Comprehensive Review and Analysis of the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS)

Final Report
Volume II

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Comprehensive Review and Analysis of the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS)

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Appendices

Appendix A

Technical Information on Methods

Appendix A. Technical Information on Methods

The following sections describe technical details of the methods of data collection and analysis used during the Comprehensive Review and Analysis of LINCS. Each section describes one of the methods used in the five studies that comprise the Review: the LINCS Website, the LINCS Discussion Lists, the Regional Technology Centers, the Special Collections, and the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Website. These methods were:

- Website review and usability testing of the LINCS website and its components
- Cost analysis of the LINCS website and component programs
- Content analysis of the LINCS Discussion Lists
- Document review
- Stakeholder interviews
- Surveys of users and non-users of the LINCS website

Website Review and Usability Testing

The LINCS website, including links to its regional and partner websites, was initially reviewed by RMC staff for the interim report on the RTC Study. This review was descriptive of the organization and content of these websites and an attempt to understand the comprehensiveness and consistency across the website. The procedures used are described in the interim report on the RTC study previously submitted to NIFL.[1]

An expert review and usability testing of the LINCS website and its components was subsequently conducted by Design Perspectives, Inc., consultants to RMC. Details of their methodologies are available in their reports to RMC, both previously submitted to NIFL:[2]

Cost Analysis

KPMG, LLP, a consultant to RMC, conducted a financial or cost analysis of the operations of the LINCS website and databases, LINCS Discussion Lists, the RTC, and SC grant programs. A description of the methods uses are presented in their report which is located in Appendix B of this report.[3]

Content Analysis

RMC asked KPMG, LLP to conduct a content analysis of the postings on the LINCS Discussion Lists to describe the content of the lists, determine the extent of legislative advocacy and other inappropriate messaging occurring in the lists, and look for evidence of impact. A full

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[1] *Review of LINCS Regional Technology Center Grant Program*, June 3. 2004.

[2] Design Perspectives, Inc., *LINCS Usability Evaluation: An Expert Review,* November 29, 2004, and *LINCS Usability Study*, December 15, 2004.

[3] KPMG, LLP, *LINCS Cost Analysis*, August, 2005.

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description of the methods and procedures used are available in their report to RMC which can be found in Appendix D of this report.[4]

Document Review

RMC obtained relevant documentation describing the LINCS website and its component programs for the Comprehensive Review from several sources: NIFL/LINCS staff members, RTC and SC directors, Discussion Lists moderators, and "swap sites" on the LINCS website that contain proposals, reports, plans, legislation, guidelines and other materials of interest to LINCS grantees, program staff, and staff members. RMC staff read these materials and used them primarily as references and background materials for our review throughout the duration of the project. However, NIFL Requests For Proposals, project proposals, and grantee reports were important sources of data for the interim reports for the studies and a Grantee Summary Report written for NIFL as part of this Review[5]

Interviews with NIFL/LINCS Stakeholders

RMC conducted telephone interviews with several different groups of people interested in and/or knowledgeable about the LINCS project, its programs or products. The interviews collected information about the purpose, structure, and operation of the LINCS website and grant programs; its relationship to the goals of NIFL, and the history of its design and implementation. RMC developed interview protocols based on the questions developed for each Comprehensive Review study, with most questions asked in the same way of the different groups to provide various perspectives on the same question. Copies of the interview protocols can be found in the interim reports on the studies of the Discussion Lists, RTC grant program, and Special Collections grant program.[6] The following lists the protocols available in the appendices of these reports:

- LINCS Discussion List Study: Discussion List moderators; NIFL staff, and staff from two private organizations hosting similar online discussion lists;
- Regional Technology Center Study: RTC directors, partner agency representatives, NIFL staff, and NIFL board members;
- Special Collections Study: SC directors, Core Knowledge Group members, NIFL staff members, and NIFL board members.

Interviews ranged from approximately 30 minutes to more than two hours, depending on the interviewee. In several cases, an interview was conducted over several days. Interviews were voluntary and conducted in confidence. All interviews were conducted in the winter and spring of 2004 except for the some interviews of DL moderators, which were completed in spring, 2005. The following is a list of the groups and the number interviewed:

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[4] KPMG, LLP, *LINCS Content Analysis of Discussion Lists*, December 10, 2004.
[5]. Specific documents reviewed are listed in the interim reports for those studies: Review of LINCS Discussion Lists, Review of LINCS Regional Technology Center Grant Program, and Review of LINCS Special Collections.
[6] *Review of LINCS Discussion Lists*, December 15, 2004; *Review of LINCS Regional Technology Center Grant Program*, June 3, 2004; *Review of LINCS Special Collections*, June 16, 2004. The Discussion List moderator protocol can also be found in the Summary Report of LINCS Discussion Lists Moderators' Interviews – March 2005 found in Appendix E of this report.

- 6 NIFL staff, including the Interim Director, the past director, the Director of LINCS, 2 current staff members and one former staff member;
- 3 NIFL board members, 2 current and 1 past;
- 2 members of a board members' organization who were familiar with LINCS and the RTCs;
- 13 LINCS Discussion List moderators;
- 2 staff members of private organizations hosting online discussion lists;
- 5 RTC directors representing, including 1 former director;
- 8 RTC Partner agency representatives;
- 1 RTC Affiliate agency representative;
- 10 Special Collections directors; and
- 10 Special Collections Core Knowledge Group members

For more information about these interviews, please refer to the individual LINCS study reports.

User and Non-User Surveys

RMC conducted four surveys of users and non-users of the LINCS website:

- the Adult Education/Literacy Practitioner Mail Survey, a survey of full and part-time adult education/literacy public program administrators and instructors;

- the Adult Education/Literacy Professional Membership Online Survey, a survey of members of organizations that are part of the National Coalition of Literacy;

- the LINCS Website User Online Survey, a survey of users of the LINCS website in the general population; and

- the LINCS Discussion List Online Survey, a survey of subscribers to LINCS Discussion Lists.

Three of the survey questionnaires are almost identical in content; the Discussion List Survey was tailored to the specific questions of that study but contained some questions that overlapped the other surveys or could contribute to the Website Study. Although the audiences for each survey were sampled, there was a slight possibility of overlap of groups being surveyed. To minimize duplication, respondents were asked not to complete a questionnaire if they had already participated in one of the other surveys.

All participants in the surveys were voluntary and received no compensation for their participation. No information was collected that required individual respondents to identify themselves. An explicit statement regarding anonymity and confidentiality was included on the first page of each survey questionnaire. Identifying information was included in the data collected from the surveys only if a respondent volunteered the information in order to receive an executive summary of the Comprehensive Review Final Report in exchange for completing the questionnaire. Because e-mail addresses can lead to the identification of a respondent, RMC handled any questionnaire that was by e-mail as if the address was identifiable information and applied appropriate procedures to protect confidentiality, according to the provisions of the U.S. Privacy Act of 1974.

Based on our pilot of the surveys, each questionnaire required, on average, about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Data collected were entered and stored in an Access database created for the purpose by RMC. Mail survey data were entered manually and data from the three online surveys entered automatically into the database upon completion of the questionnaire.

Below are details of the sampling, data collection, and responses to each of the surveys.

The Adult Education/Literacy Practitioner Mail Survey

This survey collected information from the audience that is the primary target of the LINCS project: adult education/literacy teachers and administrators in Adult Basic Education Programs. The extent of this group's access to technology is limited, i.e., reliable e-mail addresses are not routinely available for the population, primarily part-time teachers with high turnover. For this reason we believed a mail survey would ensure a greater response rate than other types of surveys, allowing RMC to determine the breadth of awareness and use of the LINCS website among practitioners in the adult basic education field.

      Sampling. To collect information from adult education/literacy practitioners in the field (e.g., full/part-time program administrators, full/part-time teachers) without reliable e-mail addresses or access to the internet, RMC sampled from the universe of publicly funded adult education programs in operation during FY 2003-2004, based on plan used that RMC conducted for OVAE in 1996 for the *National Evaluation of the Set-Aside for Teacher Training and Innovation in Adult Education*.

The sampling frame derived from a frame of 1,770 adult education programs developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 2002 for their Adult Education and Literacy Survey and Adult Literacy Life Skills Survey. NCES conducted these two surveys in 2003 to provide information on literacy proficiency of participants in federally funded adult education programs. The Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) gave RMC permission to use this database of adult education programs and NCES agreed to provide us with data file of the database.

Program sampling occurred by grouping the programs by size of their student enrollment: small (fewer than 500 students enrolled), medium (500-1,000 students enrolled), and large (more than 1,000 students enrolled). The target population of this survey was paid full-time and part-time administrative and instructional staff, which mirrored the primary target audience of the NIFL website.

Stratification was necessary because of the variation in access and use of technology by program staff working in programs of different size. Those working in large programs typically have more technology resources available to them than those working in medium or smaller programs with few resources. For this reason we believed that staff members in large programs would be more likely to access and use LINCS than staff in smaller programs and as such, the sample needed to have a balanced representation of these different types of programs.

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Based on the 2001-2002 National Reporting System (NRS) data for adult education programs, the total number of full and part time administrators and instructors nationwide is estimated to be about 85,000 in about 1,770 programs. Of the 85,000 administrators and instructors, approximately 53% are from large programs, 13% from medium-sized programs and 34% from small programs. The estimated average number of staff (administrators and instructors) per large-sized programs is 133.2; for medium-sized programs is 36.4; and for small-sized programs is 13.3.[7]

The goal of the sampling design was to produce a representative sample of programs from each of the three categories: large, medium, and small. With the population of 1,770 programs, a sample of 100 programs yielded a confidence interval of +/-9.5 with 95% confidence, which is an acceptable margin of error. However, past experience with similar surveys indicated that we could expect a response from 80% of the programs; therefore, we sampled 125 programs. Based on the distribution of staff in the three categories, we randomly selected 66 large-size programs, 17 medium-size program, and 42 small-size programs for a total of 125 programs.

Program staff members were randomly selected from each of the 125 programs in the program sample to receive the mail survey. The number included in the sample was based on the proportion of staff found in each size of program (see table above, i.e., 53% of the sample would be represented by staff in large programs, 13% by staff in medium programs, and 34% by small programs. The following describes the procedure for deriving the sample size.

First, the initial sample size of 382 is statistically appropriate for a tolerance of +/-.05 margin of error with 95% confidence. This initial number was adjusted to take into account the overall response rate. We expected an overall response rate of 80%, based on a past RMC mail survey. Therefore, a minimum sample size of at least 480 program staff was required to ensure the desired statistical sample.

Second, the sample number needed to be expanded again to account for those individuals who had never visited the LINCS website. When piloting this survey, we found that almost 40% of the 27 respondents had not visited the LINCS website. While this sample was not representative, it was indicative of the likely high numbers of program staff that were probably not familiar with LINCS. For this reason, we increased the sample size again to ensure that the program staff sampled would be more likely to include both those who had visited the LINCS website and those who had not. Therefore, the sample of 480 was adjusted, using a 40% estimate, resulting in an expected sample of at least 800 staff members nationwide.

Third, for the sake of computational convenience and statistical conservatism, RMC added another 50 to the 800 for a total sample size of 850 program administrators and instructors to be surveyed by mail

Pilot. The Adult Education/Literacy Practitioner Mail Survey initially went through a comprehensive review by NIFL administrative staff and an internal review by RMC staff

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[7] Data on the number of adult education programs and staff were obtained from the National Reporting System for Adult Education Programs 2001-2002, which RMC obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics.

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familiar with the adult education/literacy field and involved in ongoing work in the adult education and family literacy field.

In May 2004 three Adult Basic Education program directors and six instructional staff members (two teachers from each program) from three states (Oregon, California, and New Hampshire), representing three types of organizations: community-based organizations, community colleges, and libraries, participated in a pilot test of the survey. A debriefing questionnaire accompanied the survey questionnaire and requested comments on burden, readability, clarity, and interpretability.

Staff members from the three programs completed the survey questionnaire and provided responses to the debriefing questionnaire. Based on their feedback, we revised our survey questionnaire to make certain questions clearer, combined questions for a more concise reporting of similar data, and changed answer patterns to make them consistent across all questions.

Data collection. RMC randomly selected 125 adult education programs from the NRS database stratified according to the percentages described above. In early March, 2005, we contacted their program directors by telephone, e-mail, and letter, explained the purposes and importance of the study, and enlisted their cooperation and support. Below are the procedures that were followed.

RMC requested staff rosters of full and part-time instructors from program directors.

- We randomly selected instructors from the list of staff and mailed them hard copies of the questionnaires. Program staff either mailed or e-mailed the completed questionnaires to RMC.

- To compensate for programs that decline to participate, additional programs were randomly selected from the NCES list and solicited in order to maintain the sample of 125 programs.

- To compensate for staff that did not return the questionnaires after a reminder, new names were randomly drawn from the staff lists to maintain the sample of 850 instructors.

At the suggestion of NIFL staff, RMC also sent hard copies of the questionnaire to the COABE Conference, a conference for ABE program staff and a volunteer distributed the questionnaires to volunteer participants who then returned them to RMC in self-addressed postage paid envelopes.

Response. To improve response rates, RMC used several strategies for the mail survey.

- A cover letter was attached survey to inform the respondent of the importance of the study and will stress the need to obtain complete data.

- Respondents were informed in the cover letter that an executive summary of the final report would be available to them upon request and provision of an email address.

- A toll-free telephone number and email address for RMC Research was included on the cover page of each questionnaire so that respondents' questions could be readily answered or difficulties resolved.

- The cover letter specified the date by which a response was expected. After that date, all non-respondents were contacted by telephone or e-mail. Any program directors not responding within two weeks of the telephone follow up were either sent additional e-mails or received a telephone call explaining the importance of their response and encouraging them to participate.

- The period of data collection was extended through May, 2005.

The response to the mail survey was 177 completed questionnaires. This represents a response rate of 21% of the 850 sampled. This number also represents 19% of the total number of questionnaires received across the four surveys. The volunteer COABE conference sample response was 7 questionnaires, or less than 1% of the total responses.

The Adult Education/Literacy Professional Organization Online Survey

This survey was intended to collect information from an important but different audience for LINCS: professional consultants, researchers, program designers, and others that participate in the professional adult education/literacy membership organizations that serve this group. Members of these groups are accessible by e-mail and, because of their electronic access, are probable users of LINCS.

Sampling. This survey targeted professionals in the adult education/literacy field, for example, policy makers; researchers; state directors of adult education agencies; professors of adult education/literacy; and adult education/literacy consultants. RMC solicited a number of adult education/literacy professional organizations to ask their members to participate in the survey. Ultimately, one organization agreed to participate, the Family Literacy Association, and a NIFL staff member provided us with the Family Literacy Program Directory, which contained a list of family literacy program directors. Each list included e-mail addresses which facilitated contact.

