

Culminating Learning Project

1. Engage the workgroup

Briefly describe the composition of your program improvement workgroup.

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I identified the number of staff on the workgroup.	The workgroup is made up of five staff members (ABLELink Data Entry Person, Orientations Instructor, two ABLE instructors (one veteran/one novice) and a support staff member) and myself
2. ___ I described the positions of the staff on the workgroup	

2. Identify the program component to target for program improvement

List the program components that need attention that you identified from self-assessments, research review, and data analysis. Indicate the ONE program component that the workgroup selected to target in your pilot project.

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I listed the needs identified by the self-assessments.	<p>Needs identified in self-assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Educate the community about our program -Provide more leveled classes <p>-Improve our ability to maintain communication with past and present students</p> <p>Needs identified in research review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Learning how to assess the strengths and needs of students in the four component reading skills (vocabulary, fluency, decoding and comprehension) -Learning more about the contextualized approach to curriculum and instruction -Learning more about increasing the student achievement levels for basic skills students <p>Needs identified through data analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transition Goals -Enrollment -Level completion rates for ABE/ASE
2. ___ I listed the needs identified by the research review.	
3. ___ I listed the needs identified by the data analysis.	
4. ___ I listed ONE of those needs for us to use in the pilot.	

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	Prioritized need or program component: -Increasing level completion for ABE/ASE
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Briefly describe the process used to select the targeted component, as well as the process used to identify the parts of the targeted program component that you want to keep and the parts that need new strategies.

Checklist	Response
<p>1. ___ I described the process the workgroup used to narrow the needs down to the one program component to be used in the pilot.</p> <p>I described how we examined the current program component to identify:</p>	<p>The work group met at the end of last school year to discuss our results from the 3 target areas. Increasing level completion was identified in 2 of the 3 areas. We were concerned that we had a higher than average number of students who attended an orientation session and didn't stay in the program long enough to be considered enrolled or to be post tested. This negatively affects our program's Table 4 data (enrollment and MSG attainment) and level completion rates. In order for students to show level completion, they need to remain active in the program. If a student attends class regularly, they are typically able to show level completion.</p>
<p>2. ___ what we are doing now that we want to keep, and</p>	<p>We decided that we needed to enhance our orientation to provide more support for students as they enter the program to decrease early stop out and drop out numbers.</p>
<p>3. ___ what parts of the program component that need new strategies.</p>	<p>We kept the components of our previous 2-day orientation intact and added a third day. Day 3 of orientation involves working with these new students in small groups and one on one to help ease their transition into the program and classroom. During this time, they meet one on one with our transitions instructor to talk about their goals and go over their test scores. They also work with one of our support staff to introduce them to distance learning options and practice computer skills. We also added a career search activity using mynextmove.org</p>

3. Set a vision and goals

Vision: Orientation _____ will be working well when...
(Fill in the program component you are working on)

Checklist	Response
<p>1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in completing the vision</p>	<p>Over the summer, the support staff and I met 4 times to work through the elements of our orientation and identify strengths and weaknesses. We would each leave the meeting with tasks to</p>

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statement.	complete before the next meeting. Our goal is to meet the standards sent forth by the state for enrollment and MSG attainment.
2. ___ I included the final vision statement.	Orientation will be working well when a minimum of 85% of those in attendance are becoming enrolled students and a minimum of 63% of enrolled students are making measurable skill gains.

Goals: When we are finished, we will have achieved the following...

Checklist	Response
1. ___ I described how I engaged the staff in anticipating achievements	The entire work group met at the start of the new school year to review the goals and finalize programmatic changes to the orientation process. This was also discussed at the whole staff meeting.
2. ___ I included that list	Our goals are to; -increase level completion for ABE/ASE -increase enrollment -provide greater support to students -meet the performance standards set by the state

Evaluation criteria: What evidence will you collect to determine if you meet your goals? Identify each of the end user groups and the evidence each end user group identified as evidence they would need to convince them to use the new strategy.

End User	Evidence to Collect
Orientation/Transitions Instructor	Orientation evaluation, attendance, ABLELink (enrollment numbers, students' progress), goals, test scores
Teachers	Attendance, Test Scores, Student Feedback/Evaluations, Transitions outcomes
Support Staff	Student feedback, attendance, ABLELink Data, enrollment numbers, percentage of students who post test
Coordinator	Attendance, ABLELink data (Table 4), Student Surveys, Teacher Feedback, Individual Learning Plans, Goal Sheets
Checklist	Response
1. ___ I identified each of the end users (e.g., teachers, tutors, aides, managers) who will be using the new strategies.	I spoke with the end users and many of us came up with roughly the same evidence to show that increasing the support offered by mentoring students beginning at orientation and following through at scheduled times (roughly every 40 hours) would increase students level attainment.
2. ___ I solicited from each group the evidence they would need to convince	

them the new strategy worked, and I included each piece of evidence identified.

4. Gather and select promising practices

Briefly describe where you looked for models or strategies that would address your targeted component.

Checklist	Response
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I identified all of the sources we explored to find models and strategies that address our program improvement component.	We gathered ideas about orientation during conversations with other Aspire program coordinators and teachers and from their websites. We looked at intake and career advising procedures at the Wayne County Schools Career Center. We participated in professional development about career pathways and adding that into your orientation and advising. As part of our local United Way's workforce initiative, one of the requirements was to provide our students with a life coach. In working with other agencies, we learned best practices for providing these individualized services.

