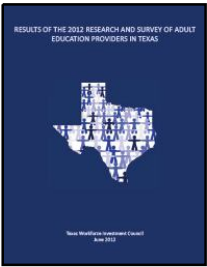


Results of the 2012 Research and Survey of Adult Education Providers in Texas



Adult education serves a critical role in the development of a well educated, highly skilled workforce. It prepares adults for further academic instruction or skills training that leads to employment and self-sufficiency. The adult education system in Texas comprises both federally funded and community-based providers. However, only the numbers of adult learners served by providers that receive federal funding from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) are tracked. Without knowing the total number of providers in Texas (both those receiving funding from TEA and those who do not receive TEA funding) and how many adults they are serving, calculating the delivery of programs to address the statewide need for adult education is impossible.

Prior studies by the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) have shown that there were approximately 4.3 million Texans who qualified for adult education services in 2011. For planning, funding, and program delivery, it is critical to understand the total number of learners actually served and the number who requested, but did not receive, service.

The Council executed this study to quantify these unknown populations in order to estimate the activity addressing the statewide delivery of adult education: the adult education/literacy providers in Texas and the individuals who are receiving services. While there is much about the methodology used for the study and the limitations of this type of research in the [full report](#), this document focuses primarily on why the study was undertaken and what was learned.

Why is the Adult Learner Population Critical?

Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees required by Texas employers—especially during periods of dropping unemployment rates, when access to skilled workers is critical. The Council advocates the provision of services and programs to enable adult learners to become and remain active in the workforce.

In order to meet the demand for workers, English language learners—a rapidly growing population which requires additional skills for workforce-related success—must be engaged and trained in ways that address both language and occupational skill acquisition. Those adults with low literacy levels should be assisted through targeted literacy programs to help them to gain or maintain employment.

The definition of adult education is determined by Title II of the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Title II of WIA defines adult education as the instruction and services below postsecondary level provided for individuals 16 years old or older not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law, and who:

- lack basic educational skills to function effectively in society,
- do not have a secondary diploma or equivalent, or
- are unable to speak, read, or write English.

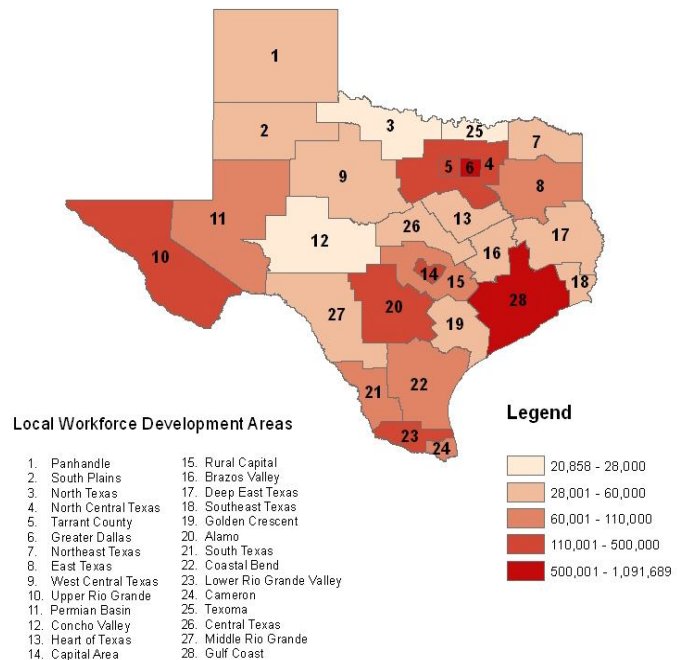
Analysis of Survey Results

Adult education programs generally emphasize basic skills in reading, writing, math, and English-language competency to prepare adults for jobs or further academic instruction. This definition, though somewhat narrowed by statutory parameters, provides a starting point for understanding the role of adult education in workforce development. In this study, adult education includes adult basic education (ABE), adult secondary education (ASE), English as a second language (ESL), and 'other' educational programs.

An electronic survey to determine the number of students served was sent to 652 adult education and literacy providers in Texas. The response rate for this survey is 50 percent (327 responses). The high provider response rate suggests that the sample accurately represents the population. The survey included questions regarding number of students, sites, funding, and waiting lists in 2011.

In 2011, adult education providers in Texas (both those funded by TEA and those not receiving TEA funding) report serving more ESL students than students in ABE, ASE, or 'other' programs as can be seen in the chart on the next page. On average, each ESL student completed a greater number of hours in their program than ABE, ASE, or 'other' adult education students.

Individuals Eligible for Adult Education Services, 2010



Source: Office of the State Demographer projections assuming half of the 1990s migration rate.