Data collection. Due to time constraints, RMC chose to ask any people on these two lists to voluntarily participate in the survey rather than attempt to sample. Solicitations were sent by e-mail in early April, 2005, to a total of 3,790 professional members of these organizations. The e-mail explained the survey and asked that they use a hyperlink to access the online questionnaire. Participants completed the questionnaire online. Completion and submittal of questionnaires online resulted in data being stored directly on the RMC server for analysis by RMC staff.

Response. For the Professional Membership online surveys, RMC followed recommendations of Dillman (2000), Sudman (1976), and others in the development, programming, and administration of the surveys to increase response rates. These included, e.g., keeping the online questionnaire as short and simple as possible, using brief and clear

instructions, and programming the questionnaire using technology that will not prevent less advanced computers from accessing the survey. However, because of limited resources, RMC substituted e-mail contact with members of the samples, where possible, rather than personal telephone calls. In addition, during administration, RMC

- An invitational e-mail message was sent to (a) inform them of the study; (b) invite them to complete the survey; (c) emphasize the importance of their responses; (d) describe the estimated burden that completion of the survey would require; (e) provide a hyperlink to the website housing the online subscriber survey; and (f) provide them with contact information for questions. The hyperlink was keyed with a unique identification number for each subscriber to ensure that each respondent could complete the questionnaire only once;

- A follow-up email reminder was sent one week later, with a second reminder several weeks later if we had received no response. Both reminders included the hyperlink to connect to the survey.

- Data collection was extended beyond the planned six weeks to a full two months, ending on May 27, 2005.

The total number of participants was 359 or 38% of the total number of participants across all four surveys.

The LINCS Website User Online Survey

This survey targeted users of the LINCS website in the general population, those for whom we had no other way to contact them but were known to visit and/or use LINCS. Because LINCS is a public resource, open and accessible to anyone using the Internet, these users could be from any sector of the general population but likely to be active in the adult education/literacy field, e.g., students, teachers, tutors, program directors, researchers, curriculum designers, and librarians. However, because they are the group that uses LINCS, they were in the best position to describe its value and use.

This survey duplicated most of the questions on the Adult Education/Literacy Practitioner Mail Survey and the Adult Education/Literacy Professional Organization Online Survey. However, by placing the solicitation to participate in this survey directly on the LINCS website and in pop-up windows that appeared randomly to visitors of the website, this survey captured the experience of respondents who use the LINCS website and could comment immediately on their experience.

Sampling. Locating links to the survey on the website ensured collecting data from the broadest possible audience of LINCS, i.e., any users of LINCS, whether or not they are practitioners or professional organization members that were targeted by the two other surveys. Thus, the universe for this survey was any potential visitor to the website. Because there is no way to know exactly who is a member of this universe of LINCS users and to solicit their participation directly, the basis for sampling was the WebTrends data collected for NIFL about the number of visitors and "hits" to the LINCS website. These data included the "Number of Different Users" for two of the LINCS website online databases: the materials and grants

databases. The monthly average number of different users of the website was estimated to be about 1000 unduplicated users.

Initially RMC assumed that we would, through the use of pop-up solicitations be able to produce a randomly selected sample of users. However, because this was classified as a customer satisfaction survey, the decision was made to use a volunteer approach to obtaining responses, and collect as many responses as possible. Visitors to the website could choose to respond to the survey solicitation located in several locations on the website, or to the pop-up solicitation that appeared randomly.

Data collection. Solicitations to participate in the survey were posted on the LINCS website beginning in early March, 2005. They remained posted until the end of May, 2005. Participants submitted completed questionnaires online in response to these solicitations. Completion and submittal of the online questionnaires resulted in data being stored directly on the RMC server for analysis by RMC staff.

Response. RMC followed the recommendations of Dillman (2000), Sudman (1976), and others in the design, programming, and administration of the survey to increase response rate. This included, e.g., keeping the online questionnaire as short and simple as possible, using brief and clear instructions, and programming the questionnaire using technology that will not prevent less advanced computers from accessing the survey. In addition to these design features,

- RMC worked with LINCS staff to post an appealing invitation on the LINCS home page and other key pages on the LINCS website with a hyperlink connecting the user to the survey on RMC's server. Also, a pop-up window with the same invitation appeared randomly, but only once during a visit to the website, on other frequently used pages;

- the survey remained accessible to interested participants beyond the initial six to eight weeks planned for data collection, to achieve the highest number of responses.

RMC had hoped to collect at least 794 completed questionnaires, which would represent 45% of the 1000 users estimated from the Webtrends data if a simple random sample of that population was obtained. Instead, RMC was successful at collecting questionnaires from a volunteer sample of 275 general population users of the LINCS website. This number represents 28% of the 1000 estimated users of the LINCS website; it also represents 29% of the total sample of respondents to all four surveys conducted for the Comprehensive Review.

The LINCS Discussion List Online Survey

This survey targeted users of the LINCS Discussion Lists, typically active professionals and students in the adult education/literacy field. These users could be accessed by e-mail through their subscription addresses. Because they were subscribers, it was assumed that they were the most familiar with the procedures and content of the discussion lists and were in the best position to comment on their usefulness and value.

Sampling. At the time of the survey there were 14 LINCS Discussion Lists with a total membership of approximately 6500, all with e-mail addresses. Many members subscribe to

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more than one list. To create a universe for sampling, the lists were combined and cleaned to remove duplicate addresses and decrease the chance that subscribers would receive more than one e-mail solicitation. The cleaned list resulted in a universe of approximately 1246 members.

A simple random sample of the 1246 members was drawn, resulting in a sample of 716. This number assumes a +/- .05% margin of error with 95% confidence, and a 45% response rate.

Data Collection. At the beginning of March, RMC sent an e-mail to the sample inviting them to participate in the survey. They were asked to access the online questionnaire through a hyperlink embedded in the e-mail solicitation. Respondents that completed the survey online had their data automatically entered into an electronic database for analysis by RMC staff.

Response. As in the other two online surveys, RMC followed recommendations in the literature for design, programming, and administration of the survey to obtain the best possible response rate. Specifically,

- an invitational e-mail message was sent to (a) inform them of the study; (b) invite them to complete the survey; (c) emphasize the importance of their responses; (d) describe the estimated burden that completion of the survey will require; (e) provide a hyperlink to the website housing the online subscriber survey; and (f) provide them with contact information for questions. The hyperlink was keyed with a unique identification number for each subscriber to ensure that each respondent could complete the questionnaire only once;

- one week after the invitational e-mail was sent, non-respondents were contacted by e-mail urging them to respond. A second follow-up email reminder was sent several weeks later. Both reminders included the hyperlink to connect to the survey.

- To compensate for subscribers that did not respond or declined to participate, additional subscribers were randomly selected from the list and solicited in order to maintain the sample size. In all, solicitations were e-mailed to 1246 subscribers.

- RMC continued soliciting subscribers through the end of May, 2005, longer than had been anticipated.

RMC received a total of 111 completed questionnaires from subscribers for a response rate of 16%. Out of the total responses received from all four surveys, the subscribers represent 15%.

Appendix B

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LINCS Cost Analysis

KPMG

National Institute for Literacy

LINCS Cost Analysis

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

RMC Research Corporation ("RMC") has engaged KPMG LLP ("KPMG") to assist in its *Comprehensive Review and Analysis of LINCS* for the National Institute for Literacy ("NIFL"), specifically to provide assistance in a cost or financial analysis of the Literary Information and Communication System ("LINCS").   RMC wants to understand the cost effectiveness of the operation of the LINCS Website, its associated databases, and its other key components, that is, the Regional Technology Centers ("RTCs"), the Special Collections ("SC" or Content Development Partners), and the Discussion Lists ("DLs"). For purposes of this report, the Special Collections, Regional Technology centers and certain NIFL affiliates are referred to as the "LINCS Cost Centers."

The objective of the study is to provide NIFL decision makers with an historical and scenario analysis, to assist them in maximizing their limited resources in order to effectively serve their stakeholders in the fulfillment of NIFL's mission. This study was prepared using facts provided by NIFL and LINCS affiliates.   We did not independently verify these facts.   The results and conclusions of this report may be materially affected to the extent that the facts differ from those provided.

2 Executive Summary

This report analyzes the services NIFL provides through the LINCS Cost Centers. Through a review of the related financial data available, KPMG has prepared a cost analysis on the effectiveness of the financial data employed by the LINCS cost centers, including a high level examination of the cost structure incurred by comparable for-profit companies.

In light of our analysis, our findings for the overall LINCS operations are:

- NIFL has used an effective combination of limited staff resources, contractor support, and RTC involvement to maintain a variety of Web-based information dissemination.
- The Southern and Midwest RTCs provide important skills and resources to the continued operation of the LINCS Website. Many of these services are able to be provided without direct expense to the RTC grant budgets.

Our findings for the RTCs are:

- Four of the RTCs conduct operations at very similar levels of average operating budgets, approximately $170,000. Eastern has on average operated at less than half of that, at approximately $60,000.[1]

- The role played by human capital in the operations of the centers is critical, as reflected in the share of its costs in the overall budget. Based on the fifth year budgets, fully loaded labor represents anywhere from a third of the budgets up to 71 percent.

- Of the five categories of services used for this analysis, the three that are most associated with specific knowledge, skills, and aptitudes, are Maintaining Collections, Research Activities, and Education and Training Services. These account for almost half of the activities for four of the centers, and 90 percent for the Western-Pacific.

- The role of in-kind provided goods services play a not insignificant role in the operations of the centers. Based on the information provided by the RTCs and through interviews, it is clear that many additional hours are provided to the operations than are reflected in the presentation of the budgets. While our information is very high level, it is our informed sense that the impact would be an increase in the percentage of time accounted for by the RTC knowledge workers or subject matter experts.

Our general findings with respect to the SCs are:

- Of the nine SCs examined, eight have operated at a very similar five-year average budget level of approximately $50,000 a year. The other is quite larger at approximately $166,000.

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[1] The Eastern LINCS became a part of the Midwest LINCS in project Years 4 and 5. Through information provided by Midwest personnel, KPMG has assigned 25% of these year's budgets to this LINCS.

- Across the SCs, there is quite a range of the budget share for fully loaded labor, namely, 22 percent to 85 percent on a five-year average basis, and 10 to 93 on the most recent year's budget.

- The SCs do portray a broadly similar approach to organization across the five general service areas. The picture is consistent at the five-year average and most recent year perspective. Approximately seventy percent of the service activities are directly associated with expanding and maintaining the collection.

- The similar cost structure of the SCs is likely due to the fact that they have a much narrower and more defined mission compared to the RTCs. Such commonality of a narrow mission is then, not surprisingly found in a common approach to its fulfillment.

Our general findings with respect to the Discussion Lists is:

- From the perspective of the current DL operations, that is, the current configuration and use of software, hardware, and SMEs, the DLs are a cost effective component of LINCS. The DLs yield measurable benefits2 based on the number of registered users, activity conducted, and the search activity of the DL archives, while requiring minimal financial resources.

Our findings from the market comparability analysis:

- Based on a set of 22 comparable companies with broadly comparable information collection and dissemination service lines, the market based, interquartile, requirement for gross profitability runs at seventeen percent to 86 percent of operating expenses.

- Even if the operations of the centers were to be replicated via a non-profit structure, which include normal economic returns to the management, the level of additional resources required to be raised are reasonably expected to exceed the current level of NIFL funding.

- As currently configured and operated, the RTCs do not compete with for profit firms.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered:

- Through its process of grant awards, NIFL should continue to look for organizations whose mission are consistent with the goals and mission of NIFL. The benefits to the Literacy community from leveraging of time, goods, and services, is significant.

- NIFL should formalize a review of the value of the in-kind goods and services all of its grants leverage. Because this value is significant, NIFL should ensure that policy makers understand all of the benefits that NIFL engenders.

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[2] A rigorous valuation of the intangible benefit associated with the quantitative measures noted, would provide a better articulation on the valuation of the benefits, but given the low cost of operations, such an examination hardly appears to be warranted.

- Any restructuring consider for LINCS operations and maintenance, needs to ensure that all aspects of current LINCS operations, especially those supported through leveraged resources, are fully accounted and funded.

Summary finding:

- Given the need for sharing programs, practices, and resources, NIFL is a classic example of what economists refer to as a public good. That is, NIFL provides the means and resources to meet the needs of a target population for which the free market does not provide enough profit incentive. In other words, without NIFL funding, it is reasonable to conclude that such services would not be provided.

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The remainder of this report is structured as followings:

- Section 3 provides a cost of services analysis of the overall LINCS and LINCS Cost Center operations,

- Section 4 contains the market comparability analysis of the services provided by the LINCS Cost Centers ,

- Section 5 provides our conclusions and recommendations, and

- The appendices present the supporting information used in the course of our analysis.

3   Cost of Service Analysis

To conduct an analysis of the cost structure of the LINCS service provision, KPMG collected and reviewed LINCS' financial data and conducted functional analysis interviews with personnel from each of the entities that provide services to the operations and maintenance of the LINCS Web-based dissemination activities. This section analyzes that set of information. The financial data includes available budgets via Federal Form 524, budget summaries, and actual funds each center received.

The entities providing such service are: the National Institute for Literacy ("NIFL"), five regional technology centers ("RTC"), and twelve Content Development Partners ("Special Collections"). This collection of organizations will be referred to collectively as the LINCS Cost Centers.

3.1   LINCS Overview[3]

LINCS, a Web-based network, is one of the principal locations for literacy-related information for individuals and organizations. The main activities conducted each year by LINCS are the expansion of a self-created database of local, regional, and nationally developed materials; the training of people in the application of technology in teaching and professional development; and the leveraging of several million dollars for regional, State, and local literacy agencies.

LINCS is a cooperative electronic network of national, regional, state, and local partners. These partners include: NIFL, five regional LINCS partners, representative organizations from 45 states and territories, twelve Content Development Partners ("Special Collections"), and several major national organizations. The coordinated efforts of LINCS partners have provided a national infrastructure for the literacy community to access on-line the most comprehensive collection of family and adult basic skills research, as well as resources available for teaching, learning and training.

The LINCS Cost Centers use the following guidelines in their efforts to tackle literacy-related concerns:

- As a comprehensive system, LINCS is designed to meet the needs of adult and family literacy stakeholders by providing free, timely, easy, and efficient access to the most relevant and up-to-date adult and family literacy resources and training.

- As a distributed system, LINCS' architecture is intended to provide more flexibility in contributing and maintaining resources at the state and local level while eliminating fragmentation and duplications nation-wide.

- As an interactive system, LINCS brings together different literacy stakeholders enabling them to share resources and expertise instantaneously through different online communication tools.

