



## Attachment D: Student Attendance Policy

**Policy Purpose and Rationale** – The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) – Adult Basic Education (ABE) office requires that:

ABE programs use State and Federal ABE funds to provide efficient and effective services to the eligible ABE population within their consortium boundaries. To meet that requirement, programs must implement effective outreach activities and, once students are enrolled, engage students in programming that is of sufficient intensity and duration for students to achieve their goals.

### **Recruitment and Outreach Methods**

Due to the nature of the students we serve, our outreach methods have been via service providers (Vocational Rehabilitation, Transition Programs, and Schools that have programs for deaf students). Over the school year, we arrange field trips to various local high school programs as well as transition programs to inform students of their options upon graduation of the program. We have an active Facebook page and share our happenings via that avenue - many deaf people prefer to keep in touch using this medium. We also attend community events throughout the state to inform the community that there are classes available for adult students. Our pamphlets are available for distribution at various state agencies that serve students with disabilities, to ensure that deaf adults know what's available to them. We strongly believe that partnering with other ABE sites (Faribault and Sauk Rapids) has greatly improved our visibility in greater Minnesota and they have referred potential learners to our program. We are also getting inquiries from other areas throughout the state, asking "when?" will we offer classes in their location.

### **Attendance Policy**

The CSD Deaf ABE attendance policy, as stated in the Student Attendance Contract, is as follows:

*Attendance is needed in order to make progress. Classes are funded based on attendance. If students do not come to class regularly, CSD Deaf Adult Education cannot offer free classes. Students who do not meet the attendance requirements may be dropped from the class and will need to re-register the following semester.*

*Regular attendance is expected and is your responsibility. Excusable absences include: unexpected work commitments, family emergencies, and illnesses. If you consistently arrive late to class, leave class early, have several consecutive absences without contacting your teacher, or attending less than the agreed upon schedule, you will need to meet with the Program Coordinator to reevaluate your continued enrollment in the program.*

Either the Adult Education Coordinator or the student's teacher will review and discuss this policy during registration and/or orientation.

### **Student Attendance Contract**



Students are required to sign the CSD Deaf ABE Policies and Procedures Student Contract during registration (see Attachment E). This form outlines the students schedule, provides teacher contact information, and describes Deaf ABE's policies and procedures, including attendance requirements and the learner progress policy.

### **Retention Strategies at Registration**

At registration, staff will provide information about the CSD Deaf ABE program and what the student will need to do to be successful in the program. This includes:

- Informing students of our policies and procedures surrounding attendance and the importance of contacting us to report absences
- Discussing with students their personal and academic goals and helping them see how they are connected
- Assisting the students in identifying the difference between short and long-term goals and how those will be attained
- Ensuring that students are aware that personal education goals will be achieved through regular attendance. Also, that we understand students may need to stop attending classes for periods of time due to various reasons and we will make every effort to accommodate them if this need arises.
- Encouraging students to examine possible barriers to regular attendance and finding ways to address these barriers before beginning to attend. This includes providing referrals for assistance, if available at the CSD site, or other community resources.
- Informing students that level gain is connected to regular attendance, progress in multiple areas, and test scores
- Notifying students that if they were to leave the program, students who have shown commitment in both attendance and academics will be given priority when re-entering the program

### **Retention Strategies in the Classroom**

Retention Strategies in the Classroom CSD ABE Staff and Teachers will:

- Remind students that regular attendance is necessary to reach their personal goals.
- Follow-up with students regarding their attendance practices.
- Review classroom practices to encourage student persistence.
- Build a sense of community within the classroom as well as structure and develop student leadership.
- Provide instruction that meets student academic goals, needs, and learning styles.
- Align student focus with classroom instruction.
- Increase the availability of computer classes and instruction.
- Explore student attendance with the possibility of recognition and incentive in the classroom and program.
- Speak with students who have not been attending regularly to determine why they have been absent and encourage them to return.



- Meet with students on a regular basis to assure that all progress and testing information is communicated to the student (reading, writing, ASL, soft skills, and individual readiness).

### **MDE-ABE Learner Progress Policy**

The ABE Consortium will comply with the [Learner Progress Policy](#) to ensure ABE funds are being used appropriately. Our consortium has decided to use September 9th, 2013 as the date we began the Learner Progress Policy implementation. We have incorporated the following explanation of the Learner Progress Policy in our orientation materials to make enrolling students aware of the policy:

*The learner must show improvement in test scores (CASAS or TABE) during 24 months of instruction. If the student does not advance at least one level during this time period, he/she must meet with their teacher and/or the Adult Education Coordinator to establish a six-month action plan. If no progress is shown during the six-month action plan, the student may be dismissed from the program for a pre-determined period of time.*

See Attachment H.2 for the the Learner Progress Plan Agreement, which includes the six-month action plan.

### **Reviewing Data with Consortium Partners and Stakeholders**

During our monthly staff meetings, we review enrollment figures. We also share the data with our Vocational Rehabilitation partners as well as our partner locations in Sauk Rapids and Faribault. With this data review, we are able to predict trends in enrollment, possible shifts in demographics, and the ability to adjust class schedules as needed.

### **Agreements with Partners and Building Referral Networks**

We do not have a partnership with Workforce Centers. However, we do have a referral base throughout the state via Vocational Rehabilitation and the Department of Human Services - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Division. Also, our partner sites are tremendously helpful in ensuring that referrals to CSD Deaf ABE happen.

**Using the MIS Data to Monitor Student Attendance and Retention** – The Program Director and Coordinator review the attendance on a monthly basis and inform the staff of current trends. Instructors are enthusiastic about keeping attendance numbers high, thankfully its a warmer winter!

### **Policy Contact Information**

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