A project of ProLiteracy, the American Library Association Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, and the Onondaga County Public Library
Adult Literacy through Libraries: an Action Agenda
2014

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According to the recently released Program for the International Assessment for Adult Competencies (PIAAC), one in six American adults struggles with basic English literacy. This amounts to a staggering 36 million people between the ages of 16 and 65 who struggle on a daily basis to perform basic tasks such as completing a job application, understanding a medication label, or reading a simple story to their children. To equitably serve adults with low literacy skills, public libraries provide a range of services including special high interest/low reading level collections, resources to support test taking and educational advancement, access to technology, and private spaces for one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction. Adults are coming to the library in growing numbers to use the public computers, access print and digital resources, search and apply for a job, and improve their education. Librarians are being asked to stretch their resources, and they are responding with diligence, determination, and remarkable creativity.

In 2013, with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, ProLiteracy, the American Library Association Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (ALA OLOS), and Onondaga County Public Library (OCPL, Syracuse, New York) convened a Library Literacy Community of Practice. The group sought to reinvigorate a national discussion on the intersection of library and adult literacy services, to shine a light on the exceptional efforts that are underway in communities nationwide, and to challenge libraries that are not currently offering services to adult learners to consider steps they can take to become part of the solution.

Members of the Library and Literacy Community of Practice, consisting of thought and action leaders from across the fields, came together for a series of monthly web-based conversations and a two-day face-to-face meeting in September 2013. Building on previous efforts such as the Literacy in Libraries Across America (LILAA) Initiative and learning from ongoing initiatives such as the American Dream Starts @ Your Library, the project developed a National Library Literacy Action Agenda.

The Action Agenda is a series of recommendations intended to spur conversation, ideas, and action to integrate the public library with other services available to help adult learners improve their literacy and basic skills.
ACTION AGENDA FORMAT

The Action Agenda is organized into priority areas identified by the Community of Practice:

- Collection Development
- Technology and Digital Literacy
- Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships
- Professional Development and Graduate Education
- Community Planning and Program Evaluation
- Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
- Sustainability

Each priority area section lists outcomes supported by concrete action recommendations. The supporting resources section lists additional resources for each area.
Whose responsibility is it to help adults strengthen their reading skills?

To address the serious problem that the United States has with the lack of adult literacy and basic skills, every major public and private sector agency and organization must play a role. However, libraries, whose main mission is built on the bedrock of literacy, have an especially important role to play. The public library’s greatest human resource—and this project’s intended audience—is the skilled librarians and library staff at the frontlines of public service. They have the training, knowledge, community connections, and will to help adults with low literacy pursue their educational, work, and life goals. In addition to recommendations for library staff and administrators, this document contains recommendations tailored toward adult educators, adult learners, academic institutions that prepare library and information professionals, state libraries, and library volunteers including board and advisory committee members.

Using the Action Agenda

The practices and actions recommended in this document should help craft and implement solutions for a unique community. Note that the ability to implement some of the recommendations may depend on access to additional funding and support. Please interpret and apply the recommendations based on needs and availability of resources.

The recommendations range from simple adaptations of existing programs to high-effort initiatives such as convening a community literacy coalition. We recognize that every recommendation will not fit every library or community situation. We also recognize that in addition to forward-thinking ideas, many of the suggestions reflected here are already in action in libraries across the nation. Those who are involved in current library literacy initiatives are encouraged to connect with us to share success stories and challenges from which others may learn. Our hope is that all who read this work will pause to consider the public library’s role in the effort to create a more literate adult population, and that those who are moved to do so will translate into action the recommendations that are relevant to their community.

Key Terms and Definitions

We need to define three key terms as they are used in this document:

**Adult Learners**—individuals 16 years and older enrolled in an adult instruction program to gain English language, reading, writing, numeracy, digital, or basic life skills, including high school equivalency diplomas and preparation for postsecondary education; and those who are independent learners. They are sometimes also called adult new readers.

**Adult Instruction Programs**—organizations that provide educational services and programs aimed at helping adults to learn English, be literate, be work-ready, and gain a high school equivalency certificate or diploma. Their services may include: literacy instruction, adult basic education, high school equivalency test preparation, job skills training, English for Speakers of Other Languages, citizenship, digital literacy training and more.

**Adult Educators**—career teachers and tutors as well as volunteers who teach adults age 16 and older.

Please see Appendix 2 for a full glossary of terms.
Sharing the Action Agenda

The Action Agenda will be widely distributed. Currently it is available only in PDF format. We encourage you to share it, discuss it, and send your comments, questions, and specific examples to the project staff. Next steps include building a more robust web presence for the Action Agenda, providing the flexibility to share more supporting resources and highlight cases of exemplary library literacy work.

So What’s Next?

Dissemination of the Library Literacy Action Agenda is just the first step.

**WE INVITE YOU TO STAY ENGAGED WITH OUR PROJECT TEAM AS WE MOVE FORWARD BY:**

- Joining the ALL Community of Practice to be notified about ALL webinars, presentations, and resources.
- Looking for and attend ALL presentations at upcoming face-to-face and virtual conferences at the regional and national level.
- Connecting with the project team to ask questions, share feedback, or tell us about your own library literacy story.

**WE CHALLENGE YOU:**

- To use one or more of the recommendations set forth in this document to enhance an existing program or service or to implement a new initiative.
- To share your ideas, case studies, and results with our project team so that we can promote your program to our nationwide audience.
- To make connections. Seek out support from the multitude of library and literacy professionals who are already doing a phenomenal job serving adult learners, or if you are in a position to share what you know with another practitioner or program that may benefit, speak up!
The recently released report from the Organisation for Economic and Community Development (OECD), called the Program for the International Assessment for Adult Competencies (PIAAC), shows that 1 in 6 American adults—an estimated 36 million individuals—struggles with basic English literacy. While difficulty with reading, writing, or other basic skills may not be outwardly apparent, we know there are adults who daily face these challenges in every community. Public libraries of all sizes are called to serve these individuals, and collection development is an essential element of this service. Building and promoting a collection of print and digital materials that meets the readability needs, goals, and interests of adults with limited literacy helps ensure that as the library attracts and engages these customers, it will be equipped to serve them.

**OUTCOME 1.1** Library collections include print and digital materials that meet the readability needs, goals, and interests of adult learners and the instructional resource needs of adult educators.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Create a collection development policy that includes procurement of print and/or digital materials for adult learners, as well as instructional resources useable by adult educators.

- Allocate an appropriate portion of the collection development budget to purchasing print and digital materials suitable for adult learners and adult educators.

- Consider the costs and benefits of investing in instructional materials, such as student workbooks, in addition to general easy reading materials.

- Train collection development and acquisition staff to effectively identify and source print and digital materials suitable for adult learners and adult educators.

- Encourage collection development and acquisition staff to consult with local adult educators and adult learners for assistance with selection of materials that are suitable for their needs.

- Encourage collection development and acquisition staff to seek purchasing relationships with vendors that supply materials from various publishers that produce resources specifically for adult learners and adult educators.
OUTCOME 1.2 Libraries promote print and digital materials within the collection that address the readability needs, goals, and interests of adult learners and the instructional resource needs of adult educators.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide ready reference lists of available print and digital materials for adult learners and adult educators.

- Periodically feature materials for adult learners and/or instructional materials for adult educators in physical displays within the library, on the library website, and in other promotional efforts.

- Clearly and accurately catalog materials for adult learners and adult educators so that they can be easily located and accessed by customers with or without the assistance of a public services librarian.

- Consider methods to help customers identify adult learner materials in a discreet manner, such as using a universal symbol. Mark materials consistently within and across library systems so that the symbol’s meaning becomes widely known and understood.

OUTCOME 1.3 Libraries periodically evaluate their collections of print and digital materials to ensure that their collections effectively address the readability needs, goals, and interests of adult learners.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review circulation and use statistics for print and digital materials purchased for adult learners.

- Survey target customers (adult learners and adult educators) periodically to assess how well the collection meets the readability needs and interests of the adult learner population.

- Use the data collected to make good purchasing, marketing, and collection development decisions that reflect the needs of adult learners in their communities.
across the nation, public libraries provide community members with equitable access to technology and the training needed to use it effectively. Access to free broadband Internet, including Wi-Fi, public computer workstations and other hardware such as tablets and e-readers, and content including e-books, online reference, and free access to subscription-based online resources and services is increasingly common.

The recommendations below build on the excellent progress public libraries have made over the past decade to meet emerging customer technology needs to help libraries tailor current efforts to better serve adults with limited traditional literacy or English language skills and the educators who work with this population. This population includes beginning technology users and those who regularly use computers and/or mobile digital devices in their daily lives, but who may benefit from additional training or access to relevant resources, content, and applications.

**OUTCOME 2.1** Libraries encourage adult learners to use public computers and other digital technology (e.g., tablets) in the library to meet their needs.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Allow flexible time limits for adult learners who need additional time to use public computers and other digital technology effectively.

- Permit student/tutor pairs to use public computers and other technology in the library for instructional purposes.

- Provide ready reference lists of free online resources for adult learners.

- Subscribe to free and/or fee-based digital resources that are useful to adult learners, and promote the availability of these resources. (Examples include the Learner Web and USA Learns.) See resources section for web addresses.
OUTCOME 2.2  Librarians provide training, support, and encouragement to help adults with literacy limitations use digital technology in the library.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Establish volunteer computer coach programs and leverage partners like community-based organizations to provide access to computer labs and/or staff.

- Provide digital literacy instruction; also provide modified instruction for adult learners using Universal Design for Learning principles.

- Adapt computer workstations to meet the needs of adult learners. For example: download screen readers and supply headphones and/or headsets with microphones, locate one or more stations in an area where an adult can practice speaking English as part of a learning program, etc.

- Be prepared to respond to adult learners’ emerging technology needs, such as the need to access computers and learn digital literacy and typing skills required by the new computer-based high school equivalency tests.

OUTCOME 2.3  Libraries and adult instructional programs work together to take full advantage of adult learners’ access to Internet-equipped mobile devices.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Purchase and promote e-books for adult learners.

- Work with adult instruction programs to help adult learners access instructional content using their own devices or devices borrowed from the library.

- Provide ready reference lists of mobile applications for literacy instruction and practice that adult learners and adult educators may find useful, as well as guidance for downloading and using these applications.