- As a collaborative network, LINCS' content, design, structure, and feature enhancements are developed through contributions, feedback, and ongoing communication between NIFL, LINCS partners and different sectors of the literacy field.

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[3] Information for this section is taken from the NIFL website: http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/about/about.html

As an evolving system, LINCS reflects new developments to help improve literacy stakeholders' access to information and use of technology resources in teaching and learning.

3.1.1   NIFL's Supporting Activities

NIFL Overview

The activities of NIFL to strengthen the Nation's literacy skills are authorized by the U.S. Congress under two laws, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act ("AEFLA") in the Workforce Investment Act of 1993 and the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB") of 2002. The AEFLA directs the Institute to: provide national leadership regarding literacy, coordinate literacy services and policy, and serve as a national resource for adult education and literacy programs. More recently, the NCLB law also directs the Institute to disseminate information on scientifically based reading research pertaining to children, youth, and adults, as well as information about development and implementation of classroom reading programs based on the research.

NIFL supports programs and services designed to improve the quality of literacy programs nationwide and by statute is administered by the Secretaries of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. NIFL's primary activities are the following:

- Bringing technology to the literacy field through LINCS, a state-of-the-art, Internet-based information and communication system. LINCS operates through a network of partners nationwide to provide a single point of access to a broad array of literacy-related information and public discussion lists as well as technology training opportunities.

- Improving services to adults with learning disabilities through *Bridges to Practice*, a four volume research-based guide. The Institute has provided training in more than 30 states in the use of *Bridges to Practice* and is now focusing on training trainers.

- Promoting adult literacy system reform through *Equipped for the Future* ("EFF"), a long-term initiative that developed content standards to ensure that every adult can gain the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill real-world responsibilities in his or her role of worker, parent, and citizen.

- Connecting those in need of adult, child, and family literacy services with information about programs in their communities through America's Literacy Directory, an easy-to-use, on-line searchable database.

- Providing copies of NIFL publications through the its Hotline and Clearinghouse, where English- and Spanish-speaking operators are available between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. Hotline operators also make program referrals using America's Literacy Directory.

- Offering policy information to government agencies, Congress, and the adult literacy field through briefings, Policy Updates on developments of national importance, and State Policy Updates on issues of concern to state and local literacy programs.

- Developing and disseminating scientifically-based reading research and research-based products to educators, parents, policymakers, and others through the *Partnership for Reading*, a collaborative effort among NIFL, the US Department of Education ("ED"),

and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development ("NICHD"), and the US Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS").

NIFL Role in LINCS Web Operations

In carrying out its mission as described in the previous section, NIFL undertakes an oversight role in the operations and development of the NIFL website and the LINCS effort. NIFL staff time in support of the web-based dissemination activities is represented in the following table.

Table 1. NIFL Personnel Effort Devoted to Websites.

NIFL Measure	NIFL Fiscal Year				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Full Time Equivalents	2.0	2.0	1.5	2.25	1.25
Percent of effort for LINCS	95%	95%	90%	90%	90%
Percent of effort for DLs	3%	3%	7%	7%	7%
Percent of effort for Other	2%	2%	3%	3%	3%

Source: NIFL staff estimates, 2005.

Services of Titan Corporation

Titan Corp is a third party contractor that provides technology services for NIFL. One-third of its time is spent directly supporting LINCS. Titan provides NIFL with IT and hosting services. The following is a business description of Titan Corporation.[4]

> Titan Corporation's principal activity is to provide information and communications products, solutions and services for national security. It focuses on four markets: C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), Transformational Programs, Enterprise IT and the War on Terrorism/Homeland Security. Solutions and services include research and development, design, installation, integration, test, logistics support and maintenance. The Group also provides information processing, information fusion and data management services to government agencies with sophisticated information systems. In addition, it develops and produces digital imaging products, sensors, lasers, electro-optical systems, threat simulation systems, intelligence electronic hardware, signal intercept systems and complex military specific systems. During 2002, the Group discontinued the operations of Titan Wireless, Cayenta, AverCom and LinCom Wireless.

In addition to general administrative and basic technological support, the following are representative of the types of services Titan performs for NIFL:

- System Maintenance, software/hardware purchase and upgrade support,

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[4] As described on Business.com.

- System Documentation,

- Internet access services and support,

- Cataloging, calendar grant, job and news flashes support,

- Management support,

- Technical assistance,

- Utility support,

- Website enhancement services,

- Database development enhancements,

- Archive services, and

- Support for the NIFL America's Literacy Directory (ALD)

Similar to the five year term of the RTC and Special Collections grants, the Titan contract also has a five year term. KPMG has allocated the five-year contract amount of $3,846,153.29 evenly over the term of the contract. Per discussions with NIFL personnel, KPMG has allocated one-third of Titan's billed expenses to LINCS.

Table 2: Titan Contract Allocation

	Project Year				
	1	2	3	4	5
5-year Budget:	$3,846,153				
Yearly Allocation	$769,231	$769,231	$769,231	$769,231	$769,231
LINCS Multiplier	*x (1/3)*	*x (1/3)*	*x (1/3)*	*x (1/3)*	*x (1/3)*
Total LINCS Titan Expense	**$256,410**	**$256,410**	**$256,410**	**$256,410**	**$256,410**

Titan personnel staff time in support of the web-based dissemination activities are represented in the following table.

Table 3. Titan Corp. Labor Cost per Hour to Support Websites.

Labor Category	NIFL Fiscal Year				
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Systems Engineer 5/4	$115.00	$115.00	$115.00	$85.00	$85.00
Web Specialist	$43.00	$43.00	$43.00	$43.00	$43.00

Source: NIFL staff estimates, 2005.

3.1.2   *RTCs' Supporting Activities*

This section provides a discussion of the role each of the five RTC have played in the development of the LINCS website and their role in current operations. From our review of the financials associated with the RTCs and discussions we had with each center, to varying degrees they have LINCS website responsibilities, but the efforts and activities are not tracked separately or distinctly for that effort. LINCS website operations are blended into the range of and scope of services each provides. Therefore, the actual discussion of the cost associated with each RTC is presented in the section on *Regional Technology Centers*.

Eastern LINCS

The earlier years of this project were spent recruiting partners and maintaining these relationships. Significant time was spent developing and introducing partners to web templates, newsletters and discussion lists, web-based trainings, technical support, and regional listserv services.

In addition time was spent on training and certifying Expert Trainers. State partners were expected provide and reimburse these experts for delivering on-site training within the state. Information for services provided during years four and five are included with the Midwest RTC services.

Thus, no meaningful expenses were incurred by Eastern LINCS in the development of the Website.

Midwest LINCS

The majority of the RTC's operations are dedicated to maintaining the database and its website. This also includes web development and maintenance services for the Family and Assessment collections and, in years 4 and 5, the Eastern RTC and partners. As of year 5 it also includes supporting the Northwest and helping with system maintenance of its site, which is hosted on the Midwest servers. Though not a large part of its budget, the RTC also spends time helping its partners with web development services.

In years 1 through 3, an estimated $20,350 worth of donated time was spent developing and implementing the LINCS template for four state partners. In addition, approximately $42,000 in donated time was spent on web design/programming and web hosting for five partner states. One partner state used the RTC's services for an Electronic Newsletter for fifteen months, resulting in and estimated cost of $450 ($30/month). Four states used the RTC's services for hosting electronic discussion lists at a cost of $1,000. Most of the partner states have the capacity to host their own lists.

In years 4 and 5, technology planning was a major focus of the project. States consult with the RTC on technology and technology planning issues, but the majority of the work is done by the partner. Less assistance was needed during this period with Template development and implementation services, as only two states implemented the template. This resulted in approximately $10,150 worth of time spent assisting the partners. In addition, approximately $39,000 in donated time was spent on web design/programming and graphics, database design and programming (dynamic sites), and web hosting. Five Midwest and two Eastern state

partners used the web hosting services. Four Midwestern and one Eastern state partners used the RTC's database hosting services for their electronic discussion lists, which was valued at $2,500.

The Midwest RTC has played a development role for the LINCS website. It is clear that this RTC is in a position to provide assistance to the States in their region that does not require NIFL funding, but flows from the role that Kent State University undertook as an RTC. In that regard, NIFL funding has been able to leverage additional resources. For years 4 and 5, the total allocated budget was approximately $357,000, resulting in at least $51,650 leveraged funds, or an additional 14 percent.

Northwest LINCS

The majority of this center's operations are spent performing research and loading information onto the website, web maintenance, and cataloging.

The RTC operates its own server and provides technical services such as hosting discussion lists, creating web pages, and proving email accounts. It contracts with the webmaster for some web design and update services.

In a partnership with the states, the center has created a Technology Pilot program which is a national student learner site. For the Pilot, the center worked with its Montana partner, which created LINCS Professional Development modules. The Wyoming partner offers a workshop for the GED Transition Site and its Oregon partner offers workshops and new resources for Even Start Programs.

The RTC is also responsible for maintaining the Oregon State LINCS website, the Corrections Special Collections and other small agency sites.

This RTC operations appear to have been mostly operational and less on the development of the LINCS website. As is presented in the RTC Cost Analysis section, this RTC has also benefited from significant in kind provision of goods and services.

Southern LINCS

The majority of the center's operations is spent on maintaining web sites, providing technical support, maintaining the web sites for both the Literacy and Learning Disabilities and the Equipped For the Future Special Collections, and provides an online calendar of LINCS and partner activities and programs. The center also performs cataloging, hosting discussion lists, and developing a Pilot program.

An estimated $17,000 per year in donated sources is spent providing web hosting services for the center's partners. The center also maintains discussion lists in which approximately $800 in donated sources is spent per list. In addition, the RTC spends approximately $12,000 in donated time and resource for discussion board hosting, calendar hosting, web trends web log analysis, and cataloging services.

The Pilot program is a free professional development service that is offered to partner states. The Pilot is run by both the Southern LINCS and he Midwest LINCS.

The center's webmaster is responsible for designing the web pages for all the LINCS RTCs and four special collections (Literacy and Learning Disabilities, Program Leadership, Equipped for the Future, and Workforce Education). The Southern LINCS also provides server space, server maintenance, web maintenance, cataloging support, and general management and coordination services for all four LINCS. The majority of these services are provided as an in-kind service.

In addition, the webmaster provides assistance to partner states and National LINCS on web design and maintenance; assures 509 compliance on all Southern LINCS web sites, and assists in training and presentations.

Similar to the Midwest RTC, this RTC has played an important development role for the LINCS website. As will be discussed in the RTC Cost Analysis section, the University of Tennessee is in a position to provide assistance to NIFL and the broader LINCS community that does not require NIFL funding. In that regard, NIFL funding was able to leverage significant additional resources for the development and operations aspects of the LINCS website.

Western-Pacific LINCS

The Western-Pacific RTC maintains the web sites of the state and island partners. In addition to these services, the majority of the center's operations is spent on designing web sites, print, graphics, and logos. The center also maintains and hosts the ESL collection as well as the Science and Numeracy collection.

Sun Microsystems donated and installed an Enterprise 3000 server, which was valued at $60,000. The center also continues to receive technical support for this server. In addition, Mindset Software Inc. provides database, technical, and programming support for the project.

The RTC has created and maintained a regional communication infrastructure, developed web sites for partner state and islands, conducted technology and LINCS training in each state and islands, and leveraged NIFL funding to well over $900,000 in in-kind contributions, equipment and services. The RTC receives over $75,000 in funding for resource development for curriculum development for the joint Learning Resources/CNN/CBS web site. In addition, MLS or MLS students provide cataloging and abstracting services for the LINCS database for the region.

The operations of the Western-Pacific RTC are difficult to separate into distinct activities that directly support the website versus other activities. Based on the information obtained from the RTC, it is clear that many of the activities build upon one another or serve more than one purpose as demonstrated in having leveraged approximately one million dollars. Their role in the early development however was not significant.

3.1.3   LINCS Operations Findings

Our general findings with respect to the operations and development activities of the LINCS Website are:

- NIFL has used an effective combination of limited staff resources, contractor support, and RTC involvement to maintain a variety of Web-based information dissemination.
- The Southern and Midwest RTCs provide important skills and resources to the continued operation of the LINCS Website. Many of these services are able to be provided without direct expense to the RTC grant budgets.

3.2 Regional Technology Centers

3.2.1 RTC Overview

The National Institute for Literacy funds five regional technology hubs. These are:

1) **Eastern LINCS**[5] - Ohio Literacy Resource Center (originally: ABLE Net)

2) **Midwest LINCS** - Ohio Literacy Resource Center

3) **Northwest LINCS** - Northwest Regional Literacy Resource Center

4) **Southern LINCS** - Tennessee Literacy Resource Center at the Center for Literacy Studies

5) **Western/Pacific LINCS** - State Literacy Resource Center of California

The following discussion highlights the functions and services provided by each RTC.

Eastern LINCS[6]

Pennsylvania's ABLE NET Project was the Eastern LINCS Regional Technology Center from October 1, 2000 until September 30, 2003. Since then, the Ohio Literacy Resource Center has worked to continue the quality training and services ABLE NET provided.

Working with existing partners, as well as developing new partnerships, Eastern LINCS continues to link to sites within each state to provide information, communication and training throughout the region. The Eastern LINCS partner states include: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the Virgin Islands.

Midwest LINCS[7]

The Midwest LINCS, operating out of the Ohio Literacy Resource Center, Kent State University, provides a link to national, regional, and state-specific resource material for adult literacy practitioners and students. Web sites have been developed for each state literacy resource center in the twelve Midwest states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The Midwest Regional Technology Center provides technology support to its partners. Services include:

- Web design and development

- Web hosting

- Graphics design

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[5] The grant for the Eastern LINCS was transferred to the Midwest LINCS during its fourth project year.

[6] The discussion of the services provided by the Eastern RTC is taken from: http://www.easternlincs.org/aboutus.htm

[7] This discussion of the Midwest RTC is taken from: http://archon.educ.kent.edu/Midwest/activities.html

- Electronic discussion lists

- LINCS Cataloging

- Audio and video distribution

- Database development and support

- Training and presentations

Northwest LINCS[8]

The Northwest LINCS Project is located in Moscow, Idaho. The region comprises seven states: Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and Utah. Each state has a state specialist who helps to gather information for the LINCS Regional Technology Center. Funding is provided by a grant from the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). The purposes and the goals of this project, which are listed below, include the improving professional development and instruction, integrating technology into teaching and learning, and raising awareness of LINCS.

