicated with staff and other partners?

See above. Program data is shared and discussed in every staff meeting, and meetings with the Community Ed Director, in emails as needed, and in numerous informal meetings throughout the year. The annual MN ABE Report Card is also shared with staff and the Community Ed Director. Redacted data has also been shared with community partners in order to facilitate data-driven programming decisions and with nonprofits when applying for any local grant funding.

2.3 Describe the process(es) used in the consortium to help students develop realistic goals and timelines for educational progress, secondary credential

attainment, enrolling in college, and/or gaining or improving employment. Refer to Document A as appropriate. Address the following:

How do these processes vary for different types of students, or for students enrolled in different types of programming?

Lakes Area Adult Education students identify their goals at the time of enrollment. ABE staff conduct an individual interview and assessment during the orientation period, and student needs and objectives are determined. Students are also connected to any community resources they may need at this time.

After completing their initial assessments, students and staff review their goals and talk about any additional steps that may be needed, such as increasing English skills, before enrolling in GED classes. The student's test scores are entered into SID, and their Personal Education Plan is placed in the student's file. A three-month check-in is scheduled for a review of the student's progress and a revision of their goals, if needed. The relevant test scores and goals are also reviewed by the instructor each time they re-test.



As students progress in their classes, they work with their teacher and with support staff to update and revise their goals. Students create short-term educational goals that are steps toward longer-term goals, such as enrolling in postsecondary classes. Short-term goals may include test scores or level gains, professional and soft skills like coming to class on time (ACES Transitions Integrated Framework), learning how to use a computer (Northstar Digital Literacy), or basic academic skills (College and Career Readiness).

2.4 Describe how the consortium adequately identifies, reports, and uses information about students that may fall within WIOA barriers to employment (public assistance, exhausting MFIP, disability, displaced homemakers, ex-offenders, foster care, homeless, learning disabled, low-income, migrant workers, and single parents) in the intake process.

How are the barriers to employment defined and/or explained to students during the intake process?

Student intakes are conducted by LAAE staff at all locations. Staff are expected to address all components of the intake form with the learner, including the WIOA barriers to employment. When a student identifies a barrier they are facing, an appropriate referral is made to a local workforce professional, MFIP provider, post-secondary educational institution, or community service provider who might best be able to assist the learner. It is incumbent upon the local instructor to refer the student to the local entity with the capacity to best address WIOA barriers.

During the intake process, LAAE staff may also use tools such as Bridge to Benefits to help identify students' eligibility for public assistance programs and guide referral decisions. This helps ensure that barriers to employment are not only discussed but proactively addressed through targeted support.

How is the consortium utilizing the information collected? (e.g., specialized referrals, additional services, instructional planning)

There are several supplemental service providers that can provide instructional support or advice in certain circumstances. For example, information gathered during intake may reveal that a student has a documented learning disability, in which case the instructor may reach out to the ABE supplemental service provider, Physical and Non-Apparent Disabilities Assistance (PANDA), for guidance and resources. In the past, PANDA has provided the consortium with assistive devices such as magnifying glasses, reading glasses, and colored overlays.

Lakes Area Adult Education (LAAE) also uses other creative ways to address barriers so that students can attain their academic goals and move on to employment or higher education. For example, if students in Detroit Lakes lack a driver's license or personal transportation, they may rely on public transit to attend class, which can be costly. To address this barrier and encourage student attendance, LAAE utilizes a portion of funds provided by a United Way grant to purchase tokens for the Becker County Transit. These tokens are then provided to students with this barrier so they can attend class. Each time the student comes to class, they are eligible to receive two tokens, one for transportation home and one to be able to return to class.

As a second example, the ABE instructor in Pelican Rapids has been instrumental in implementing the MN Drivers License for All (<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/license-and-id/dl-all>) program throughout the consortium. Additionally, all LAAE students are eligible to receive GED scholarships for every 12 hours of class time they attend in a calendar month through a United Way grant. This incentive encourages students facing financial barriers to complete their GED in a timely manner so they can go on to further training or employment.

Based on intake information, LAAE staff refer students to a wide array of local and regional partners. These include:

- **CareerForce Centers** (Detroit Lakes and other locations): MFIP, DWP, TANF, unemployment insurance, veteran services, and job search assistance
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind:** offered virtually or through partner referrals
- **M State Disability Services and Freedom Resource Center**
- **Mahube-Otwa:** housing assistance, parenting support, child care, energy assistance, Head Start, health services, and legal support
- **Becker County Human Services:** SNAP, cash assistance, medical assistance, and WIC
- **Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota**
- **M State Community and Technical College:** postsecondary training, certifications, and career pathways

These partnerships allow instructors to respond meaningfully to student-identified barriers and ensure access to employment-related supports. Not all services are available in every location, but referrals are made based on geography and student needs.