- Provide plain language instructions and training to help adult learners and adult instruction providers borrow digital materials such as e-books or fee-based applications using their own devices or devices borrowed from the library.
OUTCOME 2.4 Libraries work with partner agencies in their communities to provide technology training for people with limited literacy who are not likely to come to the library for this service.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Partner with community organizations such as anti-poverty groups, immigrant support or senior support agencies, housing agencies, and one-stop career centers to provide at-risk populations with digital literacy instruction and access to technology outside the library.

- Identify partners such as schools, community colleges, universities or community-based programs in areas of high need that will lend space, computers, or other technology resources for librarians to use when doing training outside the library.

- Look for ways to use existing outreach vehicles such as bookmobiles or tech vans to help adult learners build technology skills.

OUTCOME 2.5 Librarians help adult learners understand how to access the technology resources available to them in their community.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Provide assistance and information to help adults with limited literacy skills identify the purposes for which they want to use technology.

- Provide information about broadband access options and equipment subsidy programs such as EveryoneOn for which low income customers may be eligible. Librarians are able to identify customers who may benefit from these resources.

- Be prepared to inform adult learners about appropriate digital literacy instruction opportunities in the community (outside the library); and/or provide training for adult learners and other customers on technology topics such as how to purchase, use, and maintain tablets and smartphones and how to access broadband Internet in the library.

- Publicize the library's digital literacy services and training opportunities using web-based portals like the EveryoneOn database in addition to traditional community bulletin boards and event calendars.
The value of collaboration is widely acknowledged among resource managers and funders across all fields of public service. Collaboration allows partners to share ideas, use resources more efficiently, and create more impact. Many types of collaborations exist, but there are common characteristics underlying any successful partnership. These include open communication, relationship building, and clear negotiation of responsibilities. The following action recommendations aim to enable your library and its partner service organizations to leverage the advantages of partnership to improve services to adult learners.

**Outcomes**

**Outcome 3.1** Libraries and adult instruction programs work together to increase awareness of the range of possible library and adult education collaboration models.

**Action Recommendations**

- Regularly review case studies to better understand current and historical collaborations at the local and national levels. These range from one-time collaborative events to more robust, ongoing strategic partnerships such as shared staffing, space, or infrastructure.

- Share case studies about collaboration to help raise awareness of potential partnership models among other providers.

**Outcome 3.2** Libraries and adult instruction programs create or expand partnerships in their community by increasing numbers of partners and/or intensity of collaboration and coordination.

**Action Recommendations**

- Include service to all customers, including those with limited basic literacy, limited English speaking ability, and/or unique cultural needs, as an actionable priority area in the library's mission statements and strategic plans.

- Encourage representatives of local adult instruction programs to connect students to library resources, and invite these representatives to help library staff and administration better understand how to serve these customers. Encourage local adult instruction programs to officially reflect this commitment in their missions, strategic plans, and/or curricula.

- Publicly commit to partnerships with local adult instruction programs and use existing communications channels (social media, news releases, marketing and public relations tools) to promote these collaborations to customers, students, funders, administrators, and the community at large.

- Work with adult instruction programs to implement joint awareness raising projects and influence policy efforts to increase impact and awareness (for example, by crafting common language to use for local, state, and federal efforts to raise awareness and influence policy).
OUTCOME 3.3 Libraries and adult instruction programs recognize the benefits of collaborating with each other.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Seek collaborations with adult instruction programs without waiting for a major community challenge, such as significant cuts in funding or a natural disaster like a major storm, to necessitate partnership.

- Evaluate how current services (such as reference, educational programming, and collection development) address the needs of adult learners.

- Work with adult instruction programs to assess how future collaboration can help improve services to customers and students.

- Work with adult instruction programs to explore funding opportunities afforded by collaboration, such as access to new funding streams. Take advantage of the preference of many foundations and corporate funders to support collaborative work.

OUTCOME 3.4 Libraries and adult instruction programs have established processes and strategies to facilitate and strengthen collaboration.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Ensure that every library staff member knows what services the library has to offer for adult learners and adult educators and is prepared to share this information with appropriate audiences.

- Provide a directory of staff members at the branch and the system level who are prepared to respond to needs expressed by adult educators as well as a simplified directory to help adult learners connect with library staff.

- Seek out staff or volunteers from adult instruction programs to serve as liaisons to the library at the branch and system level and/or encourage adult instruction programs to proactively designate staff or volunteers to serve as liaisons to the library.

- Make the library available as a place for adult instruction providers, community service providers, and other stakeholders to convene.

- Elect staff to serve on local adult instruction programs’ boards and advisory committees, and invite adult instruction practitioners to sit on the library’s board and advisory committees. Incorporate this collaboration into each organization’s bylaws.
OUTCOME 3.5 Libraries and adult instruction programs reach beyond initial or traditional partnerships and increase and/or maintain new/nontraditional partnerships within the community.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Work with adult instruction programs to network with other community agencies that do not normally provide literacy instruction but are likely to serve adults with literacy needs (such as fair housing organizations, emergency services personnel, healthcare providers, one-stop career centers, and agricultural extension programs).

- Work with adult instruction programs to demonstrate the integral role of literacy and basic education in the work of these service providers.

- Work with adult instruction programs to promote the message that no one has to work alone. Partnering across institutions is effective and can benefit all providers, such as hospitals as partners for health literacy, local fire departments for safety education, or banks for financial literacy.

- Raise awareness of the need for adult instruction services in the community and create connections to increase the potential for partnerships across various sectors such as business/industry and public schools.

- Use partnership opportunities to redefine the way libraries offer services (for example, by providing services at partner locations and/or establishing mobile services in areas where the need for adult education/literacy services is high).
As professionals and pre-professionals in the library field, we all share a particular appreciation for education. As graduate level librarianship and para-professional library programs provide us with the opportunity to develop an understanding of the practices, tools, and challenges of the field as students, professional development opportunities allow us to continue to grow in our careers and to familiarize ourselves with emerging challenges and innovations in our evolving service landscape.

These recommendations highlight the importance of incorporating adult basic education and literacy as a priority in the profession and in graduate school and paraprofessional pedagogy to prepare library staff to respond to the needs of the entire community. An understanding of literacy-related trends and concerns can not only help students and professionals determine their own role in the solution, it can also help us to amplify the relevance of the library as an institution in society where literacy and basic skills are essential to survival.

The supporting resources section contains helpful links to relevant professional organizations and free professional development resources that will be useful to current and future library staff. Appendix 3 includes additional recommendations directed toward library students, faculty, and academic institutions that prepare future library staff as well as accrediting bodies that govern the development of library curriculum.

**OUTCOME 4.1** Libraries value and develop staff with experience serving customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Create welcoming environments that reflect and embrace the unique cultures of the community.
- Require staff to participate in professional development related to serving these customers.
- Ensure that every public library branch within a system has at least one staff member with expertise and experience serving customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs.
- Ensure that every public library branch has at least one staff member who speaks a language in addition to English and who has experience working with customers who may not yet be proficient in English.
OUTCOME 4.2 Libraries seek assistance from adult instruction programs when designing/selecting professional development to help front-line librarians better serve customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Work with community-based adult instruction providers to offer professional development. (Examples: collection development, programming, and services for adult learners; plain language communications; marketing, promotions, and outreach to adult learners; building literacy collaborations; cultural competency and sensitivity training, tutor training, etc., conducted in person, online, or a blend of both).

- Seek assistance, guidance, and resources from state and national library associations, education and other service organizations when determining how to provide this professional development to their staff. (See examples in Appendix 2.)

- Arrange periodic workshops to help service staff develop and maintain the communication skills needed to work with English language learners in the community.

OUTCOME 4.3 Libraries encourage academic institutions that offer graduate MLS/MSLIS degree programs and paraprofessional certificate programs to better prepare graduates to serve customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Seek candidates who are prepared to serve customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs when recruiting graduates from library degree programs (MSLIS/MLS) and paraprofessional certificate programs.

- Seek opportunities to assist in the curriculum development process at academic institutions that prepare library professionals and paraprofessionals to ensure that services to special populations, including adult learners, are addressed within the academic program.

- Seek opportunities to host student field placements/internships that involve working with adult learners, under the guidance of a librarian with experience with this population and/or in collaboration with adult instruction providers.
Public libraries have a responsibility to shape collections, programs, services, and partnerships around actual customer needs. To do this effectively, the library must remain aware of what needs exist within the community it serves. Literacy is a holistic need that extends beyond the capacity and interest of the library to nearly every other sector: service agencies and instructional organizations want to help their clients and students increase their skills and decrease their reliance on support and programming; educational institutions want children to reap the benefits of growing up with literate caregivers; industry and corporations want an educated workforce and customer base; and healthcare providers want a population that better understands healthy living practices and how to navigate the medical system.

No single organization will be able to successfully assess and address the literacy need while operating alone. The public library is an ideal convener, bringing like-missioned service organizations, members of industry, educators, and local government representatives together to identify adult literacy needs within the community and to develop a collective and cohesive strategy to meet these needs. If the library is not well positioned to organize such an effort, it should ensure that representatives of the library are present at the table. By developing and maintaining consistent communication, all stakeholders will gain a better understanding of community needs, service gaps, and how each partner—including the library—fits into the solution. This knowledge will help the library define its role and make a deliberate plan—supported by committed resources—to help meet common adult literacy goals within the community.

**OUTCOME 5.1** Key library personnel and volunteers, including board members, help address adult literacy and education challenges within their community.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Invite community members with experience in the adult instruction field to present at staff or volunteer meetings or share information about the local need and impact on the community in other ways.

- Provide opportunities for library staff and volunteers to talk about the need and identify possibilities for library involvement.
**OUTCOME 5.2** Libraries have a method to remain current about adult instruction services that are already available in the community as well as existing gaps in availability of services.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Provide and/or promote the use of a system that allows community groups to share information about available programs and services.

- Seek representation on community coalitions that are working on adult instruction-related needs.

**OUTCOME 5.3** Libraries participate in a work group to identify the unmet adult literacy and education needs that exist in the community.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Work with the group to identify what local literacy/adult skill level data already exists.

- Based on a review of existing data, work with the group to identify other information that needs to be collected.

- Work with the group to select and implement the best strategy to collect the additional information based on available resources, staff time, and the characteristics of the community (examples: surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.).

**OUTCOME 5.4** Members of the work group use community needs assessment information to help them identify priority adult literacy and education areas that each organization is uniquely suited to address.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Work with partners to identify the changes needed in these priority areas.

- Each participating organization determines what services it is willing and able to provide to help bring about these changes. (Library involvements range from simple referrals to existing services to planning, implementing, and supporting comprehensive library-based instructional services for adult learners).