This project provides the following services:

- Training for the LINCS system

- Training and support for Web development

- Training for professional development

- Integration of technology into literacy learning

- Operation of Discussion lists

- Mini-grants to partners

- Research for integration of technology into learning

Southern LINCS[9]

Southern LINCS ("SLINCS") is a focal point for the southern region with links to state, regional, and national information. SLINCS is hosted by the Southern Regional Technology Center at the Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee. The Center for Literacy Studies at The University of Tennessee coordinates a consortium of fourteen southern states. The fourteen consortium members are: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

SLINCS provides the following services to consortium members:

- Training and Technical Assistance. SLINCS staff conducts training events once or twice a year. Training has included such topics as developing a Web site, cataloging locally

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[8] The discussion of the Northwest RTC is taken from: http://www.nwlincs.org/NWLINCSWEB/About%20Us.htm
[9] The discussion of the Southern RTC is taken from: http://slincs.coe.utk.edu/about_slincs/about_us.html

produced materials, training trainers in each state, training practitioners to use LINCS, and training practitioners to integrate technology with teaching and learning.

- Electronic Discussion Lists for States. SLINCS sets up and maintains electronic discussion lists for member states on its server. Currently, there are more than forty discussion lists from state-wide lists for practitioners to lists for special interest groups.

- Building Partnerships. SLINCS provides an electronic network that enables states to share achievements. Partners share strategies for connecting practitioners to the Internet; for example, Arkansas invited representatives from fourteen states to attend its Technology Institute.

- Collecting and Developing Resources. Practitioners regularly develop high quality resources, but these resources are not circulated beyond a narrow audience. A key role of SLINCS is to collect these resources developed by southern states and catalog them so they are accessible to others on the Web. Catalog assistance is provided for states that want to catalog their own resources.

- Publishing Materials on the Web. Many literacy practitioners need access to quality materials. Through the consortium efforts, SLINCS assists states in publishing resources that can be easily disseminated through the Web. Staff collects and publishes resources from member states.

Western/Pacific LINCS[10]

Western/Pacific LINCS is managed by the Western/Pacific Literacy Network. This center covers nine time zones and numerous international telecommunication infrastructures in the western United States and the Pacific Islands. It serves the following twelve locations: Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, American Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, and Palau.

Western/Pacific LINCS provides free email, listservs, Web hosting and development, and technical training to literacy programs throughout the western United States and the Pacific Islands. Over 140 countries and all 50 states visit the site for education resources.

Western/Pacific LINCS provides assistance in:

- Website construction,

- Listserv maintenance,

- LINCS database use, email setup, browser use, resource referral, the integration of technology into teaching and learning, Web hosting; and

- Material archiving including video and audio files, software assistance including Photoshop, Flash, HTML, Word, Excel, Filemaker, and Adobe Acrobat, computer hardware set-up and use, database development, and video and audio production for online use.

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[10] The discussion of the Western/Pacific RTC is taken from: http://literacynet.org/lincs/programsactivities.html

3.2.2 RTC Cost Analysis

RTC Categories of Service

KPMG conducted interviews with personnel from of each of the RTCs to better understand the broad types of services offered, the nature of their operations, and the cost structure for the services each RTC provides. The financial data represents the budget history and other financial information for the five project years under review.

To conduct a review of the RTC operations, it was first necessary to define the broad set of services provided by the RTCs. To do so, KPMG conducted a review of the RTC proposals to understand the set of services each Center was to provide. We supplemented that information with discussions with NIFL, RTCs interviews, and our previous understanding of RTC operations.[11]

Through our review of this data, KPMG identified five categories of service that the RTCs provide. The result was a set of five categories meant to characterize the range of services provided by each RTC. There are four broad categories: Center Operations, Maintaining Collections, Research Activities, and Education and Training; as well as one catchall category referred to simply as Other. Each are described in more detail as follows.

1) **Center Operations.** This category captures the overall management of the RTC. It includes the upkeep of the program/facilities, administrative activities, maintenance, billing/budgeting, and any routine outreach functions such as building relationships.

2) **Maintaining Collections.** This category captures all of the effort associated with finding information, including: interviews, phone calls, internet searches, or publication research. It also includes the effort of assembling and categorizing the information and resources. Maintaining the collection can also involve, if applicable, the amount of time spent on discussion lists relating to the RTC collection.

3) **Research Activities.** This category details the amount of effort necessary to load information into a database or Website for distribution and dissemination.

4) **Education and Training.** This category details the time spent developing and delivering education and training.

5) **Other.** Catchall category for extraordinary and/or non-routine functions and services that the RTC provides. Efforts that fall into this category include the following:

   - Eastern/Midwest LINCS: includes the time spent coordinating communication and collaboration between the partners and across regions; time spent on calls and meetings with other LINCS RTC/CDP and national partners; installation, development and support of technologies used by partner states. This effort increased in the fourth year largely due to contacting, coordinating, and establishing relationships, services and support for the Eastern region.

   - Southern LINCS: includes non-routine national responsibilities such as raising money to fund Pilot, setting up e-meetings, and designing covers for LINCS CDs. AE Pro, a professional online development project, is a pilot program in

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[11] Our previous work in this area includes this effort's principal investigator, Brian Shea, role as a DOL liaison to NIFL from approximately 1993 through 1998.

development with the Midwest LINCS. It is intended as a five year pilot, after which responsibilities will be shifted to the States.

- Western LINCS: basic non-routine functions such as being a liaison between partner States.

For each of the RTCs, the distribution of services for up to five years is presented in Appendix A.

RTC Descriptive Statistics

The next step was to distill the financial data and operational information into a set of descriptive tables for each center. With the data collected, KPMG was able to construct a set of four such tables for each center. Two of the tables concern the RTCs financials, and two concern the nature of the operations. We described each of the tables below and note that the detailed presentation of the data for each of the RTCs is found in Appendix A.

Financial Tables:

- DOE Funds: Using Federal Form N0. 524, this table contains the five-year budget histories for each RTC.

- Award History: Using the "U.S. Department of Education (EDCAPS)–GAPS Award History Report," this table contains details of the funds withdrawn for each of the five years under review ("Actuals"). We used a list of the Grant ID and LINCS Cost Center Award Numbers to match the Actuals to the budgeted for each LINCS cost center.[12]

Operational Tables:

- Loaded Labor: For each year, KPMG calculated a labor cost that is inclusive of salaries, fringe benefits, and indirect costs. These rates and coverage are specific to each RTC and are detailed in the DOE Funds data. The fully loaded cost of labor is the most comparable basis to use across centers. This indirect percent ranged from eight to fifteen percent for the five RTCs.

- Percent of Time: Through an interview process, we collected from each RTC, estimates of the percentage of their time required to produce each category of service. In other words, this allocation is a breakdown, on a percentage basis, of the total labor effort expended on each the five broad types of services.

In creating the financial tables, KPMG made the following adjustments to the data as presented in the original budgets. These adjustments are based on discussions with RTC operations staff.

- Since taking over the Eastern LINCS operations in year three, the Midwest RTC's budget reflects expenses for operating both centers. Per our discussion with Midwest directors, KPMG allocated 25 percent of the total Midwest LINCS budget toward Eastern LINCS services. The same percents were used to allocate this total to the budgeted functions listed on the Form No. 524.

- The Southern LINCS' total budget has also been segmented to include costs related to the Southern LINCS, estimated at eighty percent of the budget, and the Equipped for the Future Special collection, estimated at twenty percent.

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[12] A listing of the Ids and Award Numbers is presented in Appendix C.

RTC In-Kind Services

The LINCS Cost Center operations rely heavily on the donated services and materials from many states, corporations and CKG members. The Centers' personnel also devote extra time and efforts, not funded by the NIFL grant.

For many of the LINCS Cost Centers, the value of donated time and efforts have been based on the individual's pay rate as indicated by either available market information or the rate the person makes at their job. In addition, equipment donations are valued using available market rates.

In its discussion with the LINCS Cost Centers and review of the Form No. 524 budgets, KPMG found these in-kind services and the use of leverage funds are a very important part of the financial assistance each center receives.

The following sections provide more detail and examples of such services.

In-Kind from Other Sources

KPMG reviewed the proposals the RTCs submitted to determine the extent and degree to which any RTC was the recipient of in-kind goods and services. The RTCs do receive various donated services through other institutions and individuals. As is seen in the summary Table 4 below, the RTCs do receive significant contributions of both goods and services. While no attempt was made by KPMG to validate the figures cited, nor determine the fair market value of items presented but not valued, it is clear that in-kind donations represent a material component to the underlying structure for each RTC. KPMG has determined that such donations significantly affect the RTC's ability to deliver important goods and services. Table 4 details the major in-kind donations for each of the five RTCs.

Table 4: Overview of the RTCs' In-Kind Services

LINCS Center	Services	Equipment
Eastern/ Midwest	• In-kind services for the first three years of the grant totaled more than $145,000. • This includes: Web design, Web hosting, electronic newsletters, additional training, and electronic discussion list services. It also includes technology planning, LINCS Template implementation, database design and programming services. • Midwest LINCS personnel and its affiliates contribute countless, unpaid hours toward the development and growth of this center. • Year 5 includes a consultant (@ 25% FTE) who works on the distance learning pilot project.	
North western	• According to the Form No. 524, in-kind services and donations amounted to over $267,000 over the life of the grant.	• Donations of hardware, software, and other equipment have amounted to over $2,800 over the course of the grant. • The project coordinators (previously Linda Eckert and currently Karen Brees) run this center from their homes.
Southern	• In-kind services and donations amounted to over $112,000 over the life of the grant • Over $29,000 in state donated personnel hours toward Web hosting, discussion board hosting, calendar hosting, streaming video hosting, Web trends Web log analysis, and cataloging services they provide • $20,000/year from UT for F&A expenses. • NIFL receives significant exposure from fact sheets, brochures and newsletters that are produced for state agencies, and through the center's involvement with programs at Texas A&M. • NIFL uses relationship with Tennessee to get funding for PD work, including two existing online courses and the free use of the online virtual meeting funded by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.	
Western/ Pacific	• Maintaining state literature Websites in exchange for state provided staff time for this service. • Work for the education task forces for most of the partner States to help work on standards in which LINCS gets a lot of exposure. • Donated time is based on the current income supplied by partners.- The non-profit, Literacy Works, which gets no funding from NIFL and is funded through the Peninsula Library System. These funds are used to pay office rent, buy some of the computers used for LINCS. • Other organizations such as Verizon, Fannie Mae, and other corporations interested in literature, provide grants to this LINCS to promote literacy issues such as literacy in the workplace and home loan information. LINCS is used on all of this work and receives significant exposure as a result. • Maintaining ESL and Science and Numeracy Collections' Web servers for a largely reduced cost.	• In-Kind Equipment: Amounts equal real world purchase cost for first year of donation and then depreciation applied for each subsequent year of use based on IRS depreciation tabulations. • Sun-micro system was valued by looking at the market price and applying depreciation schedules.

RTC Comparative Analysis

Using the RTC information presented in the tables presented in Appendix A, we are able to construct a table of comparative descriptive data. As in seen in the table below, fully loaded labor costs comprise the largest use of funds granted for the majority of the RTCs. In compiling the fully loaded figures, the indirect cost rates ranged from eight to fifteen percent.

We begin with a view of the operations over a fire year period in Table 5 below. This view of the data is based on five year averages for the RTCs.

Table 5: Five-Year Averages – RTC Cost Summary

	Eastern	Midwest	Northwest	Southern	Western-Pacific
A. Budgeted					
1) Total Budget	59,474	168,369	153,602	179,971	166,400
2) % Fully Loaded Labor	35%	37%	46%	63%	76%
3) In-Kind Level	High	High	High	High	High
B. Services					
1) Center Operations	36%	34%	30%	31%	5%
2) Maintaining Collections	10%	12%	3%	25%	40%
3) Research Activities	19%	20%	44%	5%	20%
4) Educ/Training Services	21%	19%	23%	15%	30%
5) Other	16%	15%	0%	24%	5%

It is also important to note that the Midwest LINCS took over operations of the Eastern LINCS in Year 4. As such, the Eastern LINCS information displayed in the table is only for two years of operation.

In the top section of the table, "A. Budgeted," the five year average budget figures are displayed along with the average percentage of the budget that is devoted to labor costs. The third line is an indicator based on the data presented in Table 4, of the amount of in-kind services the center was able to leverage.[13] Reading the budget and labor percentage lines left to right, one can see by inspection that there is a positive correlation between the two items. Discerning how one can translated this into service mix, however, is not so apparent.

The best story to tell is how, as the budgets increase and allow for a greater share to be directed to the knowledge workers of the RTCs, the percentage of activity devoted to "Maintaining Collections" increases. That story holds true, until one looks at the Northwest RTC.

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[13] As indicated in the previous section, KPMG did not undertake a market valuation exercise to determine the monetary value of the in-kind goods and services. Based on our review of the descriptions provided by the RTCs, it is clear that a valuation would result in a value that represents a non-insignificant percentage of the budget. Thus, KPMG simply indicates via this indicator, that the in-kind contributions are "high."

Similarly, it appears that there is no scale in economies in dealing with Center Operations, and that such activities will always occupy about a third of the RTC efforts. This does not hold true for the Western-Pacific, which only devotes five percent. While, a priori, you would expect such activities to decrease proportionately with budget resources, it is surprising that all others are about a third, with similar size budgets for Northwest and Southern.

When one reads down the column, "B. Services" for Eastern and Midwest, it appears that the two centers operate in a very similar manner. This is true, even though they represent the smallest and, almost, the largest five-year budgets.

The implications we can draw from the five-year view are two-fold. First, because we were asking for a five-year view, it is likely that the "point estimates" on distribution of services provided by the centers contain a large variance. That is, these figures could be "ball park" figures. Secondly, from the budgets and informal discussions, there is support that the operations of the RTCs have matured over the period. This is also consistent with the nature of NIFL, which is also a growing, evolving and learning organization.

It is instructive therefore, to examine the most recent year of data. Looking at the most recent year offers a structure of costs and services reflective of the current state of priorities and stage of center development. Table 6 presents the summary for the fifth project year for each of the RTCs.

Table 6: Fifth Year – RTC Cost Summary

	Eastern	Midwest	Northwest	Southern	Western-Pacific
A. Budgeted					
1) Total Budget	68,950	206,850	150,000	226,000	180,000
2) % Fully Loaded Labor	29%	29%	44%	58%	71%
3) In-Kind Level	High	High	High	High	High
B. Services					
1) Center Operations	35%	35%	50%	40%	5%
2) Maintaining Collections	9%	9%	15%	25%	40%
3) Research Activities	18%	18%	20%	5%	20%
4) Educ/Training Services	23%	23%	15%	15%	30%
5) Other	15%	15%	0%	15%	5%

Note: Since taking over the Eastern LINCS operations in year three, the Midwest RTC's budget reflects expenses for operating both centers. Per our discussion with Midwest directors, KPMG allocated 25 percent of the total Midwest LINCS budget toward Eastern LINCS services.