On average, an adult education provider who received funding from TEA served a greater number of students than a provider who did not receive TEA funding. The students served by a TEA-funded provider completed more hours. TEA-funded providers, on average, offered services at more sites.

Totals of Survey Responses for 652 Providers

Adult education providers who received funding from TEA were more likely to have a waiting list for their programs and had a greater number of students on the waiting list.

Estimated statewide totals indicate that adult education providers in Texas served a total of 182,384 ABE, ASE, and ESL students in 2011. TEA-funded providers served 100,443 (55 percent of the total number of students served) and the providers not receiving TEA funding served 81,941 (45 percent).

	Total	TEA Funded	Not TEA Funded
Number of Students:			
ABE	42,971	35,693	7,278
ASE/GED	21,809	6,936	14,873
ESL	117,604	57,814	59,790
Other	23,450	4,646	18,804
Additional Funding			
Provider has Waiting List	244	89	155
Number on Waiting List	26,546	11,247	15,299
Services Offered at Multiple Sites	269	87	183
Number of Total Sites	2,336	1,045	1,291

Table Notes: The summarized results illustrate the actual responses of the providers who answered the survey combined with the imputed sample mean values for the providers who did not answer the survey (n=652).

In that same reporting year, adult education providers offered services at an estimated 2,336 sites throughout the state. TEA-funded providers operated an estimated 1,045 sites and providers not receiving funding from TEA operated 1,291 sites. An estimated 87 TEA-funded providers (58 percent) and 183 providers not receiving TEA funding (37 percent) offered services at multiple sites.

Estimated statewide totals of students served and projections of need illustrate that 4.24 percent (182,384 individuals) of the 4,301,577 individuals who were eligible received adult education services in 2011. TEA-funded providers served 2.34 percent of the overall need and the providers who do not receive TEA funding served 1.9 percent.

An estimated 26,546 to 42,305 individuals were on a waiting list for adult education programs in 2011. Estimates indicate that a total of 89 TEA-funded providers (59 percent) and 155 providers not receiving funds from TEA (31 percent) had a waiting list. When added to the estimated 182,384 individuals served, 208,930 to 224,689 individuals sought adult education services in 2011.

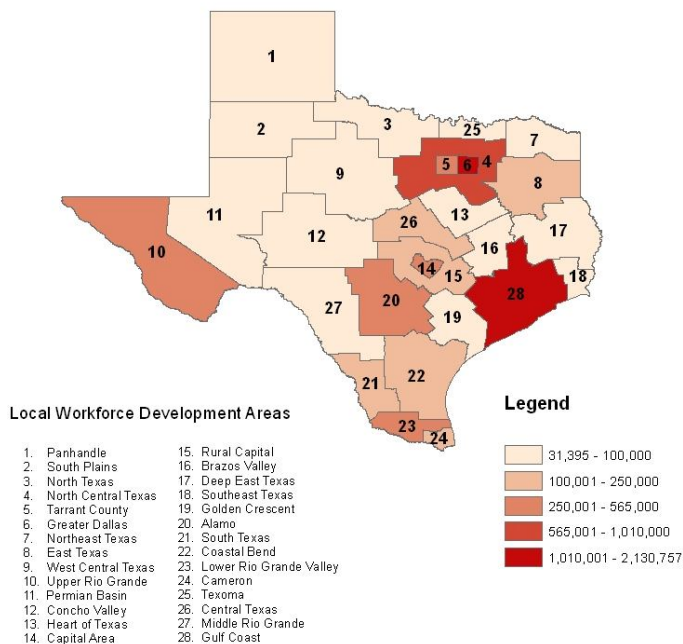
The map to the right shows the estimated number of individuals eligible for adult education services in 2040. These Office of the State Demographer projections assume a migration rate half the rate of the 1990s.

Observations

It is important to note that the comprehensive list of adult education providers used for this research and the resulting total number of adults served are only relevant for a specific period of time since any list of providers will become outdated when organizations throughout the state begin new services and others discontinue existing services. This research, therefore, provides a snapshot of adult education in Texas at a particular point in time.

The Texas Workforce Investment Council was created in 1993 by the 73rd Texas Legislature. As an advisory body to the Governor and the Legislature, the development of an integrated strategic plan for the workforce system is one of the Council's primary responsibilities. Because all Texans are part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, [Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System \(FY2010–FY2015\) \(Advancing Texas\)](#) specifies three populations that will be targeted for increased employment outcomes. One of those target populations is English language learners and those with low literacy levels. Detailed demographic analyses and maps are also available [here](#).

Individuals Eligible for Adult Education Services, 2040



Source: Office of the State Demographer projections assuming half of the 1990s migration rate.