- Work with the group to develop a plan to address the needs within a defined time frame. The plan includes work that will be done by individual organizations as well as work that will be done collaboratively.

- Establish a process to allow members to regularly share what they have done with others in the group.
OUTCOME 5.5 Libraries have clear, explicit purposes for the work they choose to do in adult literacy.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Ensure that all librarians and library staff can clearly explain to stakeholders and the general public how their literacy work supports the mission of the library.
- Ensure that members of the library's board and key funders understand and support the reasons for the library's work in literacy.

OUTCOME 5.6 Libraries have documented and committed to a strategic plan for the adult instruction services they choose to provide.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Set measurable outcomes for the library's work in adult literacy. The outcomes should be appropriate for the type and level of adult instruction provided by the library and its partners.
- Develop outcomes that focus on the new information, skills, and experience that adult learners will acquire by participating in library literacy services.
- Evaluate programs and services not only by outputs such as the number of students served or the number of hours of service provided, but also by impact-oriented outcomes.
- As part of the program planning process, identify what measures will be used to judge if a program is making progress in meeting its outcomes.
- Use an existing system to collect the data needed to show progress toward outcomes. If one does not exist, establish one. Work with other providers to consider the use of a shared data system that could more fully demonstrate community impact and progress toward shared goals.

OUTCOME 5.7 Librarians regularly use program data as well as input from the participants and partner groups to improve, expand, or sustain their programs.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS
- Use data to improve services and the ability to meet outcomes.
- Include evaluation results in print and in web-based public information.
- Regularly promote literacy work to the community to gain recognition and support, which may help preserve funding in times of scarce resources.
**PRIORITY AREA 6: RAISING AWARENESS AND INFLUENCING POLICY**

Advocacy, understood in its broadest sense, includes a spectrum of activities that range from educating others on library and adult literacy issues to raising public awareness or asking legislators to take specific actions on funding or legislation. You may find that your library may only be able to participate in some of these recommendations; while other recommendations are better referred to a library affiliated group or association.

**OUTCOME 6.1** Local libraries work with adult literacy organizations to raise awareness of adult literacy and have a strong presence in the local community; libraries are seen as key adult literacy partners, advocates, and resources.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Collaborate with adult instruction providers to raise awareness about the importance of adult literacy to the well-being of the community. Highlight the library’s role as a lead partner in tackling adult literacy issues.

- Take advantage of opportunities such as International Literacy Day and National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week to raise awareness about adult literacy.

- Cultivate champions for adult literacy by inviting influencers to serve on the board, participate as keynote speakers at local library events, etc.

- Work with adult literacy organizations to ensure consistency of messaging when advocating for adult literacy to increase effectiveness of the effort. Adopt messages from state or national associations or work together to develop local messages.

- Work with adult literacy organizations to cultivate messengers, such as adult learners (sometimes called Literacy Ambassadors), friends of libraries, etc., who can communicate with policy makers and other key stakeholders.

- Regularly visit and communicate with local stakeholders and policy makers to make sure they are aware of the library’s services to adult learners. Ask messengers to join you as spokespeople on the library’s behalf.

- Partner with adult literacy advocates and service providers to sustain efforts in strengthening relationships and ensure continuity of activities.

- Join an existing public policy network pertinent to libraries and adult literacy. Where none exists, create a local network with other adult literacy partners in order to share information and advance mutual interests.

- Encourage governing and support entities (board, Friends of the Library, Library Foundations, etc.) to formally endorse, when possible, policy decisions that can positively impact adult literacy efforts.

- Promote the library as a place where the general public can learn about the state of literacy in the community as well as about available adult instruction resources.
OUTCOME 6.2  Libraries encourage state library associations (501c3’s) to establish or strengthen a formal advocacy system that effectively promotes and supports local and state library adult literacy efforts.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a formal system to coordinate local library and adult literacy efforts to raise awareness and influence policy.

- Encourage state libraries and state library associations to participate in traditional and non-traditional efforts such as social media campaigns, postcard campaigns, and use of billboards and public service announcements, for promotion and awareness of libraries and adult literacy.

- Encourage library associations to establish an ongoing plan to raise awareness and influence policy around adult literacy as it relates to the library and its overall mandate and strategic plan.

- Encourage state library associations to maintain a single-point-of-contact system throughout the state to keep local libraries and library-affiliated groups abreast of public policy and awareness issues pertinent to libraries and adult literacy.

OUTCOME 6.3  Libraries and library systems work to ensure that state library policies, and policies of other agencies receiving federal funds, are effectively influenced by local adult literacy needs and initiatives at the local level.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Invite local adult literacy organizations to contribute to the library's long-range plan to ensure inclusion of adult literacy activities.

- Collaborate with other adult literacy service providers to influence state and federal policy related to adult literacy and library literacy initiatives and programs.

- Look for opportunities such as town hall meetings and budget hearings to influence local, regional, and state level public and private initiatives, funding, and policy as they relate to potential library literacy efforts.
OUTCOME 6.4 Libraries ensure they are integrated into related state and federal policy issues such as immigration, welfare, job training, employment, health, and into pertinent issues at the local and state level.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**
- Develop a clear understanding of how adult literacy is vital to a local library agenda and community needs. Demonstrate this to the public whenever possible.
- Articulate how the library serves as a key resource on public policy issues related to adult literacy.
- Participate in deliberations and decision-making in relevant public policy arenas and work with other agencies and organizations to ensure the library has a voice at the table.

OUTCOME 6.5 Libraries work with state, regional, and national organizations to ensure a broader and more effective advocacy, and public relations effort on behalf of library literacy initiatives and literacy needs in general.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS**
- Work with state and national associations to develop and support national initiatives that promote library literacy involvement.
- Work with local, state, regional, and national organizations to establish coordinated messaging in support of library literacy efforts. Coordinated messaging should include key issues for libraries, such as digital literacy.
- Regularly review past advocacy and public relations efforts for possible replication.
PRIORITY AREA 7: SUSTAINABILITY

Libraries and adult instruction programs alike have been facing dwindling resources and are constantly being asked to do more with less. Funding cuts put programs, services, collection development, and even staff positions at risk. By planning ahead to institutionalize services to adult learners as a strategic imperative—at the branch, system, and even at the state level—libraries will be better poised to protect these services in times of scarcity.

OUTCOME 7.1 Libraries draw on a variety of sources to develop a solid funding base for their services to adult learners.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify community partners and leverage these partnerships to increase the impact of adult literacy funding within the community and to access new funding resources.

- Explore joint funding efforts and sources of funds with adult instruction providers such as collaborative grant writing and special events.

- Seek library-based funding resources such as Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds and existing library budgets to support literacy work.

- Collaborate with groups such as Friends of the Library and library foundations to generate support for adult literacy efforts.

- Collaborate with adult instruction programs to use limited resources more effectively, to reduce competition for funding for like-missioned programming, or to access funding that might not be available if sought independently.

- Seek funding or in-kind support for literacy programs from national service organizations/agencies such as the Corporation for National Service, Retired Senior Volunteers Program/RSVP, Americorps, and City Year Volunteers.
OUTCOME 7.2 Libraries/library systems encourage state libraries and other state agencies to support local literacy initiatives through funding and/or policy development.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Encourage state libraries to include adult literacy in their missions and/or strategic plans in order to access funding that can be used to support or supplement adult literacy efforts of local libraries.

- Help other state agencies understand how increasing adult literacy would have a positive impact on the work they do. Encourage these agencies to support library literacy programs with funding or in-kind support.

- Ensure that state and federal pass-through funds such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) are used to help support adult literacy efforts and library programs.

OUTCOME 7.3 Libraries include their adult literacy programs and long-term sustainable funding for them in their strategic plans.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- Update and review funding plans for funding adult literacy services on an annual basis.

- Ensure that staff/key volunteers have specific responsibilities for raising funds for the adult literacy programs.

- Describe in the plans how working with undereducated adults helps the library to better reach underserved library populations in general (for purposes of obtaining LSTA funding, etc.).

- Develop a contingency plan to ensure that some level of adult literacy service will be maintained if funding is cut or if facilities become unusable due to a natural disaster, long-term power outage, etc.
Program measurement and evaluation are essential to the success of any library program. Whether you implement one or most of the action recommendations in this document, evaluating your progress periodically will allow you to identify and celebrate your successes, alter your approach to address challenges that arise, and use customer feedback to grow programs, collections, and services that reflect the true needs of your community.

Strategies range from analyzing program attendance or circulation statistics, to surveying staff, customers, and partners and hosting focus groups, to completing full-blown outcomes and impact assessment with the support of an external evaluation team.

The level of evaluation required for a particular program or service often depends on factors including the following:

- What resources are allocated to the initiative? How else might the resources be used? If there is a high likelihood that the resources could be reallocated, the need to prove the value and efficacy of the program or services escalates.

- Where is the program in its life cycle? For example, is it a brand new program? Is it new to the library branch but based on existing programming at other branches within a library system? Has it been in operation for a while, and if so, is it time to re-evaluate and refresh it?

- Are there obvious problems with the program or initiative? Is it clear that the current strategy is not working to achieve the goals and objectives? Will shifting the strategy lead to greater success?

- What are the funders’ evaluation requirements, if the program is externally funded?

- What are the evaluation needs and requirements of the other stakeholders and partners?
M ost public libraries already have evaluation systems and processes in place. Often these existing strategies can be adapted to assess adult literacy programs and services. Consider what steps your library is already taking to evaluate programs and services, and use the tips below to better incorporate adult learners into the process.

**TIPS FOR INVOLVING ADULT LEARNERS IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS:**
- Make sure that all customer evaluation tools are written in plain language.
- When possible, allow participants to access survey questions in print and read aloud, and allow participants to respond verbally in addition to in print or online.
- Ask adult instructors to help facilitate the completion of a survey and/or focus group with adult learners as part of an existing class or small-group learning opportunity.
- If you aim to reach new/underserved customers, consider visiting an adult instruction program to hear from adult learners who may not be comfortable visiting the library.

**FIVE KEY STEPS TO AN EVALUATION DESIGN**
1. Clarify understanding of the program’s goals and strategy.
2. Develop relevant and useful evaluation questions.
3. Select an appropriate evaluation approach or design for each evaluation question.
4. Identify data sources and collection procedures to obtain relevant, credible information.
5. Develop plans to analyze the data in ways that allow valid conclusions to be drawn from the evaluation questions.