Here again we see a positive relationship between the size of the budget and percentage of budget devoted to RTC labor cost. The share of labor runs from 29 percent for the smallest RTC budget of Eastern, to a high of 71 percent for Western-Pacific. After that, it is hard to find a consistent story by activity across centers, of the distribution of effort across centers.

The activity that displays the greatest similarity across centers is the provision of Education and Training Services, from a low of fifteen percent for both the Northwest and Southern RTCs, to a

high of thirty percent for the Western-Pacific. The next service area that offers a similar view is that of Research Activities. Four of the centers display a very similar profile with a range of only eighteen to twenty percent. The outlier is the Southern RTC, which reported only five percent.

Because we used the above terms to define activities, which were intended to be broad, and the primary information collection was via interviews, it is possible that the centers used slightly different interpretations of the categories we presented. If we combine the Maintaining Collections with the Research Activities as an attempt to capture a very broad brush of collection related activities, the range of results does in fact grow more consistent.[14]

Whereas the Maintenance activity displayed a range of nine to forty percent, the combined set ranges from a low of about a quarter of activities for both the Eastern and Midwest RTC, to about a third for Northwest and Southern, to a high of just less than two-thirds for the Western-Pacific. This view also displays a positive sense of correlation with the overall budget.

3.2.3   RTC Cost Analysis Findings

To the extent that there is a view that emerges from this review, it is:

- Over the past five years, four of the RTCs conduct operations at very similar levels of operating budgets, approximately $170,000. Eastern has on average operated at less than half of that, at approximately $60,000.

- The role played by human capital in the operations of the centers is critical, as reflected in the share of its costs in the overall budget. Based on the fifth year budgets, fully loaded labor represents anywhere from 29 to 71 percent of the budgets. The five yea averages show a range of 35 to 76 percent.

- Of the five categories of services used for this analysis, the three most closely associated with specific knowledge, skills, and aptitudes are Maintaining Collections, Research Activities, and Education and Training Services. These account for almost half of the activities for four of the centers, and 90 percent for the Western-Pacific.

- In-kind provided goods and services play a significant role in the operations of the centers. Based on the information provided by the RTCs and through interviews, it is clear that many additional hours are provided to the operations than are reflected in the presentation of the budgets. It needs to be recognized that a proper valuation of those would likely influence the percents discussed above. While our information is very high level, it is our informed judgement that the impact would be an increase in the percentage of time accounted for by the RTC knowledge workers or subject matter experts.

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[14] KPMG realizes that the movement itself of five to four categories accounts for some of the range reduction. However, the four resulting categories do represent a set with much less overlap and therefore reduces the subjectivity of interpretation.

3.3 Special Collections[15]

3.3.1 Special Collections Overview

The LINCS Special Collections ("SCs") specialize in information of high-quality literacy practices and materials for use in adult education and literacy programs. LINCS Special Collections are built around specific content areas, specific settings or contexts, and professional development topics.

Each Special Collection has a Core Knowledge Group ("CKG") charged to guarantee the quality and timeliness of the resources maintained by each SC. The CKG is an advisory group of subject experts who assist in the quality control of the Collections by: ensuring that rigorous selection criteria leads to the inclusion of high quality resources; locating and suggesting sites for review; and checking the progress of the site throughout the year. Although some CKG members receive a small monetary gift for their work, many devote time and resources that are not funded.

The twelve LINCS SCs are maintained by the following Content Development Partners.

1 **Assessment**

The Assessment Collection is maintained by Midwest LINCS at the Ohio Literacy Resource Center. The goal of the Assessment SC is to provide access to quality on-line resources to practitioners and administrators dealing with learner assessment issues in adult literacy programs.

2 **Correctional Education**

The Correctional Education Collection is maintained by the Correctional Education Association (CEA). The CEA is a professional association for educators working in correctional facilities. It represents a comprehensive collection of resources for basic skills and literacy programs in correctional education. It is intended as a single access point for instructors, administrators, and adult learners to find activities and links related to correctional education.

3 **English as a Second Language ("ESL")**

The ESL Collection is maintained by California Literacy, Inc. in partnership with ProLiteracy Worldwide, Western/Pacific LINCS, and World Education, Inc. Its mission is to demonstrate the value of ESL education, foster and promote the development of high-quality ESL programs, provide guidelines for planning and supporting these programs, and support ongoing communication and collaboration among stakeholders. The intended stakeholders or audiences for the ESL SC are: instructors, literacy practitioners, program administrators, researchers, adult learners, and state staff involved in some aspect of ESL education.

4 **Equipped for the Future ("EFF")**

The EFF Collection is maintained by the EFF Center for Training and Technical Assistance at the Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee. Funds for this collection are included in the Southern LINCS budget. The EFF SC brings EFF related resources and expertise to a

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[15] Information for this section is taken from the NIFL website: http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/about/about.html

single point of access for multiple users working in adult and family literacy education. The collection includes materials developed by EFF partners and other quality materials relevant to standards-based education and program improvement.

5 **Family Literacy**

The Family Literacy Collection is maintained by Midwest LINCS at the Ohio Literacy Resource Center. The goal of the Family Literacy SC is to provide individuals working with families a way to access a variety of high quality resources quickly and easily. These resources include scientifically based research about family literacy and information about parenting issues, professional development, interactive children's activities, and classroom materials. The audience for the Family Literacy SC is divided into three broad categories: families (parents/caregivers and children); practitioners working with families (teachers, tutors, and other staff); and managers/administrators of programs that work with families (directors and coordinators).

6 **Health & Literacy**

The Health and Literacy Collection is maintained by World Education, Inc. The goal of this collection is to support the integration of health and literacy education in adult basic education programs and health literacy education in health care settings. It also aims to provide direct access to easy-to-read health information, and health resources in languages other than English. The target audiences are: adult basic education practitioners interested in introducing health topics in their classrooms/programs; health care providers and health educators serving diverse populations with limited English literacy skills; and adult literacy students and health care consumers looking for plain language health information resources.

7 **Literacy & Learning Disabilities**

The Literacy and Learning Disabilities Collection is maintained by Southern LINCS at the Center for Literacy Studies. As one of LINCS SCs, the Literacy and Learning Disabilities Collection aims to provide a single point of access to information on LD issues important to: adults with learning disabilities and their families; adult education teachers and tutors; staff: Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, One-Stop; and employers.

8 **Program Leadership and Improvement**

The Program Leadership and Improvement Collection is maintained by Southern LINCS at the Center for Literacy Studies. Funds for this collection are combined in the same grant as the Workforce Education Collection. Its goal is to provide access to quality online resources for adult basic and literacy education leaders to improve program services and outcomes. Adult basic and literacy education leaders include program directors or managers, researchers, policy makers, funders, professional development staff, state adult education directors and staff, board members, learners, and adult education teachers.

9 **Policy & Legislation**

The Policy and Legislation Collection is maintained by the National Institute for Literacy.

10 **Science & Numeracy**

The Science and Numeracy Collection is maintained by the Western/Pacific LINCS. This SC provides annotated links to Internet sites that are useful for teaching and learning about science and numeracy. The collection emphasizes the ways in which science and math skills are important to understanding the world around us. The resources in the collection have been arranged according to the national education standards in science and in numeracy. Materials in the SC are provided for adult education instructors, adult learners, and adult education/literacy program managers.

11 **Technology Training**

The Technology Training Collection is maintained by the Adult Literacy & Technology Network and the Sacramento County Office of Education. Its goal is to offer a resource where adult education providers can find reviewed resources pertinent to implementing technology effectively in instruction and where learners can find resources to improve their technology proficiency. Its intended audience is: adult education audience categories of program managers and administrators, teachers and tutors, and adult students and learners

12 **Workforce Education**

The Workforce Education Collection is maintained by Southern LINCS at the Center for Literacy Studies. Funds for this collection are combined in the same grant as the Program Leadership and Improvement Collection. Its mission is to demonstrate the value of workforce learning, foster and promote the development of high-quality workforce education programs, provide guidelines for planning and supporting these programs, and support ongoing communication and collaboration among stakeholders. Workforce Education is defined as work-related learning experiences that can include: foundation skills, technical knowledge and computer skills; serve either employed or unemployed workers; are provided either inside or outside the workplace; focus on the skills and knowledge workers need to get and keep good jobs and meet demands for productivity, safety, and advancement. This project is a joint effort of the National Institute for Literacy and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy.

3.3.2 *Special Collections Cost Analysis*

KPMG conducted interviews with personnel of each of the centers to better understand the costs for the services the SCs provide. For this analysis, KPMG also gathered budget history and other financial information for the five project years under review.

Special Collections Categories of Service

In section 3.2.2, "RTC Categories of Service," we describe the need to create a high level set of services performed by each of the RTCs. We use the same set of service categories in looking at the SCs. For the ease of readability, we repeat the five categories herein:

1) **Center Operations.** This is a category for the overall management of the Special Collection. It includes the upkeep of the program/facilities, administrative activities,

Financial Tables:

- DOE Funds.

- Award History.

Operational Tables:

- Loaded Labor.

- Percent of Time.

Per discussion with the SCs, KPMG allocated fifty percent of the total Workforce Education budget toward the Program Leadership and Improvement Collection services. The same percents were used to allocate this total to the budgeted functions listed on the Form No. 524. As discussed earlier, the Southern LINCS' total budget has also been segmented to include cost related to the Southern LINCS (estimated at eight percent of the budget) and the Equipped for the Future SC (estimated at twenty percent).

Unavailable Data

KPMG was not able to obtain complete financial and/or interview information from the following SCs: Health and Literacy, Policy and Legislation, and Correctional Education. The Women's Literacy special collection was never formally a grant. According to NIFL personnel, NIFL received funding from Verizon Communications, Inc. to develop this collection. These funds were transferred to the Midwest RTC at Kent State, and although parts of this program were developed, it was never fully launched.

Special Collections In-Kind Services

As presented in Section 3.2.2, "RTC In-Kind Services," the LINCS Cost Centers operations rely heavily on the donated services and materials from many states, corporations and CKG members. The centers' personnel also devote extra time and efforts that NIFL funds.

In its discussion with the SCs and review of the Form No. 524 budgets, KPMG found the following in-kind services and the use of leverage funds are an important part of the financial assistance each center receives.

The SCs receive various donated services through other institutions and individuals. Similar to the analysis of the RTCS, KPMG made no attempt to validate the figures cited, nor determine the fair market value of items presented but not valued, it is clear that in-kind donations represent a material component to the underlying structure for each SC. Some of these are included in Table 7 below.

KPMG

Table 7: Overview of the Special Collections' In-Kind Services

	Services	Equipment
Assessment	• Approximately $40,000 per year worth of time spent by CKG members for various research, expert advice, and other routine activities. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection.	
Equipped for the Future	• Southern LINCS personnel devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection. • $20,000/year from UT for F&A expenses for the Southern LINCS, which also includes the EFF collection.	• The Southern LINCS provides Web server space, server maintenance, Web development, Web maintenance, cataloging support, and general management and coordination services for this collection.
ESL	• CKG members devote extra hours toward various research, expert advice, and other routine activities. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection. • According to the Form No. 524, in-kind services and donations amounted to over $33,000 over the life of the grant	• Computers for this collection were not covered by the budget. • Western LINCS provides hosting and technical services well over the amount budgeted for this function.
Family Literacy	• Approximately $40,000 year worth of time spent by CKG members for various research, expert advice, and other routine activities. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection.	• Web server space and electronic lists are not billed.
Literacy & Learning w/ Disabilities	• UT provides over $4,000/year in funds for facilities and administrative expenses. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection.	• The Southern LINCS provides Web server space, server maintenance, Web development, Web maintenance, cataloging support, and general management and coordination services for this collection.
Program Leadership & Improvement	• UT provides over $12,000/year in funds for facilities and administrative expenses. This grant combines this collection and the Workforce Education collection. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection.	• The Southern LINCS provides Web server space, server maintenance, Web development, Web maintenance, cataloging support, and general management and coordination services for this collection.
Science & Numeracy	• CKG members devote extra hours toward various research, expert advice, and other routine activities. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection. • According to the Form No. 524, in-kind services and donations amounted to approximately $15,000 over the life of the grant	• The Director runs this collection from her home • Western-Pacific LINCS Webmaster provides server space and extra hosting and maintenance service worth approx $170,000 over the life of the grant.

	Services	Equipment
Technology Training	• Personnel devote extra hours worth $35,000 toward the development and growth of this collection. • $30,000 in video production services for Years 1 - 3. • According to Form No. 524, in-kind services and donations amounted to over $113,000 over the life of the grant	• Server hosting fees worth $600/year
Workforce Education	• UT provides over $12,000/year in funds for facilities and administrative expenses. This grant combines this collection and the Program and Leadership Improvement. • The personnel in this special collection devote extra hours toward the growth of this collection. • According to Form No. 524, In-kind services and donations amounted to over $44,000 over the life of the grant	• The Southern LINCS provides Web server space, server maintenance, Web development, Web maintenance, cataloging support, and general management and coordination services for this collection.

Special Collection Comparative Analysis

Using the SC data presented in the Appendix B tables, we are able to produce a table of comparative descriptive data. Labor costs make up the majority of the funds granted for the majority of the SCs. The percent of indirect costs are based on the total direct costs incurred by each SC. These rates ranged from eight to fifteen percent.

We begin with a view of the five-year operations in Table 8 below. This view of the data is based on the five –year average averages for the Special Collections. These values along with the percent allocations each SC provided are shown in the tables below.

Table 8: Five-Year Average – Special Collections Cost Summary

	Assessment	Correctional Education	Equipped for the Future	English as a Second Language	Family Literacy	Literacy & Learning w/ Disabilities	Program Leadership & Improvement	Science & Numeracy	Technology Training	Workforce Education
A. Budgeted										
1) Total Budget	51,000	50,000	46,062	53,024	51,000	52,000	166,400	52,169	50,148	51,188
2) % Fully Loaded Labor	43%	61%	74%	23%	74%	80%	22%	62%	85%	74%
3) In-Kind Level	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
B. Services										
1) Center Operations	6%	0%	5%	17%	8%	5%	10%	15%	25%	10%
2) Maintaining Collections	36%	0%	35%	20%	23%	35%	35%	19%	21%	35%
3) Research Activities	41%	0%	40%	54%	60%	40%	35%	50%	29%	35%
4) Educ/Training Services	12%	0%	10%	9%	7%	10%	10%	16%	5%	10%
5) Other*	5%	0%	10%	0%	3%	10%	10%	0%	20%	10%

Similar to the observations made on the five-year period of the RTCs, one can observe sharp differences in the distribution of activities SCs. The Southern LINCS began operating the Equipped For the Future collection ("EFF") in Year 3. As such, the EFF budget is displayed on a three-year average.