Briefly describe the strategy, procedure, or practice that the workgroup selected to pilot. Include a description of any adaptations that were made to make the strategy "fit" your program.

Checklist	Response
2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of the new strategies selected to pilot test.	We decided to add an initial one-on-one meeting with our orientation/transitions person to offer students more guidance. We extended our orientation to 3 days to allow for this meeting and additional resources to be shared with new students prior to entering the classroom. The students would have a follow-up meeting with this support staff member once they completed their instructional hours and took their posttest.
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of the adaptations we made to the new strategy and the rationale for those adaptations.	

5. Develop a pilot testing plan

Describe the process that was used to select the pilot sites - what characteristics did you consider in the selection process?

Checklist	Response
I included a description of:	The pilot sites were chosen by the orientation instructor and

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1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> who was involved in selecting the pilots	myself. We chose to pilot this new orientation to new students entering during FY18. The pilot locations were the Wooster and Orrville sites and only ABE/ASE students were included in the pilot group.
2. <input type="checkbox"/> the criteria and rationale we used for selecting the pilots.	

What type of training was necessary for the pilot sites? Describe how this was provided.

Checklist	Response
I included a description of:	The only training that was needed was for the orientation/transitions advisor and other support staff. This was done through meetings and regular interoffice communication directed by the program coordinator.
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the training that was necessary to get the pilot sites up to speed	
4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> who delivered the training	

Complete the chart outlining your interim benchmarks, activities, timeline, and responsible parties for planning, implementing, and evaluating your pilot project.

Interim Benchmarks	Activities	Completion Date	Lead Person Responsible for the Activity
Planning	Support Staff Meetings	7/17/17	Emily
	Research what other Ohio Aspire program orientations are doing	6/27/17	Emily/John
	Meeting with WCSCC Adult Education Manager	8/1/17	Emily
	Gather Data from FY17 orientations	8/1/17	Emily/Therese
Implementing	Integrate additional assessments (NorthStar, My Next Move)	8/1/17	Emily/Sharon/John
	Distance Education sign up	8/1/17	Sharon
	One-on-one meetings with Orientation person-initial intake	8/1/17	John
	Follow-up at 40 hours	9/18/17	John
Evaluating	Bi-monthly support staff meetings	4/9/18	Emily

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	Check-in with orientation person	4/12/18	Emily/John
	Orientation evaluation forms	4/12/18	John
	Data monitoring	4/12/18	Emily/John/Therese

What were your primary financial expenditures for the pilot project?

Expenditure Category	Cost
Orientations/Transitions Advisor Salary (paid with United Way workforce allocation)	\$4,320
benefits	\$667

6. Select and prepare the pilot sites

Briefly describe the process you used to prepare the pilot sites to implement the new strategy or procedure.

Checklist	Response
<p>I included a description of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> initial meetings I had with pilot sites to explain their roles and responsibilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> consultants or other staff used as a resource to support the pilot staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> any incentives you provided to pilot staff to encourage and/or reward their participation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> how you made sure that pilot staff knew the evaluation criteria and data they would need to collect to determine impact. 	<p>Instructors at the pilot sites were given information about the new orientation practices at the August back to school meeting. The primary responsibilities of the pilot were carried out by the orientation instructor and other support staff. I met regularly with support staff during the pilot to review student orientation, attendance and MSG attainment data. We set our evaluation criteria as a group during our planning process. I did not have any reward incentives.</p>

7. Conduct the pilot, measure the impact, and develop/fine tune PD and resources

Briefly describe the results of your pilot project based on your evaluation criteria for each end user group.

Checklist	Response
<p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included an overall narrative of the results of the pilot.</p> <p>2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included results based on the end users' evaluation criteria.</p>	<p>Based on the enrollment data, this pilot appears to be successful in transitioning students to the classroom. In FY17, 77.5% of students completing the 2-day orientation became enrolled students. In FY18, 78.6% of students going through the new 3-day orientation became enrolled. If I include students from the most recent orientation on track to be considered enrolled, this percentage jumps to 91.8%. According to orientation evaluations, students were receptive to the additional content of the third day. I do not feel that this pilot was very successful based on the attendance and skill gain data collected from ABLELink. This could be attributed to the fact that students are still attending and may make gains before the end of the program year. At this point though, 21% of new students have made a Measurable Skill Gain compared to 56% last year. Also, only 27% of them have attended for 40+ hours compared to 42% in FY17.</p>

What changes, if any, would you make before you implement the new strategy program-wide?

Checklist	Response
<p>3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included a description of specific changes I needed to make before implementing program-wide.</p>	<p>The biggest change I will make is increasing the frequency of the follow-up conference. We are planning to give this person/s the title of Student Services Advisor. Each student will be assigned an advisor and meet with them every 2-3 weeks. As part of our career pathways plan, we will add additional career exploration to the orientation schedule.</p>

Final Reflection

Briefly describe what you learned from this program improvement project that will help you in future work.

Checklist	Response
3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I included an overview of what I learned from this project.	This project was worthwhile, as it guided me on how to look at a specific piece of our program and make incremental changes. It was helpful to have gone through the training pieces, so I could understand the data, research and assessment pieces. Getting staff to help implement and carry out program change was very helpful and rewarding.