By establishing a measurement and evaluation process that reveals the outcomes and net benefits of your programming, you will arm yourself with evidence that will strengthen requests for additional resources, support, and funding—internally and externally—lending to the long term sustainability and impact of your efforts.
GOAL:
Increase the number of staff members trained to identify and serve adults with limited literacy or English language skills to increase staff comfort levels and improve services to this population.

DATA TO COLLECT:
- Number of staff members who participate in professional development
- Quality of the professional development provided
- Impact of the professional development provided on staff and customers

TOOLS TO COLLECT DATA:
- Training attendance
- Training evaluation
- Follow-up survey with staff
- Correlating survey of adult learners to assess improvement in programs and services before and after training
- Follow-up interviews with subsets of survey respondents

MEASUREMENT TIMELINE:
- One month before training: Assess customer opinion of programs/services and staff members’ level of comfort via a survey and/or a focus group
- Day of the training: Assess staff members’ satisfaction with the training
- One month, six months and one year following the training: Assess customer opinion of programs/services and staff members’ level of comfort via a survey and/or a focus group

SAMPLE PROGRAM: Provide professional development and training to library staff to equip them to better serve adult learners.
GOAL:
Increase the number of adult learners who access the library’s resources, programs, and services by incorporating library orientation into existing adult instruction.

DATA TO COLLECT:
- Number of adult learners who interact with a librarian at the library or in class
- Number of adult learners who sign up for a library card
- Number of adult learners who come to the library independently after being oriented to the library (when possible, repeat use/frequency and participation in specific programs should also be measured)
- Circulation statistic for materials for adult learners

TOOLS TO COLLECT DATA:
- Class attendance list
- Library card registrations
- Library program registration information
- Circulation statistics

MEASUREMENT TIMELINE:
- Measure interactions and library card registrations throughout the program period
- Measure repeat visits and circulation at one month, six months, and one year

SAMPLE PROGRAM: Librarians work with adult educators to orient adult learners to the library.
SAMPLE PROGRAM: Develop a high-quality, useful collection of materials for adult learners and educators

GOAL:
Improve the utility and circulation of resources and materials purchased specifically for adult learners and adult educators.

DATA TO COLLECT:
- Circulation of print materials for adult learners and educators
- Use of digital materials for adult learners and educators
- How satisfied are the target customers with the collection

TOOLS TO COLLECT DATA:
- Circulation and digital use statistics
- Customer satisfaction survey
- Follow-up interviews with a subset of customers

MEASUREMENT TIMELINE:
- Pre- and post-evaluation of circulation statistics and online use statistics
- Pre- and post-satisfaction surveys
The resources below include strategies, examples, templates, and ideas to help you develop and improve your evaluation processes. Additional resources are referenced in the supporting resources document (Appendix 1).

**Evaluation resources from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)**
*Source:* Institute of Museum and Library Services  
*Date Accessed:* January 2014  
*Priority Areas:* Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
*Resource Type:* Informational Website  
*Description:* Provides a curated list of evaluation resources specific to library and information services and defines key evaluation terms.

**Shaping Outcomes**
*Source:* Indiana University (IUPUI) for the Institute of Museum and Library Services  
*Date Accessed:* January 2014  
*Priority Area:* Professional Development and Graduate Education; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
*Resource Type:* Self-Paced Online Course  
*Description:* A free, self-paced online course on outcomes-based evaluation strategies for libraries developed by Indiana University for the IMLS.

**Tools and Resources for Assessing Social Impact (TRASI)**
*Source:* Foundation Directory Online  
*Date Accessed:* January 2014  
*Priority Areas:* Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
*Resource Type:* Informational Website  
*Description:* Tools and resources that can be used to measure a program, service or organization’s impact on the community. Includes a forum where practitioners can connect with others who are interested in assessing social impact.

**National Network of Libraries of Medicine - evaluation toolkit**
*Source:* National Network of Libraries of Medicine  
*Date Accessed:* January 2014  
*Priority Area:* Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
*Resource Type:* Informational Website  
*Description:* Full evaluation toolkit from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.
**APPENDIX 1: SUPPORTING RESOURCES**

**ABC Life Literacy**

**SOURCE:** Life Literacy Canada  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that inspires Canadians to increase their literacy skills. We connect and mobilize business, unions, government, communities and individuals to support lifelong learning and achieve our goals through leadership in programs, communications and partnerships. ABC Life Literacy Canada envisions a Canada where everyone has the skills they need to live a fully engaged life.”

**ALE Wiki**

**SOURCE:** Adult Literacy Education Wiki et al. (crowdsourced)  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Professional Development and Graduate Education; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Created in 2004, “the Adult Literacy Education (ALE) Wiki is a free, online environment for practitioners, researchers, adult learners and others who are interested in the connections between research, professional knowledge, and practice in adult basic education, adult secondary education, and English language learning. The ALE Wiki includes discussions and resources on a number of topics ranging from adult basic literacy, to assessment, workforce and workplace education, and public policy. In the topic areas are selected discussions which have taken place on electronic lists, summaries of these discussions, links to relevant research, research citations, bibliographies, glossaries of terms, and other resources.”
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
SOURCE: American Association for Adult and Continuing Education
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Professional Development and Graduate Education
RESOURCE TYPE: Organizational Website
DESCRIPTION: The mission of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE), a nonprofit 510(c)(3) organization, is “to provide leadership for the field of adult and continuing education by expanding opportunities for adult growth and development; unifying adult educators; fostering the development and dissemination of theory, research, information, and best practices; promoting identity and standards for the profession; and advocating relevant public policy and social change initiatives.”

AMERICAN DREAM STARTS @ YOUR LIBRARY: PRINT AND DIGITAL RESOURCES
SOURCE: American Library Association
PUBLICATION DATE: 2008 (updated 2010)
PRIORITY AREAS: Collection Development
RESOURCE TYPE: PDF
DESCRIPTION: “Thirty-four public libraries from the American Dream Starts @ your library initiative contributed to this comprehensive list of print and digital resources. This annotated list, the first of its kind, is an enormous contribution to the thousands of librarians and educators providing literacy services for adult English language learners.”

AMERICAN DREAM STARTS @ YOUR LIBRARY – RESOURCES AND TOOLS
SOURCE: American Library Association Office of Literacy and Outreach Services
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREAS: Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: “For more than a century, public libraries have been a cornerstone of the American Dream, providing equal access to information of all kinds. In fact, libraries are among the first American institutions immigrants turn to for help in learning how to read, write, and speak English. Since January 2007, the American Library Association (ALA) has funded 100 libraries in 28 states. Each library received a onetime grant of $5,000 to add or improve literacy services to adult English language learners and their families. The 100 American Dream libraries expanded ESL collections, taught classes, hosted conversation circles, trained tutors, increased computer access, build community partnerships, and raised the library’s visibility. This initiative is generously funded by the Dollar General Literacy Foundation.”

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION—OUTREACH RESOURCES FOR SERVICES TO ADULT NEW AND NON-READERS
SOURCE: American Library Association
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: Facts, advocacy messaging, and ALA policies on and resources for library services to adult new and non-readers.

ALA PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING AND TECHNOLOGY ACCESS STUDY 2010-2011
SOURCE: American Library Association Office for Research and Statistics, Information Policy and Access Center at the University of Maryland
PUBLICATION DATE: 2011
PRIORITY AREAS: Technology and Digital Literacy; Sustainability
RESOURCE TYPE: PDF
DESCRIPTION: This study surveys the trends associated with access to technology and the effects of related funding policies. The information in this study captures the important role that libraries play in addressing the digital divide, and the need to create a sustainable effort to provide access through quantitative data.
**Arlington Education and Employment Program Technology Curriculum**

**SOURCE:** Arlington Education and Employment Program

**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014

**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website

**DESCRIPTION:** Comprehensive technology curriculum, including lesson plans, handouts, and mapping to core skills.

**Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) ReepWorld**

**SOURCE:** Arlington Education and Employment Program

**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014

**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collection Development; Technology and Digital Literacy

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website

**DESCRIPTION:** Interactive multimedia online exercises for ESL students with supporting resources for instructors and tutors. Topics include health, family, work, and citizenship.

**Bentonville Public Library Literacy Resources**

**SOURCE:** Bentonville Public Library

**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014

**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Collection Development

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website

**DESCRIPTION:** Comprehensive description of Bentonville Public Library’s adult literacy collection and services, including links to recommended resources.

**Broadband USA**

**SOURCE:** National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce

**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014

**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Campaign Website

**DESCRIPTION:** Official site of the federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program including a program map, descriptions of projects and initiatives funded by BTOP

**BBC Webwise Basic Skills**

**BBC Webwise Courses**

**SOURCE:** British Broadcasting Channel

**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014

**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website

**DESCRIPTION:** Information and interactive courses on a wide range of digital literacy and technology topics including basic computer skills and Internet use, email, and social media. Note that this content is produced by the BBC and some terminology and examples may be specific to the UK.

**Build Literacy: Summit Webcast**

**SOURCE:** American Library Association

**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2009

**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation

**RESOURCE TYPE:** Webcast

**DESCRIPTION:** “Literacy for All: Advocacy, Libraries, and Literacy, a Webcast Summit, focused on the essential role that libraries play in providing literacy services across the lifespan. The Summit brought together diverse panels of library leaders and literacy advocates from public, school, and academic libraries. The Summit showcases innovative library-literacy partnerships, promotes community solutions, issues a call to action, responds to questions and answers, and provides resources for librarians and literacy providers. The Summit was held April 7, 2009.”
**California Library Literacy Services**

**SOURCE:** California Library Literacy Services, A Program of the California State Library  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “California Library Literacy Services (CLLS) is a program of the California State Library. The mission of CLLS is to enable Californians of all ages to reach their literacy goals and use library services effectively. California has approximately 3.4 million adults with below basic literacy skills. Over 100 CLLS libraries serve nearly 20,000 adults annually in over 800 library branches and other outlets statewide.” The website includes a description of CLLS services in addition to resources for learners, tutors and staff including archived webcasts and podcasts.

**Center for Plain Language**

**SOURCE:** The Center for Plain Language  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Center for Plain Language is a nonprofit organization that promotes the use of plain language in government and business documents and provides training for those who produce these documents.

**Center for the Study of Adult Literacy**

**SOURCE:** Georgia State University's Center for the Study of Adult Literacy  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “CSAL is committed to understanding the reading-related characteristics that are critical to helping adult learners reach their reading goals and to developing instructional approaches that are tailored to adult learners’ needs and interests. CSAL conducts research that will (1) explore individual differences in reading-related abilities and motivations for learning so that we can better tailor instruction to adult learners, (2) design a reading program and an interactive online reading tutor that can more effectively meet adult learners’ needs, and (3) conduct pilot studies to assess the potential of our instructional programs in helping adults improve their literacy skills.”