In the top section of the table, "A. Budgeted," the five-year average budget figures are displayed along with the average percentage of the budget that is devoted to labor costs. The third line is

an indicator based on the data presented in Table 7, the amount of in-kind services the center was able to leverage.[16]

Unlike the RTCs, there is no correlation between size of budget and percentage of budget devoted to labor costs. Both the highest (85 percent) and one of the lowest (23 percent) are for SCs with essentially the same size budgets, $50,148 and $53,024 respectively.

Reading across each of the service lines does reveal a fairly strong similarity across the nine SCs presented. For Center Operations, the range is fairly tight, only ranging from five percent to seventeen percent, when the Training Technology SC is excluded. A range of nineteen percent to 36 percent for Maintaining Collections becomes even tighter when one sees that four of the nine SCs have a value of either 35 percent or 26 percent. Research Activities has an overall range of 29 percent to 60 percent, but again the central tendency of five SCs is tight between 35 percent and 41 percent. Similar tight ranges are exhibited for Education and Training Services (five percent to sixteen percent) and the Other category (zero percent to ten percent when Technology Training is excluded).

It is interesting to note that from the five-year perspective, no such story emerged for the RTCs. It is likely due to the fact that the SCs have a much narrower and more defined mission compared to the RTCs. Such commonality of a narrow mission is then not surprisingly found in a common approach to its fulfillment.

Similar to the view of the RTCs, we also examined the most recent year of data. Looking at the most recent year offers a structure of costs and services reflective of the current state of priorities and stage of SCs' development. Table 9 presents the summary for the fifth project year for each of the Special Collections.

Table 9: Fifth Year – Special Collections Cost Summary

	Assessment	Correctional Education	Equipped for the Future	English as a Second Language	Family Literacy	Literacy & Learning w/ Disabilities	Program Leadership & Improvement	Science & Numeracy	Technology Training	Workforce Education
A. Budgeted										
1) Total Budget	50,000	50,000	55,000	54,282	50,000	55,000	180,000	59,107	55,000	73,379
2) % Fully Loaded Labor	10%	55%	74%	24%	68%	74%	32%	60%	93%	81%
3) In-Kind Level	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High	High
B. Services										
1) Center Operations	3%	0%	5%	30%	8%	5%	10%	15%	25%	10%
2) Maintaining Collections	35%	0%	35%	20%	22%	35%	35%	19%	15%	35%
3) Research Activities	37%	0%	40%	45%	60%	40%	35%	50%	20%	35%
4) Educ/Training Services	20%	0%	10%	5%	7%	10%	10%	16%	5%	10%
5) Other*	6%	0%	10%	0%	3%	10%	10%	0%	35%	10%

As was the case for the five-year view, there is no correlation between size of budget and percentage of budget devoted to labor costs. Both the highest (93 percent) and lowest (ten percent) are for SCs with essentially the same size budgets, $55,000 and $50,000 respectively.

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[16] See footnote 12.

Reviewing the most recent, an overall story emerges as well. In general, Center Operations tends to be the smallest percentage of overall service, followed closely by the catch-all category of Other. The main area of activity is that devoted to Maintaining Collections and Research Activities, with the latter always at least as large as the former. After those two, Education and Training follows, though with some distance.

While there tends to be one or two centers that do not fit that story for any given service area, it is nevertheless a fairly tight description. The one-year view is also consistent with the hypothesis that a more narrow mission combined with a well-defined set of responsibilities results in, at a high level, a similar approach by the SCs to providing services notwithstanding the wide range SC topics.

3.3.3 Special Collections Cost Analysis Findings

Our general findings with respect to the Special Collections are:

- Of the nine SCs examined, eight have operated at a very similar five-year average budget level of approximately $50,000 a year. The other is quite larger at approximately $166,000.

- Across the SCs, there is quite a range of the budget share for fully loaded labor, namely, 22 percent to 85 percent on a five-year average basis, and 10 to 93 on the most recent year's budget.

- The SCs do portray a broadly similar approach to organization across the five general service areas. The picture is consistent at the five-year average and most recent year perspective. Approximately seventy percent of the service activities are directly associated with expanding and maintaining the collection.

- The similar cost structure of the SCs is likely due to the fact that they have a much narrower and more defined mission compared to the RTCs. Such commonality of a narrow mission is then, not surprisingly found in a common approach to its fulfillment.

3.4 Discussion Lists

3.4.1 Discussion Lists Overview

From the four Discussion Lists ("DLs") established in 1995 to the 13 currently now operating, the simple Internet technology of listservs provides thousands of literacy stakeholders opportunities to: discuss the literacy field's critical issues; share resources, experiences, and ideas; ask questions of subject experts; and keep up-to-date on literacy issues. Each national LINCS discussion list is moderated by a national organization with expertise in each relevant topic area.

Some of the activities of the DL are discussed in other background documents to the RMC analysis. We refer the interested reader to the following related reports:

- *Interim Report: Review of LINCS Discussion Lists* (December 15, 2003).

o   Content Analysis of Discussion Lists (December, 2004).

3.4.2   *Discussion Lists Cost Analysis*

In a broad sense, the operation of the DLs requires three areas of operation: personnel, information technology, and financial resources. We discuss each in turn below.

DL Information Technology. The information technology ("IT") infrastructure used to operate the DLs is an example of the aspect of LINCS that, while operational for a number of years, has not been the recipient of any significant investments. Nevertheless, the DLs have been operational with minimum delays since 1995.[17] The underlying technology is public domain software that, while not subject to revisions and enhancements, has proven to be operationally stable on the LINCS computer platform and capable of handling a growing number of subscribers. The software has facilitated the posting and distribution of over 41,000 messages since 1995. The amount of contractor resources and effort to set up a new DL is minimal.

DL Personnel. NIFL has teamed with a set of subject matter experts to assist in the day-to-day operations of the LINCS hosted DLs. Each DL has a designated "moderator" who:

- helps organizes guest speakers,

- schedules a variety of topics for discussion,

- sends reminders to the subscribers on netiquette and DL guidelines,

- follows the various threaded discussions, and

- reviews the postings.

NIFL's approach to the use of DL moderators has been to identify individuals with work experience in the area of the DL topic, and seek his or her assistance on a *voluntary* basis. To date, NIFL has been able to fill these roles and, when the situation arises, transition the duties when an individual has decided to resign from his or her post.

DL Financial Resources. NIFL did incur costs to have the DL software installed and tested. This was done as part of the overall NIFL Website creation and establishment. As such, there was not a DL budget established and consequently there is no distinct historical accounting for it. As noted, the software used is public domain source code for Unix systems. The annual associated costs for IT oversight and cataloguing are approximately $33,000.[18] The original idea and design were part of the early Website development efforts and were assisted with personnel from Logistics Management Institute ("LMI"). Since that time, the DL software has not been subject to any NIFL development work. As discussed in the previous section, the role of the moderators has been fulfilled through the use of

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[17] Based on discussions with personnel from Titan Corp., the contractor responsible for the NIFL server operations.
[18] Information on hours and rates of Titan contract provided by NIFL.

volunteers.[19]   Thus there is no explicit software maintenance nor operating budgets for the DLs technology, and no corresponding labor budget.

An overview of the activity conducted via the DLs is presented in a companion report, *National Institute for Literacy Content Analysis of Discussion Lists*, December 2004, and *Interim Report: Review of LINCS Discussion Lists*, December, 2003. The reports present descriptive statistics on the level of usage, purposes served, and content of the DL activity. From a review of these reports, it is clear the DL development and operations have taken place with minimum levels of financial resources.

To the extent that NIFL decides to maintain any type of Web presence, the marginal cost of the DLs is essentially zero. The software will continue to run on any Unix-based server configured to operate as the host of the NIFL Website and it requires no dedicated staff for IT operation and maintenance. Further, NIFL has been able for a number of years to identify the needed number of subject matter experts ("SME") to act as moderators on a voluntary basis.

3.4.3   *Discussion Lists Cost Analysis Findings*

From the perspective of the current DL operations, that is, the current configuration and use of software, hardware, and SMEs, the DLs are a cost effective component of LINCS. The DLs yield measurable benefits[20] based on the number of registered users, activity conducted, and the search activity of the DL archives, while requiring minimal financial resources.

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[19] KPMG does note that recently three moderators began receiving some compensation: Workforce, Program Leadership, and Improvement. This was done at the request of US Dept of Education, Office of Adult and Vocational Education. NIFL informs us that $15,000 was allocated, but not all has been expended. The Assessment List moderator is also the Project Coordinator for the LINCS Assessment Special Collection, which implies that part of her time as DL moderator is included in the labor portion of the grant. Currently no such differentiation of her activities are tracked.

[20] A rigorous valuation of the intangible benefit associated with the quantitative measures noted, would provide a better articulation on the valuation of the benefits, but given the low cost of operations, such an examination hardly appears to be warranted.

4   Market Comparability Analysis

The previous analysis was conducted between and amongst the various RTCs. As a way to benchmark the activities of the grantees, which are all non-for-profit organizations, KPMG conducted an analysis of for profit, public companies that are broadly comparable in terms of the services provided.

The interviews conducted with the RTC representatives and our development of the broad categories of services serve as the basis for an economic analysis that evaluates the pricing and results of these centers' transactions to those of for profit companies. KPMG conducted a market comparative search to identify the cost structure companies[21] for comparable functions identified in the previous section.

4.1   Selecting Comparable Service Providers

KPMG performed a search for comparable educational/training and cataloging service providers as the basis for this analysis. The following SIC codes presented in Table 10 were examined in performing the educational/training and cataloging services search.

Table 10: SIC Codes Used for Market Comparability Analysis.

SIC Code	SIC Code Description
5192	Wholesale of Books, Periodicals, and Newspapers
7373	Computer integrated systems design
7375	Information Retrieval Services
8733	Noncommercial Research Organizations
8743	Public Relations Services
8999	Unclassified Services
8200-8299	Educational Services
8300-8399	Social Services
9100-9199	General Governmental Services
9400-9499	Administration of Human Resources
9610-9619	Administration of General Economic Programs

Our databases returned a total of 201 companies within these SIC codes. Of these companies, fourteen were inactive or had incomplete financial data and were eliminated from further consideration, leaving 187 companies for further review.

We then applied a series of quantitative screens[22] to the remaining companies in order to identify those that were functionally different from the LINCS centers.

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[21] The companies used in this market comparability analysis are publicly-held companies.

[22] For the quantitative screens, we chose the percentages presented below because the LINCS centers hold virtually no inventory and incurs virtually no R&D or advertising expenses.

- **Advertising/Sales.** Like R&D activities, high levels of advertising are generally indicative of the development or ownership of non-routine intangible assets – particularly, valuable brand names and trademarks. There were 32 additional companies with advertising expenditures greater than three percent of sales, which were eliminated as a result of this screen.

- **Inventories/Sales.** In its activities as comparable educational/training and cataloging service providers, the LINCS centers do not take title to goods, nor do they carry substantial amounts of inventory. Therefore, independent companies that do carry large amounts of inventory are functionally distinct from the LINCS centers, and would require a different return for their activities. There were 39 companies with an Inventory-to-Sales ratio of eight percent or greater, which were eliminated

- **R&D/Sales.** Companies that conduct research and development ("R&D") are generally involved in the development of non-routine intangible assets, which is inconsistent with the activities of LINCS Centers' operations. There were 56 companies with an R&D-to-Sales ratio of three percent or greater were eliminated.

The remaining companies were evaluated qualitatively. KPMG reviewed financial data and business descriptions for each of the potentially comparable companies in order to determine if they engaged in unrelated functions that would render them not comparable to the LINCS centers. Specifically, companies were eliminated if any of the following was found to apply:

- Company performs manufacturing.

- Company performs significant other services unrelated to wholesale distribution.

- Company sells through other distribution channels or at a different level in the market.

- Company has significant foreign operations.

- Company is in the process of restructuring its operations.

- Company owns valuable intangible assets.

- Company is facing going concern issues.

As a result of the qualitative review, 38 companies were eliminated, resulting in a final set of 22 comparable distributors. These companies are listed in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Companies Used in Comparative Financial Analysis

Company Name	
1	Anteon International Corp
2	Apollo Group Inc
3	Bright Horizons Family Solutions
4	CACI Intl Inc
5	Corinthian Colleges Inc
6	Cornell Companies Inc
7	Devry Inc

Company Name	
8	Educate Inc
9	Emtec Inc
10	First Consulting Group Inc
11	ITT Educational Services Inc
12	Learning Care Group Inc
13	Learning Tree Intl Inc
14	LPA Holding Corp
15	New Horizons Worldwide Inc
16	Nobel Learning Communities Inc
17	Perot Systems Corp
18	Providence Service Corp
19	Sierra Systems Group Inc
20	Strayer Education Inc
21	Titan Corp
22	Tyler Technologies Inc

Business descriptions for these companies are included in Appendix D, while their financials are presented in Appendix E.

4.2   Financial Performance of Comparative Private Sector

For a typical service company, almost by definition, the delivery of its services is most dependent upon the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes of its workforce. Service companies rarely rely upon significant expenditures of fixed equipment and heavy capital. For a public company, the costs of salary and related human capital expenses, such as training, are contained in the operating expense category of its income statement.

Rather than examine the relationship of net profits to a level of activity as described by overall sales, it is more appropriate in our context to examine the core cost structure with respect to profitability. To benchmark the cost structure of the comparables against those of the RTC's, we examined the relationship between the firms' profitability with respect to their operating expenses. This ratio is also referred to as the Berry ratio. The use of the Berry ratio is a common means of conducting cross company comparisons for service sector firms

The Berry Ratio is a methodology used in determining the appropriateness of economic profits earned relative to the economic risks assumed, and is calculated based on the ratio of gross profit to operating expenses. Gross profits are derived by subtracting cost of goods sold (or cost of service provide) from the total sales (or revenue).

KPMG evaluated the average results of the uncontrolled comparable companies over a five-year period because multi-year averaging reduces the effect of short-term variations. Because the

LINCS center's grant period is over an interval of five years, KPMG chose a five-year period to provide a longer horizon of tested party results. Table 12 below presents the Berry ratios of the comparable companies.