**Center for the Study of Adult Literacy Readability Resource**

**SOURCE:** Georgia State University’s Center for the Study of Adult Literacy  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collection Development; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Overview of the Coh-Metrix, the computer systems used by CSAL to evaluate and select level-appropriate texts.
**The Change Agent**

**SOURCE:** World Education/New England Literacy Resource Center  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website and Publication  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Change Agent is a low-cost social justice newspaper published twice a year in March and September. The Change Agent provides cutting edge resources for teaching social issues, powerful student writing that inspires discussion, and many ready-to-use lesson plans—all oriented toward a multi-level audience. The Change Agent is available in print and in an interactive online format.

**Commission on Adult Basic Education**

**SOURCE:** Commission on Adult Basic Education  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) is a membership organization that advances national and international adult education and literacy opportunities for all persons. COABE’s mission is “to provide leadership, communication, professional development and advocacy for adult education and literacy practitioners in order to advance quality services for all adult learners.”

**Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) Reference Guide to National Projects: Digital Literacy, Broadband Adoption, and Digital Inclusion**

**SOURCE:** Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA)  
**PUBLICATION DATE:** 2013  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** “This brief reference guide provides basic information for state and local libraries about current national projects associated with digital inclusion, digital literacy, and broadband adoption. Each project profile features a summary followed by project details and reference information.”

**Copian: Connecting Canadians in Learning**

**SOURCE:** Copian  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collection Development; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Formerly known as the National Adult Literacy Database (Canada), Copian focuses its efforts on providing information and knowledge-sharing services free of charge to the literacy and workplace essential skills community. With resources in both English and French, the Copian online library is the largest, most comprehensive and most current collection of digital tools and documents in Canada. To support our charitable objectives, we engage in project and other business opportunities in the broader learning community to generate revenue that is subsequently reinvested in our core services. Copian relies on the Government of Canada’s Office of Literacy and Essential Skills for its operational support and also receives in-kind support from the Government of New Brunswick.
**Connect Your Community Computer Literacy Curriculum**

**SOURCE:** OneCommunity  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collection Development; Technology and Digital Literacy Skills  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website; PowerPoint Presentations  
**DESCRIPTION:** Basic computer skills curriculum in English and Spanish broken down into short PowerPoint modules.

**Curriculum Materials from New York State Digital Literacy Initiative (DigLit NY)**

**SOURCE:** New York State Library  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; PDF; PowerPoint  
**DESCRIPTION:** A collection of digital literacy and computer skills curricular materials from New York State Library Public Computing Center partners.

**DeKalb County Public Library Foundation—Support Literacy Campaign**

**SOURCE:** DeKalb County Public Library Foundation  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Campaign Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** An exemplary Library Foundation website that promotes local library literacy efforts and partnerships and encourages community members to contribute to the cause.

**DigitalLearn.org**

**SOURCE:** Public Library Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** DigitalLearn.org is a site devoted to helping everyone to effectively use digital technologies through simple online training modules. It also features a community area that allows teachers and librarians to share successes and strategies used at the local level. The site is managed by the Public Library Association and was developed with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

**DigitalLiteracy.gov**

**SOURCE:** United States federal government and partners  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** In an effort to broadly manage the extant and emerging literacy needs of the digital and information age, the Obama administration launched the Federal Digital Literacy portal, bridging the interests of a number of federal agencies. Librarians, adult educators, work force development agents, other public servants and adult learners themselves can all find a wealth of resources, relevant news and opportunities through this comprehensive compendium of digital literacy related initiatives.
**Digital Literacy in New York**

**SOURCE:** The New York State Broadband Initiative  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** One goal of the New York State Broadband Initiative is “to create more ‘e-citizens’ who are digitally literate and connected to affordable Internet access, so they can be full participants in the information age.” This project creates trainers at the state level and organizes workshops in order to reach adults within the state of New York aiming to develop their digital literacy skills.

**Do We Care About Us? Center for the Study of Adult Literacy TEDx Peachtree Talk on Advocacy Featuring Daphne Greenberg, CSAL Lead Researcher**

**SOURCE:** Georgia State University’s Center for the Study of Adult Literacy  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2013  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Video  
**DESCRIPTION:** Do We Care About Us? 12-minute independently organized TEDx talk on advocating for adult literacy

**ESL Resources—REEP Suggestions**

**SOURCE:** The New York State Broadband Initiative  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** A list of online ESL resources compiled by the Arlington Education and Employment Program.

**Evaluation Resources from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)**

**SOURCE:** Institute of Museum and Library Services  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Provides a curated list of evaluation resources specific to library and information services and defines key evaluation terms

**Equipped for the Future**

**SOURCE:** University of Tennessee Knoxville  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Professional Development and Graduate Education; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Equipped for the Future (EFF) exemplifies a disintegrable one-stop web platform for adult educators seeking tools to engage students’ learning. The website features a broad range of free toolkits, professional development modules, and web-based student resources in addition to related publications.

**Even Anchors Need Life Lines: Public Libraries and Literacy**

**SOURCE:** Gail Spangenberg for The Center for the Book in The Library of Congress  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 1996  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** A historical report on adult literacy services in public libraries which includes analysis, findings and recommendations based on a 1990s nationwide survey of chief officers of state library agencies, key literacy contacts in state libraries, heads of state literacy resource centers, and directors of local library literacy programs.
EveryLibrary
SOURCE: EveryLibrary
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
RESOURCE TYPE: Organizational Website
DESCRIPTION: “EveryLibrary is a nonprofit social welfare organization chartered to work exclusively on local library ballot initiatives. The organization is registered in Illinois after reaching our funding/pledge goal from individual, corporate, union, and foundation donors. We work with local ballot committees and PAC leaders in support of local library ballot measures, on specific state legislative measures which impact libraries’ ability to act as districts, and independently to advocate for specific library initiatives among the voting public.”

Everyone On and the Everyone On Campaign Toolkit
SOURCE: EveryoneOn and Partners
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREAS: Technology and Digital Literacy; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website; Instructional Website; Campaign Website
DESCRIPTION: “The EveryoneOn campaign aims to help the millions of Americans who do not have the digital literacy skills they need to succeed and help them understand the relevance the Internet has in their lives.” Everyoneon.org offers a ZIP code search tool to find free local computer and Internet training classes and includes information on computer basics, job searches, accessing government resources, and how to connect with friends and family.”

Fast Forward New Mexico Curriculum
SOURCE: New Mexico State Library
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREAS: Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website; Instructional Website
DESCRIPTION: This site includes presentations and resources on basic computing and small business development skills for use in workshops and classes. Materials are available in English and Spanish.

Federal Citizenship Resources—Learners
SOURCE: United States’ Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Collection Development
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website; Instructional Website
DESCRIPTION: Information and self-study resources for individuals who are preparing for naturalization, including a ZIP code search tool learners can use to find local assistance. Includes English and Spanish resources.

Federal Citizenship Resources—Libraries
SOURCE: United States’ Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Collection Development; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Professional Development and Graduate Education
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: Information about the resources, programs and technical support available to libraries that seek to support the naturalization process in their communities, including webinars that provide an overview of the process and access to USCIS instructor training. Also includes access to several toolkits and resources librarians can use directly with customers.
**Federal Plain Language Guide**

**SOURCE:** United States Federal Government  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Use the plain language tips and tools included in this guide to improve the accessibility of your library’s promotional and informational materials, and share information about plain language with other businesses and service providers in your community.

**Florida Library Literacy Tip Sheets**

**SOURCE:** Florida Department of State Division of Library and Information Services  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Sustainability; Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** When developing partnerships with other organizations, it is important to develop a sense of what type of partnership would best facilitate project work and impact the end user. This comprehensive resource outlines the different forms of collaborative work that can take shape and provides a general guide to handling the responsibilities and challenges of partner work.

**Foundation Directory Online**

**SOURCE:** Foundation Center  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Foundation Directory Online is a fee-based subscription service that provides grant seekers with detailed information about foundations and corporate donors, including giving histories and current funding opportunities. A free basic version is available online, and the premium version is available for free use in libraries, nonprofit resource centers and community foundations through the Funding Information Network.

**GCF Learn Free**

**SOURCE:** Goodwill Community Foundation  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “GCFLearnFree.org creates and provides quality, innovative online learning opportunities to anyone who wants to improve the technology, literacy and math skills needed to be successful in both work and life. By delivering over 750 different free lessons to millions of people in over 200 countries and territories, GCFLearnFree.org is a worldwide leader in online education.” Many lessons can be completed on computers or mobile devices. Topics include basic computing, using the Internet, workforce training (e.g., Microsoft Office), math, reading and life skills. A Spanish version of the site is also available for free.

**GCF Learn Free—Learn English**

**SOURCE:** Goodwill Community Foundation  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Basic English literacy exercises for native English speakers and ESL exercises for speakers of other languages. This section of the site includes a teacher’s guide for instructors and service providers who work with ESL students.

**GED/HSE Resource Center**

**SOURCE:** New Readers Press  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collection Development; Technology and Digital Literacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Multimedia information and resource about the changes to the GED/High School Equivalency standards and tests enacted in 2014. Includes links to several free resources for GED/HSE preparation.
**GED Testing Service**  
**SOURCE:** GED Testing Service  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “GED Testing Service offers the only learner-centric program that is recognized and portable from state to state. The program is based on the expectations and standards for college- and career-readiness and will lead to better outcomes in education.”

**Grantspace**  
**SOURCE:** Foundation Center  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Grantspace is a resource offered by the Foundation Center that includes information and resources to help nonprofit organizations secure funding and operate effectively. The site includes a robust knowledge base, access to free and fee-based live and recorded audio and web-based training sessions, and expert presentations. Includes sample proposals documents including narratives, letters of inquiries, request cover letters and budgets.

**Grant Proposal Writing Tips**  
**SOURCE:** Grant Professionals Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The tips provided on this page by the Grant Professionals Association represent tested, practical advice for communication with potential funders. Please consult this resource when pursuing grant opportunities.

**International Literacy Day**  
**SOURCE:** International Reading Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2013  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Advocacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Campaign Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** On International Literacy Day, which is held on September 8 each year, libraries, schools, service organizations and corporations host local events to celebrate literacy and highlight literacy needs around the world. The campaign is sponsored by the International Reading Association. Each year UNESCO awards prestigious International Literacy Prizes in honor of the day.

**Grass Roots Press**  
**SOURCE:** Grass Roots Press  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Grass Roots Press, a division of Literacy Services of Canada, Ltd., publishes and distributes adult basic education resources in print and digital formats.

**IMLS Building Digital Communities**  
**SOURCE:** Institute of Museum and Library Services  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** This portal includes press releases, blog posts, grant announcements, and project profiles that capture a range of initiatives throughout the country to further digital literacy. These resources point to potential digital literacy related grant opportunities as well as project partnerships, and how your organization can contribute to the national development of computer competence at the community level.
**ISchools Consortium**

**SOURCE:** The ISchools Organization  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The ISchools organization was founded in 2005 by a collective of Information Schools dedicated to advancing the information field in the 21st century. These schools, colleges, and departments have been newly created or are evolving from programs formerly focused on specific tracks such as information technology, library science, informatics, and information science. While each individual iSchool has its own strengths and specializations, together they share a fundamental interest in the relationships between information, people, and technology.”

**King County Library System—Profile on Serving Adult ESL Learners**

**SOURCE:** ALA Programming Librarian Blog  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Blog post  
**DESCRIPTION:** Read about King County Library system’s exemplary services to adult ESL learners, including ESL classes, citizenship information fairs, and ongoing partnerships with other adult education stakeholders in the community.

**Literacy and Essential Skills Office—Canada**

**SOURCE:** Government of Canada Employment and Social Development  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Sustainability; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Through the Employment and Social Development Office, the Canadian government has assembled this resource for organizational training, project funding, and strategy development related to national workforce development, starting with literacy. Through maintaining connections and conversations about literacy and essential skills, and supporting initiatives at the local level, Employment and Social Development works toward its mission of building a stronger and more competitive Canada.

**Literacy for All: Adult Literacy @ Your Library**

**SOURCE:** American Library Association Committee on Literacy and the ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2010  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** A toolkit designed to help librarians add, expand and advocate for adult literacy services in their institutions. The toolkit includes recommendations, resources and case studies to help librarians reach and serve new and nonreaders and to establish the library as an essential partner in community literacy efforts.
**Literacy Information and Communication System**

**SOURCE:** National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The LINCS Resource Collection provides free online access to high-quality, evidence-based, vetted materials to help adult education practitioners and state and local staff improve programs, services, instruction, and teacher quality.

**Literacy Powerline**

**SOURCE:** Literacy Powerline  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Literacy Powerline’s mission is “to increase literacy levels through effective and sustainable community collaboration and engagement. The organization works with educators, business and labor leaders, philanthropies, civic and faith-based groups, policymakers, literacy providers, and students to demonstrate that everyone thrives when a community is committed to 100 percent literacy.”

**LSTA Fact Sheets by State**

**SOURCE:** American Library Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Sustainability; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) is the only federal program exclusively for libraries. It is administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and used to support local library programming related to technology access and digital literacy. These fact sheets give a closer look at the effects of this act by state. LSTA was reauthorized in 2010 and will be eligible for reauthorization again in 2015.

**MedlinePlus Easy to Read Consumer Health Information**

**SOURCE:** National Library of Medicine  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** MedlinePlus is a federally-funded online consumer health information resource. The site includes information about a broad range of health topics. Many resources are available in an easy-to-read format in English, and there are several resources available in Spanish.
**Mission Statement Incorporating Literacy**

**SOURCE:** New Albany-Floyd County Public Library  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The mission statement embedded in the New Albany-Floyd County Public Library collection development policy specifically references literacy.

**Library Mission Statement:** The mission of the New Albany-Floyd County Public Library is to create young readers, celebrate the diversity of our community, preserve our local history and promote genealogical research, support literacy, and stimulate imagination by providing services and collections in a variety of formats for use during leisure time. Through innovative programming, we create memories and shared stories for residents of all ages, in a community gathering place.

**National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week**

**SOURCE:** National Coalition for Literacy  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Advocacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Campaign Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “National Adult Education & Family Literacy Week raises public awareness of adult education and family literacy, assists adult learners in need of literacy services, leverages local resources, and supports increased access to adult education and family literacy programs.”

**National Center for Families Learning**

**SOURCE:** National Center for Families Learning  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “NCFL provides support and strategies to a network of entities involved in families learning together, including educators, schools, community-based organizations, and libraries.” The website includes links to several free supporting resources.

**National Coalition for Literacy**

**SOURCE:** National Coalition for Literacy  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The National Coalition for Literacy is a membership organization that aims “to advance adult education, family literacy, and English language acquisition in the U.S. by increasing public awareness for the need to increase funding and programs; promoting effective public policy; and serving as an authoritative resource on national adult education issues.”
National Commission on Adult Literacy: Publications and Resources

SOURCE: Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy
RESOURCE TYPE: Organizational Website; Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: The National Commission on Adult Literacy was a two-year effort to examine adult education and literacy services in America and provide recommendations for the future emphasizing workforce skills. The Commission was comprised of an independent panel of labor and business leaders, government officials, and educators. The Commission’s final report was published in 1998.

National Network of Libraries of Medicine—Defining Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes

SOURCE: National Network of Libraries of Medicine
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Community Planning and Program Evaluation
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: Tips for defining measureable goals, outputs, and outcomes for a proposed project, program, or initiative. The resource includes a useful case study about a community health/library partnership.

National Network of Libraries of Medicine—Evaluation Toolkit

SOURCE: National Network of Libraries of Medicine
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Community Planning and Program Evaluation
RESOURCE TYPE: Informational Website
DESCRIPTION: Full evaluation toolkit from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

New Orleans Public Library YMCA Collaboration

YMCA New Orleans Adult Literacy Program

SOURCE: New Orleans Public Library and New Orleans YMCA
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREAS: Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Sustainability; Community Planning and Program Evaluation
RESOURCE TYPE: Organizational Websites
DESCRIPTION: “YMCA Educational Services (YES!) is the adult literacy branch of the YMCA of Greater New Orleans. YES! provides quality instruction to adults age 16 and older in reading, math, and language. YES! serves adults who read at the 8th grade level or below. It is the only adult education provider in the area that focuses exclusively on serving these lowest-level learners. After Hurricane Katrina destroyed the YES! facilities, New Orleans Public Library offered the YMCA’s adult literacy program the use of the Main Library’s Learning Center space.”

New Readers Press

SOURCE: ProLiteracy/New Readers Press
DATE ACCESSED: January 2014
PRIORITY AREA: Collection Development
RESOURCE TYPE: Organizational Website; Informational Website
**NYS Adult Literacy Library Services Grants 2013-2016**  
**SOURCE:** New York State Department of Education  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** This list of grant recipients demonstrates the types of programming and organizational work that are being supported by state grants in New York.

**Northstar Basic Computer Skills Certificate**  
**SOURCE:** Minnesota Literacy Council and partners  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The Northstar Digital Literacy Project defines basic skills needed to perform tasks on computers and online. The ability of adults to perform these tasks can be assessed through online, self-guided modules. Included are basic computer digital literacy standards and modules in six main areas: Basic Computer Use, Internet, Windows Operating System, Mac OS, Email, and Word Processing (Word).” The site includes interactive exercises and standards as well as guidance for employers and job seekers. Students in Minnesota located near approved assessment sites can obtain a basic computer skills certificate by completing an on-site assessment. The model may be of interest to other library/literacy partnerships seeking to establish a similar certificate program in another geographic area.

**OITP Digital Literacy Task Force Report**  
**SOURCE:** The American Library Association’s Office for Information Technology Policy  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2013  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The American Library Association’s (ALA) Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) launched the OITP Digital Literacy Task Force in spring 2011 and brought together literacy experts and practitioners from school, academic, and public libraries to address opportunities and challenges related to digital literacy and associated national policy conversations. The task force concludes that America’s libraries are uniquely positioned to deepen the literacies needed for all people to thrive in the digital age. This report provides a broad overview of the role of libraries in digital literacy and outlines issues and opportunities specific to school (K-12), academic (higher-education), and public libraries with respect to supporting and fostering digital literacy.”

**Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE)**  
**SOURCE:** U.S. Department of Education  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) administers, coordinates programs that are related to adult education and literacy, career and technical education, and community colleges. The webpage provides information on current OVAE initiatives as well as the latest news and events within the workforce development-adult education field.
Ohio Literacy Resource Center  
**SOURCE:** Ohio Literacy Resource Center  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website; Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The Ohio Literacy Resource Center provides support, training and resources for the people who work in and attend classes at adult and family literacy programs. The OLRC also works with GED graduates who are attending Kent State University. The OLRC’s mission statement includes two key imperatives: 1) to stimulate joint planning and coordination of literacy services at the local, regional, and state levels; and 2) to enhance the capacity of state and local organizations and service delivery systems to provide adult literacy services.”

Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office TANF Initiative  
**SOURCE:** Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Sustainability; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** This state office manages project work and dissemination of funds granted by the national Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. This site provides a closer look at localized applications of this national program.

Opportunity for All—How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries  
**SOURCE:** Information School at the University of Washington, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, IMLS  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2000  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** When advocating for policy changes or community support for community computer access programs and digital literacy initiatives, it may be helpful to highlight the ways in which these aims align with the common good. This report situates technology access trends in the principle of the public interest by looking at usage statistics, demographic information, and net-based services accessed in public computer spaces. The data in this snapshot of public computer use establishes the importance of this resource and supports recommendations for ensuring its sustainability.

Partners in Reading  
**SOURCE:** San José Public Library  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The mission of Partners in Reading is to enrich the lives of adults through reading, writing, technology, life skills, and critical thinking, as well as English language learning. This program provides one-on-one and small group tutoring to adults with reading and writing skills below the 9th grade level.
**Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies**

**SOURCE:** Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) via the National Center for Education Statistics  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2013  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** PIAAC is designed to assess adults in different countries over a broad range of abilities, from simple reading to complex problem solving in a digital environment. “In the United States, the study was conducted in 2011-2012 with a nationally representative sample of 5,000 adults between the ages of 16 and 65. These results have heavy implications for literacy programming, national- and local-level policies, and economic development efforts.”

**ProLiteracy Education Network**

**SOURCE:** ProLiteracy  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development; Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** ProLiteracy Education Network (EdNet) provides free instructional resources to adult literacy and ESOL instructors, learners, and program staff. EdNet helps instructors learn new techniques and strategies for teaching reading, writing, math, citizenship, and basic life skills. It offers opportunities for program managers to learn how to improve or expand their services. EdNet also allows people to choose how they want to learn by offering resources in many different formats, including lesson plans, online courses, tip sheets, podcasts, and interactive web-based exercises. EdNet includes several free, self-paced online courses designed to help practitioners better understand how to work with adult learners.