Table 12: Profits to Expense Ratios of Comparable Companies

	Company Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Weighted Average
1	Anteon International Corp	154.9%	168.4%	233.6%	243.4%	260.7%	219.3%
2	Apollo Group Inc	183.9%	181.2%	198.7%	214.1%	175.3%	189.4%
3	Bright Horizons Family Solutions	167.4%	170.0%	178.9%	192.9%	205.8%	185.9%
4	CACI Intl Inc	118.9%	120.5%	125.6%	127.6%	131.6%	126.0%
5	Corinthian Colleges Inc	145.6%	156.7%	162.5%	170.2%	158.2%	160.6%
6	Cornell Companies Inc	279.4%	259.8%	232.2%	207.9%	159.5%	217.6%
7	Devry Inc	408.9%	397.0%	430.6%	318.9%	260.2%	347.0%
8	Educate Inc	n.a.	149.7%	149.7%	175.5%	158.8%	158.5%
9	Emtec Inc	n.a.	94.3%	104.5%	101.4%	112.1%	103.2%
10	First Consulting Group Inc	80.1%	102.2%	112.7%	97.0%	110.6%	100.8%
11	ITT Educational Services Inc	144.3%	146.6%	152.9%	163.7%	183.0%	161.0%
12	Learning Care Group Inc	180.1%	154.1%	89.4%	92.1%	109.2%	115.0%
13	Learning Tree Intl Inc	154.3%	131.8%	111.5%	106.4%	98.5%	122.2%
14	LPA Holding Corp	177.0%	195.0%	101.8%	111.7%	120.8%	117.0%
15	New Horizons Worldwide Inc	130.8%	113.3%	100.2%	102.7%	n.a.	111.9%
16	Nobel Learning Communities Inc	146.6%	140.7%	147.6%	121.6%	139.8%	138.8%
17	Perot Systems Corp	142.3%	150.3%	167.6%	146.0%	155.9%	152.4%
18	Providence Service Corp	n.a.	132.3%	148.6%	197.9%	186.1%	179.7%
19	Sierra Systems Group Inc	92.7%	112.5%	115.5%	128.5%	105.8%	111.2%
20	Strayer Education Inc	261.9%	230.5%	221.7%	218.2%	221.6%	226.5%
21	Titan Corp	124.7%	131.1%	139.1%	169.1%	189.2%	148.4%
22	Tyler Technologies Inc	83.4%	106.6%	131.7%	140.4%	137.7%	122.0%

Because this group of 22 firms is broadly comparable in terms of services offered, it is instructive to look toward the central tendency of the financial outcomes. To do so, we take our full range of outcomes and calculate an interquartile range of results from the 25th percentile to the 75th percentile. By dropping the outcomes from those in the top 25 percent and bottom 25 percent, the resulting set is less subject to other non-comparable market forces which our screening process may not have discovered. Table 13 below shows the interquartile range of the comparable results over the five-year 2000-2004 period.

Table 13: Interquartile Range of Profits-to-Expense Ratios

Fiscal Year Ending	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Five Year Wtd. Avg.
25th Percentile	124.7%	120.5%	112.7%	111.7%	120.8%	117.0%
Median	146.6%	148.1%	148.1%	154.9%	158.2%	150.4%
75th Percentile	180.1%	170.0%	178.9%	197.9%	186.1%	185.9%

As seen in Table 13, the resulting range of five-year weighted average ("Five Year Wtd. Avg.") outcomes goes from 117 percent to almost 186 percent. The median weighted average result of gross profits to operating expenses is approximately 150 percent. We note that the results for Titan Corporation, the company that provides some of the Web-based dissemination support for NIFL and LINCS, is very representative of the overall results; its weighted average profits to expense ratio is 148 percent.

One way to interpret these results is as follows. In order to induce the private sector to undertake the range of services offered by the RTCs, and assume the risks associated with the investment required to operate in the free market, investors require a company to generate a level of operating profit (gross profits less operating expenses) of seventeen percent to 86 percent of the company's operating expenses. Firms in the middle of financial outcomes typically generate operating profits equal to fifty percent of their operating expenses.

4.3   Market Comparability Findings

Clearly there is a range of outcomes on the level of profit required to induce and maintain private sector resources to provide comparable services to those of the RTCs. Some of that range may be attributable to differences in market segment and client base unaccounted for by the criteria of comparability used. Nevertheless, having a set of 22 firms that satisfy the criteria of comparability does present a meaningful, broad set upon which to base conclusions.

Table 14 presents estimates of the additional resources that would be required to induce a for profit company to provide the ranges of services of the LINCS centers. The cost base, or operating expense ("OpExp."), used for these estimates is the most recent full year RTC and Special Collections budgets. Note, this base does not include a value for the in-kind goods and services the centers are currently able to leverage.

Table 14: Additional Funding Requirements of For-Profit Firms

Profit Required as a Percent of OpExp.	RTCs	Special Collections	Row Total
Year 5 Budget OpExp.	**$832,000**	**$617,000**	**$1,449,000.00**
25th Quartile: 17%	$141,440	$114,070	**$255,510.00**
50th Quartile: 50%	$416,000	$335,500	**$751,500.00**
75th Quartile: 86%	$715,520	$577,060	**$1,292,580.00**

If we were to use the median value for the profit to expense ratio, the level of resources required to induce for-profit firms to provide a similar set of services would increase by $751,500. The use of the median captures the resources required in order to operate at a level comparable to a firm with a profit to expense ratio right in the middle of the set of comparable for-profit firms. Even if the operations of the centers were to be replicated via a non-profit structure, which still typically include normal economic returns to the management (that is, compensation packages), the level of additional resources required can be reasonably expected to exceed the current level of NIFL funding.

5   Findings and Recommendations

Our findings for the overall LINCS operations are:

- NIFL has used an effective combination of limited staff resources, contractor support, and RTC involvement to maintain a variety of Web-based information dissemination.

- The Southern and Midwest RTCs provide important skills and resources to the continued operation of the LINCS Website. Many of these services are able to be provided without direct expense to the RTC grant budgets.

Our findings for the RTCs are:

- Four of the RTCs conduct operations at very similar levels of average operating budgets, approximately $170,000. Eastern has on average operated at less than half of that, at approximately $60,000.[23]

- The role played by human capital in the operations of the centers is critical, as reflected in the share of its costs in the overall budget. Based on the fifth year budgets, fully loaded labor represents anywhere from a third of the budgets up to 71 percent.

- Of the five categories of services used for this analysis, the three that are most associated with specific knowledge, skills, and aptitudes, are Maintaining Collections, Research Activities, and Education and Training Services. These account for almost half of the activities for four of the centers, and 90 percent for the Western-Pacific.

- The role of in-kind provided goods services play a not insignificant role in the operations of the centers. Based on the information provided by the RTCs and through interviews, it is clear that many additional hours are provided to the operations than are reflected in the presentation of the budgets. While our information is very high level, it is our informed sense that the impact would be an increase in the percentage of time accounted for by the RTC knowledge workers or subject matter experts.

Our general findings with respect to the SCs are:

- Of the nine SCs examined, eight have operated at a very similar five-year average budget level of approximately $50,000 a year.   The other is quite larger at approximately $166,000.

- Across the SCs, there is quite a range of the budget share for fully loaded labor, namely, 22 percent to 85 percent on a five-year average basis, and 10 to 93 on the most recent year's budget.

- The SCs do portray a broadly similar approach to organization across the five general service areas. The picture is consistent at the five-year average and most recent year perspective. Approximately seventy percent of the service activities are directly associated with expanding and maintaining the collection.

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[23] The Eastern LINCS became a part of the Midwest LINCS in project Years 4 and 5. Through information provided by Midwest personnel, KPMG has assigned 25% of these year's budgets to this LINCS.

- The similar cost structure of the SCs is likely due to the fact that they have a much narrower and more defined mission compared to the RTCs. Such commonality of a narrow mission is then, not surprisingly found in a common approach to its fulfillment.

Our general findings with respect to the Discussion Lists is:

- From the perspective of the current DL operations, that is, the current configuration and use of software, hardware, and SMEs, the DLs are a cost effective component of LINCS. The DLs yield measurable benefits based on the number of registered users, activity conducted, and the search activity of the DL archives, while requiring minimal financial resources. [24]

Our findings from the market comparability analysis:

- Based on a set of 22 comparable companies with broadly comparable information collection and dissemination service lines, the market based, interquartile, requirement for gross profitability runs at seventeen percent to 86 percent of operating expenses.

- Even if the operations of the centers were to be replicated via a non-profit structure, which include normal economic returns to the management, the level of additional resources required to be raised are reasonably expected to exceed the current level of NIFL funding.

- As currently configured and operated, the RTCs do not compete with for profit firms.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered:

- Through its process of grant awards, NIFL should continue to look for organizations whose mission are consistent with the goals and mission of NIFL. The benefits to the Literacy community from leveraging of time, goods, and services, is significant.

- NIFL should formalize a review of the value of the in-kind goods and services all of its grants leverage. Because this value is significant, NIFL should ensure that policy makers understand all of the benefits that NIFL engenders.

- Any restructuring consider for LINCS operations and maintenance, needs to ensure that all aspects of current LINCS operations, especially those supported through leveraged resources, are fully accounted and funded.

Summary finding:

- Given the need for sharing programs, practices, and resources, NIFL is a classic example of what economists refer to as a public good. That is, NIFL provides the means and resources to meet the needs of a target population for which the free market does not provide enough profit incentive. In other words, without NIFL funding, it is reasonable to conclude that such services would not be provided.

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[24] A rigorous valuation of the intangible benefit associated with the quantitative measures noted, would provide a better articulation on the valuation of the benefits, but given the low cost of operations, such an examination hardly appears to be warranted.

Appendices Index

A   RTC Financial and Operational Descriptive Tables

Years 1-3: Central Intermediate Unit 10
Years 4-5: Kent State University　　　　**Eastern LINCS**　　　　**X257T000006**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	2 Year Average
1) Center Operations				36%	35%	36%
2) Maintaining Collections				11%	9%	10%
3) Research Activities				19%	18%	19%
4) Educ/Training Services				18%	23%	21%
5) Other*				16%	15%	16%
Total	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	2 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel				14,330	14,351	28,681	14,340	24%
2	Fringe Benefits				5,899	4,268	10,167	5,084	9%
3	Travel				1,250	8,750	10,000	5,000	8%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment				-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies				615	3,250	3,865	1,933	3%
6	Other				600	650	1,250	625	1%
	Support:								
7	Contractual				23,600	32,404	56,004	28,002	47%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)				46,294	63,672	109,967	54,983	
9	Indirect @ 8%				3,704	5,094	8,797	4,399	7%
10	Total				49,998	68,950	118,948	59,474	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	2 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	24,325	38,073	39,779	41,533	16,918	160,628	32,126

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	2 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel				14,330	14,351	28,681	14,340
13	Fringe Benefits				5,899	4,268	10,167	5,084
14	Total Labor				20,229	18,619	38,848	19,424
15	Indirect @ 08%				1,618	1,489	3,108	1,554
16	Total Loaded Labor	-	-	-	21,847	20,108	41,955	8,391

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* The Eastern LINCS became apart of the Midwest LINCS in project Years 4 and 5. Through information provided by Midwest personnel, KPMG has assigned 25% of theses year's budgets to this LINCS.

* Contractual expenses are for supporting states and regional partners in projects and trainings. It is also used for consultant services.

Kent State University   **Midwest**   **X257T000005**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	33.0%	33.5%	33.5%	36.0%	35.0%	34%
2) Maintaining Collections	15.0%	13.0%	10.0%	11.0%	9.0%	12%
3) Research Activities	22.0%	20.0%	22.0%	19.0%	18.0%	20%
4) Educ/Training Services	15.0%	18.0%	19.5%	18.0%	23.0%	19%
5) Other*	15.0%	15.5%	15.0%	16.0%	15.0%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	35,950	46,082	48,946	42,989	43,052	217,020	43,404	26%
2	Fringe Benefits	10,121	13,628	14,333	17,698	12,803	68,583	13,717	8%
3	Travel	26,000	12,000	10,000	3,750	26,250	78,000	15,600	9%
	Operations:	-	-	-					
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	6,318	9,779	2,500	1,846	9,750	30,193	6,039	4%
6	Other	5,500	2,400	1,106	1,800	1,950	12,756	2,551	2%
	Support:	-	-	-					
7	Contractual	55,000	78,611	70,800	70,800	97,211	372,422	74,484	44%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	138,889	162,500	147,685	138,883	191,017	778,974	155,795	
9	Indirect @ 8%	11,111	13,000	11,815	11,111	15,281	62,318	12,464	7%
10	Total	150,000	175,500	159,500	149,994	206,850	841,844	168,369	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	97,301	152,291	159,116	124,600	50,753	584,061	116,812

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	35,950	46,082	48,946	42,989	43,052	217,020	43,404
13	Fringe Benefits	10,121	13,628	14,333	17,698	12,803	68,583	13,717
14	Total Labor	46,071	59,710	63,279	60,687	55,856	285,603	57,121
15	Indirect @ 8%	3,686	4,777	5,062	4,855	4,468	22,848	4,570
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	49,757	64,487	68,341	65,542	60,324	308,451	61,690

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses are for the $5,000 annual award each state for their efforts. These expenses are supported the development of the Women Literacy Collection. A larger portion of these expenses are for subcontrats used to supplement RTC staff in supporting the LINCS Distance Learning project.

University of Idaho	Northwest	X257T020001

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	5 Year Average
1) Center Operations	25%	25%	25%	25%	50%	30%
2) Maintaining Collections	0%	0%	0%	0%	15%	3%
3) Research Activities	50%	50%	50%	50%	20.00%	44%
4) Educ/Training Services	25%	25%	25%	25%	15%	23%
5) Other*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.00%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	47,842	56,998	53,450	44,000	44,387	246,677	49,335	32%
2	Fringe Benefits	14,831	17,669	16,570	14,080	16,867	80,017	16,003	10%
3	Travel	19,000	16,000	14,000	7,490	10,635	67,125	13,425	9%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	8,000	3,000	2,500	2,319	2,000	17,819	3,564	2%
5	Supplies	2,000	2,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	19,000	3,800	2%
6	Other		18,000		30,000	15,000	63,000	21,000	14%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	47,220	43,225	47,370	36,000	45,000	218,815	43,763	28%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	138,893	156,892	138,890	138,889	138,889	712,453	142,491	
9	Indirect @ 8%	11,111	11,111	11,111	11,111	11,111	55,556	11,111	7%
10	Total	150,004	168,004	150,001	150,000	150,000	768,009	153,602	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	96,114	115,606	29,816	284,883	76,198	602,617	120,523

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	47,842	56,998	53,450	44,000	44,387	246,677	49,335
13	Fringe Benefits	14,831	17,669	16,570	14,080	16,867	80,017	16,003
14	Total Labor	62,673	74,667	70,020	58,080	61,254	326,694	65,339
15	Indirect @ 08%	5,014	5,973	5,602	4,646	4,900	26,136	5,227
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	67,687	80,640	75,622	62,726	66,154	352,830	70,566

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* The $18,000 in Year 2 is for the Adult Literacy Directory and is not included in the indirect computation.

* The $30,000 in Year 4 is for training stipends and is included in the indirect computation.