**Public Library Association**

**SOURCE:** Public Library Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Professional Development and Graduate Education; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Collaboration and Strategic Partnership  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The Public Library Association is a membership organization that is responsible for organizing events, action toolkits, professional development programs and workshops, advocacy initiatives, and profession-wide conversations specific to public libraries and public library staff on behalf of the ALA. PLA membership is not only a great vehicle for developing connections and organizational skills to better serve adult learner patrons, but can also be an avenue to share skills and innovations from your own organization.”

**Recognizing the Signs of Low-Level Literacy**

**SOURCE:** San José Public Library  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** The adult learner population can stretch beyond the students in adult basic education courses and those clearly identified as low-literate. Because of the stigmas associated with low-level literacy, many adults are adept at concealing their struggles with reading comprehension and basic skills. The suggestions on this tip sheet will help librarians effectively identify customers with literacy challenges to better reach and serve this audience.
**Reference and User Services Association**

**SOURCE:** Reference and User Services Association  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Reference and User Services Association is responsible for stimulating and supporting excellence in the delivery of general library services and materials, and the provision of reference and information services, collection development, readers’ advisory, and resource sharing for all ages, in every type of library.

**St. Paul Community Literacy Consortium Basic Computer Skills Curriculum**

**SOURCE:** St. Paul Community Literacy Consortium  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Basic computer curriculum broken down by skill sets, levels, and software. The curriculum includes folders of exercises (e.g., MS Word cut-and-paste activities) and simple lesson plans.

**Shaping Outcomes**

**SOURCE:** Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) for the Institute of Museum and Library Services  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Professional Development and Graduate Education; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Self-Paced Online Course  
**DESCRIPTION:** A free, self-paced online course on outcomes-based evaluation strategies for libraries developed by Indiana University for the IMLS.

**So I Made Up My Mind: A Study of Adult Learner Persistence in Library Literacy Programs**

**SOURCE:** DeWitt Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund and Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund; Literacy in Libraries Across America (LILAA)  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2000  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**FORMAT:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** This report provides an overview of the issue of learner persistence in library literacy programs and background on the Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Fund library-based literacy initiative. It also introduces the five library literacy programs that participated in the LILAA persistence study.

**State Library Guidebook: Support for Digital Literacy in Public Libraries**

**SOURCE:** OCLC WebJunction and the Institute of Museum and Library Services  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2013  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnership  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** “A reference guide designed to help state library agencies explore and consider potential state-level investments and partnerships that advance digital literacy efforts. It includes: 1) an overview of the current state of digital literacy in public libraries; 2) a proposed framework for considering specific types of digital literacy supports; and 3) a sample planning process designed for state library agencies.”
**State of America’s Libraries Report 2013**—
**American Library Association**

**SOURCE:** The American Library Association  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2013  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Technology and Digital Literacy; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** This report presents a wealth of useful data on the programs and services, usage statistics, challenges, and prognosis of the public library as an institution in America. The report includes a list of recommendations that community libraries can consult in order to meet the mounting challenges and contribute to the ongoing utility of the library.

**TANF Overview**

**SOURCE:** Center on Budget and Policy Priorities  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Sustainability; Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program represents a useful funding opportunity for a variety of community service organizations. Under TANF, the federal government provides a block grant to the states, which use these funds to operate their own programs.

**TechSoup**

**SOURCE:** TechSoup  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Sustainability  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** TechSoup is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects public libraries and other nonprofit organizations with technology products and services at little or no cost. TechSoup also provides access to training and resources to help practitioners make informed decisions about technology. Free resources on TechSoup are available to all users, and libraries and nonprofit organizations that register with TechSoup can access donated and discounted products and services from partners like Microsoft, Adobe, Cisco, Intuit, and Symantec.

**Technology Expertise, Access and Learning for All Texans**

**SOURCE:** Texas State Libraries and Archives Commission  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “TEAL provides training opportunities for participating libraries across Texas and the general library community. While most TEAL trainings will focus on workforce development and specific technology topics related to public computing in libraries, trainings will also help librarians support vulnerable populations in their communities like job-seekers, ESL patrons, and seniors.” The website includes a combination of self-paced training (e.g. webinars) and curriculum.

**Tech Goes Home**

**SOURCE:** Open Air Boston  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website; Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Boston-based initiative aimed at reducing the digital divide. Includes resources on a variety of digital literacy and computer skills topics – framed around integrating technology into everyday life. This site is updated frequently, and is a “go-to” for resources on newer/evolving technologies (e.g., the suite of Google apps).
**TESOL White Paper—Principles-based Approach for English Language Teaching Policies and Practices**

**SOURCE:** TESOL International Association  
**PUBLICATION YEAR:** 2012  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Sustainability; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** PDF  
**DESCRIPTION:** This TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) white paper introduces the notion of a principles-based approach (PBA) for English language teaching policies and practices. PBA identifies six principles aimed at helping policymakers, researchers, and practitioners build effective and successful practices within varied contexts while identifying and engaging with the challenges that the implementation of these practices will encounter. The principles are collaboration, relevance, evidence, alignment, transparency, and empowerment.

**The Beehive**

**SOURCE:** One Economy Corporation  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Free online tutorials for topics related to money management, job skills, health, and housing. Also includes homework help for K-12 students.

**The Programming Librarian Blog: Evaluation of Cultural Programs**

**SOURCE:** ALA Programming Librarian Blog  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Blog post  
**DESCRIPTION:** Basic tips and strategies for evaluating cultural programs.

**Tools and Resources for Assessing Social Impact (TRASI)**

**SOURCE:** Foundation Directory Online  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Tools and resources that can be used to measure a program, service, or organization’s impact on the community. Includes a forum where practitioners can connect with others who are interested in assessing social impact.

**TV411**

**SOURCE:** Education Development Center, Inc.  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “TV411’s mission is to help adults gain the basic reading, writing, math, and science skills they need to achieve their educational, career, and personal goals. They create educationally sound and entertaining multimedia learning materials and distribute them through television, the Internet, and literacy and community-based programs across the country.”

**Typing Practice—REEP Suggestions**

**SOURCE:** Arlington Education and Employment Program  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Links to typing practice websites recommended by the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP).
**University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science Outcome Based Evaluation Resources**

**SOURCE:** University of North Carolina School of Information and Library Science  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** A curated list of outcome-based evaluation lists.

**USA Learns**

**SOURCE:** USA Learns  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Technology and Digital Literacy; Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Instructional Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “USA Learns is a free website funded by the U.S. Department of Education to support immigrants who want to learn or improve their English skills as they become part of American society.” The website includes beginner and intermediate video-based English language courses and supplemental stories and activities that learners can use for additional practice. It can be used independently by students, by student/tutor pairs, or to provide an online extension of instruction provided in a face-to-face class setting.

**Value USA**

**SOURCE:** Value USA  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Value USA is a national membership organization that works to improve the nation's education system and to empower adults with low literacy skills to realize their human potential. Value USA is governed and operated by current and former adult learners.

**Wallace Foundation Adult Literacy Initiatives**

**SOURCE:** The Wallace Foundation  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** This site outlines 10 years of library literacy initiatives funded by the Wallace Foundation (1992-2002). It includes links to four research reports on learner persistence in library literacy programs that emerged as a result of the decade-long investigation.

**WE LEARN**

**SOURCE:** WE LEARN  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREAS:** Community Planning and Program Evaluation; Collaboration and Strategic Partnerships; Raising Awareness and Influencing Policy  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** WE LEARN engages a diverse membership community of adult basic education and literacy learners and alumni, educators, researchers and professional women, community activists, and anyone dedicated to investing in women's education as a stepping stone in gender equity.

**Web-based Information Science Education Consortium (WISE)**

**SOURCE:** Web-based Information Science Education Consortium  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Organizational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** WISE is a consortium of accredited graduate level library and information science education programs that share online courses in special topics. WISE has the potential to serve as a vehicle to educate library students from 16 diverse academic institutions from across the globe on the importance of understanding how to work with adults with low literacy.
**Western/Pacific LINCS ESL Special Collections**

**SOURCE:** Western/Pacific LINCS  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Collection Development  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** “The ESL Special Collection demonstrates the value of ESL education, fosters and promotes the development of high-quality ESL programs, provides guidelines for planning and supporting these programs, and supports ongoing communication and collaboration among stakeholders.”

**Working with Adult Literacy Students—CAELA**

**SOURCE:** Center for Adult English Language Acquisition  
**DATE ACCESSED:** January 2014  
**PRIORITY AREA:** Professional Development and Graduate Education  
**RESOURCE TYPE:** Informational Website  
**DESCRIPTION:** Provides strategies and tips for practitioners who work with adults with low literacy or English language skills in formal or informal instructional settings (e.g., the library).
**ALA accredited program**—a graduate level library science program resident within a college or university that meets and maintains the standards set forth by the American Library Association.

**adult basic education**—instruction in basic skills, such as reading, writing, mathematics, and other skills required to function in society, offered to people 16 years of age or older.

**adult educators**—career teachers and tutors as well as volunteers who teach adults age 16 and older.

**adult instruction programs**—organizations that provide educational services and programs aimed at helping adults to learn English, be literate, be work-ready, and gain a high school equivalency certificate or diploma. Their services may include: literacy instruction, adult basic education, high school equivalency test preparation, job skills training, English for Speakers of Other Languages, citizenship, digital literacy training, and more.

**adult learners**—individuals 16 years and older enrolled in an adult instruction program to gain English language, reading, writing, numeracy, digital, or basic life skills, including high school equivalency diplomas and preparation for postsecondary education; and those who are independent learners. They are sometimes also called adult new readers.

**adult literacy**—the ability to read, comprehend, work with, and create the written word.

**basic skills**—competencies associated with basic functions in society, employability, healthcare access, financial well-being, problem-solving in technology-rich environments, and citizenship.

**coalition**—an alliance of organizations and/or individuals formed to address a common cause such as adult literacy levels, fair housing, or economic development within a community.

**collection development**—the process of meeting the information needs of the people served by a library in a timely and economical manner using information resources owned by the library branch or system or available through an inter-organizational loan agreement.

**consumable materials**—resource materials such as workbooks that become “used up” and need to be replaced after use by a certain number of students/customers.
**cultural competence**—the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures, educational attainment and skills levels, and socio-economic backgrounds

**customers**—members of the community served by the library. Sometimes referred to as patrons or library users

**digital literacy**—The ability to use digital technology, communication tools, or networks to locate, evaluate, use, and create information

**digital materials**—library resources accessed using technological devices such as computers, tablets, e-readers, or mobile phones. E-books, instructional software, and applications (“apps”) are examples of digital materials

**English as a Second Language**—The study of English by non-native English speaking students who are living in an English-speaking country; geared toward developing general language competencies

**English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**—the study of the English language by non-native English speaking students who speak one or more other languages; an umbrella term for a broad range of English language instruction

**functional literacy**—the capacity to manage daily living and employment tasks that require reading, writing, communication, and/or numeracy skills beyond a basic level

**health literacy**—the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions

**impact**—the degree to which program/project outcomes are attributable to program/project outputs

**information literacy**—the ability to know when there is a need for information, and identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use that information for the issue or problem at hand

**library branch**—an individual library within a system of libraries

**library system**—a network of libraries that work together to serve communities within a specified region

**numeracy**—the ability to understand and work with numbers

**outcomes**—observed or reported changes in knowledge, actions, behavior, attitude, or conditions as a result of participation in a project or program

**output**—activities, events, services, and products that reach people as a result of a project or program; typically measured in amount or volume of use
plain language—written or verbal communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others. Written material is in plain language if your audience can:

- Find what they need;
- Understand what they find; and
- Use what they find to meet their needs

raising awareness and influencing policy—an attempt to shape public opinion and promote the interests of your community. Raising awareness and influencing policy includes identifying, embracing, and promoting a cause

readability—the difficulty or ease with which a text is read

ready reference—responses to quick factual reference questions

traditional literacy—competence with language based activities including text reading, writing, and communication

Universal Design for Learning—a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn

Acronyms—Organizations and Associations

ALA—The American Library Association
ALA-OLOS—The American Library Association Office for Literacy and Outreach Services
COABE—Commission on Adult Basic Education
IMLS—Institute of Museum and Library Services
LINCS—Literacy Information and Communication System
NCFL—The National Center for Families Learning (formerly the National Center for Literacy)
NCL—The National Coalition for Literacy
OCPL—Onondaga County Public Library (Syracuse, New York)
PLA—The Public Library Association
RUSA—The Reference and User Services Association
TESOL International Association—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
WISE—Web-based Information Science Education [Consortium]

Acronyms—Other

ABE—Adult Basic Education
ESL/ESOL—English as a Second Language/English for Speakers of Other Languages
ELL—English Language Learners
LSTA—Library Services and Technology Act
MLS—Master of Library Science
MSLIS—Master of Science in Library and Information Science
TANF—Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TESOL—Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
**SUPPLEMENTARY OUTCOME:** Academic institutions that offer graduate-level MLS/MSLIS degrees are taking steps to better prepare the next generation of librarians to serve customers who have limited reading and writing skills, do not speak or understand English well, or have unique cultural needs.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS—FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY**
- Prospective students research and select graduate programs that include concentrations or areas of study on serving adult learners.
- Graduate students speak with program chair or dean and request plans for offering courses on adult literacy issues.
- Faculty in library preparation programs include coursework on serving adult literacy customers, as well as research and resources on adult literacy issues.

**ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS—FOR ACCREDITING AGENCIES AND NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**
- Academic institutions hire faculty who have experience working with adult learners and who are involved in related research and scholarly work.
- Academic institutions make their courses available to students at other institutions who want to develop deeper expertise related to serving adult learners (through the online Web-based Information Science Education Network or other similar programs).
- MSLIS program directors leverage courses offered by other departments (e.g., Education, Literacy Studies) within their institutions to meet this need in the absence of faculty expertise or options for sharing with other institutions.
- Academic institutions work with adult instruction programs to provide internship/fieldwork opportunities for students who want hands-on experience.
- Academic institutions encourage students to volunteer with local adult instruction programs by providing incentives such as academic credit, recognition, and/or support such as transportation or gas reimbursement.
- Academic institutions collaborate with national organizations to develop content for courses, to facilitate networking opportunities for internships, to access sample resources for collection development exercises, etc.
- ALA accredited Library and Information Science graduate programs and other library certificate programs (e.g., CAS, paraprofessional programs) require all students to complete coursework related to effectively serving these customers.
PIAAC definitions:

- **Literacy**: understanding, evaluating, using, and engaging with written text to participate in society, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential

- **Numeracy**: the ability to access, use, interpret, and communicate mathematical information and ideas, to engage in and manage mathematical demands of a range of situations in real life

- **Problem Solving in Technology-Rich Environments**: using digital technology, communication tools, and networks to acquire and evaluate information, communicate with others, and perform practical tasks

A second round of surveys started in 2012 involving Chile, Greece, Indonesia, Israel, Lithuania, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, and Turkey. This data will be released in 2016. A third round of data collection will start in 2014.

**Results**

PIAAC results are reported in two ways: as scale scores on a 0–500 scale in three domains (literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments), and as percentages of adults reaching established proficiency levels. PIAAC reports five proficiency levels for literacy and numeracy (Below level 1, Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Level 4/5) and four levels for problem solving in technology-rich environments (Below level 1, Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3). Across all countries, only 2 percent of adults performed at Level 5 on many of the variables in the literacy and numeracy scales.
Key International Findings

- On average, across countries, the median hourly wage of workers who scored at levels 4 or 5 is more than 60 percent higher than those who scored at Level 1 or below.

- Those with poor literacy skills are more than twice as likely to be unemployed.

- Countries with lower skill levels risk losing in competitiveness as the world economy becomes more dependent on skills.

- Men and women have very similar proficiency levels.

- In nearly all countries, at least 10 percent of adults lack the most elementary computer skills.

- Successful literacy integration of immigrants is not a matter of time but of incentives and policies that encourage language learning.

- Those with lower skills proficiency also tend to report poorer health, less trust, and lower civic engagement. Finland and Japan both have large shares of top performers.

- Japan, Australia, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden combine above-average performance with a high level of equity.

Key U.S. Findings

- The U.S. mean literacy score was below the international average—ranking 16th out of 24 countries.

- The average literacy score for adults in the U.S. was 270 out of 500.

- Twelve percent of adults in the U.S. performed at the highest proficiency level on the literacy scale.

- The average numeracy score for adults in the U.S. was 253 out of 500.

- Nine percent of adults in the U.S. performed at the highest proficiency level on the numeracy scale.

- The average score for adults in the U.S. on the problem solving in technology-rich environments was 277 out of 500.

- Six percent of adults in the U.S. and 8 percent of adults under 35 in the U.S. performed at the highest proficiency level on the problem-solving/technology scale.

Health

- People with low skills are four times more likely to have poor health (two times the national average).
**Employment**
- The percentage of employed adults in the U.S. who performed at the highest proficiency level was lower than the international average of employed adults who performed at the highest proficiency level.
- Socioeconomic status in the U.S. is highly related to literacy skills. The U.S. has the highest levels of income inequality and literacy skills inequality.

**Education**
- Americans with a high school diploma or less scored lower in literacy, on average, than their counterparts in the other 23 countries.
- People who come from low educated families are 10 times more likely to have low literacy skills.
- The difference in literacy proficiency between people with the lowest and highest education levels was greater in the U.S. than in any of the other 23 countries.

**Demographics**
- The percentage of black and Hispanic adults in the U.S. who performed at the highest proficiency level on the literacy scale was lower than the percentage of white adults.
- Literacy differences between native-born and foreign-born Americans were greater than the average internationally.
- The difference in average literacy scores between the youngest and oldest Americans was smaller than in any other country.

**Civic Engagement**
- Low-literacy Americans are far more likely than high-literacy Americans to express low political engagement and understanding.

**Useful Websites**

**The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** provides information about the development of the assessment and the global results, plus samples of some of the tasks included on the survey. OECD promotes policies that will improve the economic and social well-being of people around the world, and provides a forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems. OECD sponsored the PIAAC data collection.

**The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)** provides detailed information about the U.S. study. NCES is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. NCES is located within the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences, and was the U.S. partner to OECD for PIAAC.

**American Institutes for Research/AIR PIAAC** provides a gateway to information about PIAAC across multiple sites, including a collection of media reports about PIAAC and list of upcoming events at which PIAAC will be discussed. AIR is a nonprofit organization dedicated to behavioral and social science research and evidence-based technical assistance.
Social Media Messaging

- People with #lowliteracy are more than twice as likely to be unemployed #endilliteracy
- 10% of adults lack the most elementary #computerskills #endilliteracy #lowliteracy
- People with #lowliteracy also tend to report #poorhealth, and lower #civicengagement #endilliteracy
- U.S. literacy score was below the international average; ranking 16 out of 24 countries #lowliteracy #endilliteracy #globalcompetitiveness
- Adults in the U.S. scored 270 out of 500 in literacy #lowliteracy #endilliteracy #globalcompetitiveness
- Adults in the U.S. scored 253 out of 500 in numeracy skills #lowliteracy #endilliteracy #globalcompetitiveness
- People with #lowliteracy are four times more likely to have #poorhealth #endilliteracy
- #Socioeconomic status in the U.S. is highly related to #literacyskills #lowliteracy #endilliteracy
- Americans with a #highschool diploma or less scored lower in literacy than their counterparts in other countries. #lowliteracy #endilliteracy #globalcompetitiveness
- People who come from low educated families are 10 times more likely to have #lowliteracy skills #endilliteracy
- #Lowliteracy Americans are far more likely to express low #politicalengagement #endilliteracy #globalcompetitiveness

State Adult Literacy Profiles

The Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education released new state adult literacy profiles. The profiles are not based on PIAAC data; they were calculated from the American Community Survey 2009-2011, U.S. Census Bureau. These profiles were constructed to indicate how many adults in each state lack a high school credential or English language proficiency and their corresponding participation rates in the labor force.
APPENDIX 5: LIBRARY LITERACY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEMBERS

Al Bennett: Literacy Consultant
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Darren J. Glenn: Project Assistant, ProLiteracy (Project Assistant)
David J. Rosen: President, Newsome Associates
Dinah O’Brien: Literacy Coordinator, Plymouth Public Library
Doreen Milcarek: Central Library Administrator, Onondaga County Public Library (Project Co-Director)
Elizabeth Dailey: Executive Director, Onondaga County Public Library (Project Co-Director)
Eric Nesheim: Executive Director, Minnesota Literacy Council
Gerry Burger-Martindale: Senior Manager, Calgary Public Library
Jackie Taylor: National Coalition for Literacy (Project Consultant)
John Zickefoose: Community Liaison, Corona Public Library
Katie Bova: Grant Researcher and Project Manager, ProLiteracy (Project Manager)
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