* Contractual expenses are for contracting with the Web Master for web design and update activities, and the $5,000 annual award each state for their efforts

University of Tennessee   **Southern**   **X257T000004**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	25%	25%	25%	40%	40%	31%
2) Maintaining Collections	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
3) Research Activities	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
4) Educ/Training Services	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
5) Other*	30%	30%	30%	15%	15%	24%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	85,254	95,982	68,298	83,957	110,144	443,635	88,727	49%
2	Fringe Benefits	23,019	25,915	20,662	26,009	31,942	127,547	25,509	14%
3	Travel	7,000	2,500	10,179	32,408	7,152	59,239	11,848	7%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	1,500	488	67	3,424	6,234	11,713	2,343	1%
6	Other	5,900	4,550	2,127	3,860	3,750	20,188	4,038	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	17,624	19,000	21,057	25,183	37,300	120,163	24,033	13%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	140,297	148,435	122,389	174,841	196,522	782,484	156,497	
9	Indirect @ 15%	21,045	22,265	18,358	26,226	29,478	117,373	23,475	13%
10	**Total**	**161,341**	**170,700**	**140,747**	**201,068**	**226,000**	**899,856**	**179,971**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	136,607	169,078	116,856	164,799	119,248	706,588	141,318

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	85,254	95,982	68,298	83,957	110,144	443,635	88,727
13	Fringe Benefits	23,019	25,915	20,662	26,009	31,942	127,547	25,509
14	Total Labor	108,273	121,897	88,959	109,967	142,086	571,182	114,236
15	Indirect @ 10%	16,241	18,285	13,344	16,495	21,313	85,677	17,135
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	**124,514**	**140,182**	**102,303**	**126,462**	**163,399**	**656,859**	**131,372**

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expense are for subcontracts used to supplement RTC staff in supporting the LINCS Distance Learning project.

* This center's budget also includes the EFF collection. Per discussions with the Directors, KPMG has subtracted the collection's allocated budget from the total budget given on the Form No. 524.

Peninsula Library System   **Western-Pacific**   **X257T000001**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	5 Year Average
1) Center Operations	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
2) Maintaining Collections	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%
3) Research Activities	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
4) Educ/Training Services	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%
5) Other*	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	92,658	92,658	92,658	92,658	92,658	463,290	92,658	56%
2	Fringe Benefits	22,920	22,920	22,920	22,920	22,920	114,600	22,920	14%
3	Travel	9,000	9,500	9,500	19,500	19,500	67,000	13,400	8%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	12,500	2,500	2%
5	Supplies	1,785	1,785	1,785	1,785	1,785	8,925	1,785	1%
6	Other	4,000					4,000	4,000	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	3,500	4,800	4,000	4,000	4,000	20,300	4,060	2%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	136,363	134,163	133,363	143,363	143,363	690,615	138,123	
9	Indirect @ 10%	13,636	13,416	13,336	14,336	14,336	69,062	13,812	8%
10	Total	150,000	152,000	170,000	180,000	180,000	832,000	166,400	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	148,000	142,000	189,663	87,000	127,004	693,667	138,733

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	92,658	92,658	92,658	92,658	92,658	463,290	92,658
13	Fringe Benefits	22,920	22,920	22,920	22,920	22,920	114,600	22,920
14	Total Labor	115,578	115,578	115,578	115,578	115,578	577,890	115,578
15	Indirect @ 10%	11,558	11,558	11,558	11,558	11,558	57,789	11,558
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	127,136	127,136	127,136	127,136	127,136	635,679	127,136

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expense are for mini grants for pilot projects and cataloging services.

B   Special Collection Financial and Operational Descriptive Tables

Kent State University   **Assessment**   **X257S000010**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	10%	8%	8%	3%	3%	6%
2) Maintaining Collections	30%	40%	40%	35%	35%	36%
3) Research Activities	50%	40%	40%	37%	37%	41%
4) Educ/Training Services	5%	10%	5%	20%	20%	12%
5) Other*	5%	2%	7%	6%	6%	5%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	**Personnel**	18,625	26,291	26,800	2,000	4,200	77,916	15,583	31%
2	**Fringe Benefits**	5,385	8,456	8,710	640	534	23,725	4,745	9%
3	**Travel**	7,800	6,000		15,000	5,000	33,800	8,450	17%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	1,642	5,549		3,500	3,562	14,253	3,563	7%
6	Other	3,150			2,000		5,150	2,575	5%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	9,694		10,786	27,786	33,000	81,266	20,317	40%
8	**Direct (lines 1-9)**	46,296	46,296	46,296	50,926	46,296	236,110	47,222	
9	**Indirect @ 8%**	3,704	3,704	3,704	4,074	3,704	18,889	3,778	7%
10	**Total**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**55,000**	**50,000**	**255,000**	**51,000**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	**Actual Disbursements:**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	18,625	26,291	26,800	2,000	4,200	77,916	15,583
13	Fringe Benefits	5,385	8,456	8,710	640	534	23,725	4,745
14	*Total Labor*	24,010	34,747	35,510	2,640	4,734	101,641	20,328
15	**Indirect @ 08%**	1,921	2,780	2,841	211	379	8,131	1,626
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	25,931	37,527	38,351	2,851	5,113	109,772	21,954

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expense are for the coordinator of the collection, CKG members, and focus group stipends.

* The year 3 budget detail shows six people who sum to approximately 65% of an FTE. In years 4 and 5, NIFL resources are used to fund 2 people, which when combined equal less than 10% of an FTE.

* According to the budget detail, project costs for conducting the new focus groups are reflected in the personnel and contractual line items.

Correctional Education Association **Correctional Education** **X257S000002**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	-	-	-	-	-	-
2) Maintaining Collections	-	-	-	-	-	-
3) Research Activities	-	-	-	-	-	-
4) Educ/Training Services	-	-	-	-	-	-
5) Other*	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	27,560	27,560	27,560	22,560	22,560	127,800	25,560	51%
2	Fringe Benefits	5,076	5,076	5,076	5,076	5,076	25,380	5,076	10%
3	Travel	5,564	6,764	6,764	11,764	3,000	33,856	6,771	14%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,682	18,082	3,616	7%
5	Supplies	7,200	6,000	6,000	6,000	4,682	29,882	5,976	12%
6	Other	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	11,000	15,000	3,000	6%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000	50,000	
9	Indirect @ 0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
10	Total	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000	50,000	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	42,198	52,326	54,284	48,666	22,100	219,573	43,915

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	27,560	27,560	27,560	22,560	22,560	127,800	25,560
13	Fringe Benefits	5,076	5,076	5,076	5,076	5,076	25,380	5,076
14	Total Labor	32,636	32,636	32,636	27,636	27,636	153,180	30,636
15	Indirect @ 10%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	32,636	32,636	32,636	27,636	27,636	153,180	30,636

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* A break down on the percentage of time that is allocated to the main operational functions was not available.

University of Tennessee   **Equipped for the future**   **X257T000004**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	3 Year Average
1) Center Operations	-	-	5%	5%	5%	5%
2) Maintaining Collections	-	-	35%	35%	35%	35%
3) Research Activities	-	-	40%	40%	40%	40%
4) Educ/Training Services	-	-	10%	10%	10%	10%
5) Other*	-	-	10%	10%	10%	10%
Total	**-**	**-**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	3 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	-	-	17,174	24,535	27,577	69,286	23,095	50%
2	Fringe Benefits	-	-	4,980	7,115	7,997	20,092	6,697	15%
3	Travel	-	-	1,604	2,292	2,576	6,472	2,157	5%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	-	-	421	601	676	1,698	566	1%
6	Other	-	-	623	890	1,000	2,512	837	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	-	-	4,982	7,117	8,000	20,100	6,700	15%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	-	-	29,785	42,550	47,826	120,161	40,054	
9	Indirect @ 15%	-	-	4,468	6,382	7,174	18,024	6,008	13%
10	**Total**	**-**	**-**	**34,253**	**48,932**	**55,000**	**138,185**	**46,062**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	3 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:			28,438	40,106	29,021	97,565	32,522

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	3 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	-	-	17,174	24,535	27,577	69,286	23,095
13	Fringe Benefits	-	-	4,980	7,115	7,997	20,092	6,697
14	*Total Labor*	-	-	22,155	31,649	35,574	89,378	29,793
15	Indirect @ 10%	-	-	3,323	4,747	5,336	13,407	4,469
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	**-**	**-**	**25,478**	**36,397**	**40,910**	**102,785**	**34,262**

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expense are for the consultant redesign, maintenance, and upgrade of all the website services.

* KPMG was given the actual year 5 budget. Per discussions with the Directors, the total for each of the budgeted functions in year 5 were applied to years 3 and 4 as a percent of the Southern RTC's budget.

* Contractual expenses are for the consultant work to redesign, perform maintenance, and upgrade all of the EFF sites.

	English as a Second	
California Literacy Inc	**Language**	**X257S000008**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1) Center Operations	15%	10%	10%	20%	30%	17%
2) Maintaining Collections	35%	20%	10%	15%	20%	20%
3) Research Activities	45%	60%	65%	55%	45%	54%
4) Educ/Training Services	5%	10%	15%	10%	5%	9%
5) Other*	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**			
1	**Personnel**	9,115	9,389	9,859	10,296	10,296	48,955	9,791	18%
2	**Fringe Benefits**	1,390	1,460	1,503	1,570	1,570	7,493	1,499	3%
3	**Travel**	2,700	3,200	3,200	1,800	1,800	12,700	2,540	5%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	3,450	1,500	600	1,200	1,275	8,025	1,605	3%
6	Other	-	-	-	2,820	2,855	5,675	1,135	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	29,622	30,747	36,635	33,162	32,465	162,631	32,526	61%
8	**Direct (lines 1-9)**	46,277	46,296	51,797	50,848	50,261	245,479	49,096	
9	**Indirect @ 8%**	3,702	3,704	4,144	4,068	4,021	19,638	3,928	7%
10	**Total**	**49,979**	**50,000**	**55,941**	**54,916**	**54,282**	**265,118**	**53,024**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
11	**Actual Disbursements:**	44,779	43,796	52,796	47,085	13,045	201,502	40,300

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	9,115	9,389	9,859	10,296	10,296	48,955	9,791
13	Fringe Benefits	1,390	1,460	1,503	1,570	1,570	7,493	1,499
14	*Total Labor*	10,505	10,849	11,362	11,866	11,866	56,448	11,290
15	**Indirect @ 10%**	840	868	909	949	949	4,516	903
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	**11,345**	**11,717**	**12,271**	**12,815**	**12,815**	**60,964**	**12,193**

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Other costs in Year 5 includes magazine advertising expenses and URL name change charge. This cost has been changed in order to reflect the reported totals.

* Contractual expenses are for mini grants, collection development efforts, website hosting, technical expertise, cataloging, CKG members, and reviewers.

Kent State University	**Family Literacy**	**X257S000013**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**5 Year Average**
1) Center Operations	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
2) Maintaining Collections	30%	20%	20%	22%	22%	23%
3) Research Activities	55%	62%	62%	60%	60%	60%
4) Educ/Training Services	5%	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%
5) Other*	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**			
1	**Personnel**	23,745	31,541	32,175	23,657	25,039	136,157	27,231	53%
2	**Fringe Benefits**	6,153	9,287	9,570	6,704	6,257	37,971	7,594	15%
3	**Travel**	7,200	3,068	1,551	12,000	5,000	28,819	5,764	11%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	1,992		1,000	2,365	5,000	10,357	2,589	5%
6	Other	3,150	2,400		1,200		6,750	2,250	4%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	4,056		2,000	5,000	5,000	16,056	4,014	8%
8	**Direct (lines 1-9)**	46,296	46,296	46,296	50,926	46,296	236,110	47,222	
9	**Indirect @ 8%**	3,704	3,704	3,704	4,074	3,704	18,889	3,778	7%
10	**Total**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**50,000**	**55,000**	**50,000**	**255,000**	**51,000**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
11	**Actual Disbursements:**	27,614	60,445	50,440	39,112	22,692	200,303	40,061

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	23,745	31,541	32,175	23,657	25,039	136,157	27,231
13	Fringe Benefits	6,153	9,287	9,570	6,704	6,257	37,971	7,594
14	*Total Labor*	29,898	40,828	41,745	30,361	31,296	174,128	34,826
15	**Indirect @ 08%**	2,392	3,266	3,340	2,429	2,504	13,930	2,786
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	32,290	44,094	45,085	32,790	33,800	188,058	37,612

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses are for CKG members, Focus group stipends, and cataloger costs.

University of Tennessee	Literacy & Learning w/ Disabilities	X257S000012

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
2) Maintaining Collections	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
3) Research Activities	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%	40%
4) Educ/Training Services	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
5) Other*	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	22,278	27,734	29,654	29,124	23,936	132,726	26,545	51%
2	Fringe Benefits	6,015	7,488	8,896	13,688	11,250	47,337	9,467	18%
3	Travel	5,200	5,200	3,428	3,814	10,000	27,642	5,528	11%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	405	100	100	100	100	805	161	0%
6	Other	1,580	950	400	1,100	1,100	5,130	1,026	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	8,000	2,006	1,000		1,440	12,446	3,112	6%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	43,478	43,478	43,478	47,826	47,826	226,086	45,217	
9	Indirect @ 15%	6,522	6,522	6,522	7,174	7,174	33,913	6,783	13%
10	Total	50,000	50,000	50,000	55,000	55,000	260,000	52,000	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	22,278	27,734	29,654	29,124	23,936	132,726	26,545
13	Fringe Benefits	6,015	7,488	8,896	13,688	11,250	47,337	9,467
14	Total Labor	28,293	35,222	38,550	42,812	35,186	180,063	36,013
15	Indirect @ 15%	4,244	5,283	5,783	6,422	5,278	27,009	5,402
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	32,537	40,505	44,333	49,234	40,464	207,072	41,414

* Award history information is not available for this center.

* Contractual expenses are for mini grants and the CKG members.

	Program Leadership &	
University of Tennessee	**Improvement**	**X257S000011**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1) Center Operations	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
2) Maintaining Collections	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
3) Research Activities	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
4) Educ/Training Services	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
5) Other*	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**			
1	Personnel	9,789	13,684	32,892	30,701	37,430	124,496	24,899	15%
2	Fringe Benefits	2,643	3,695	9,868	10,439	14,224	40,867	8,173	5%
3	Travel	1,500	2,600	5,000	9,236	4,000	22,336	4,467	3%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	307	140	1,589	500	250	2,785	557	0%
6	Other	-	622	1,250	2,500	1,355	5,727	1,145	1%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	7,500	1,000	3,750	7,549	6,549	26,348	5,270	3%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	21,739	21,739	54,348	60,925	63,808	222,558	44,512	
9	Indirect @ 10%	2,174	2,174	5,435	6,092	6,381	22,256	4,451	3%
10	**Total**	**150,000**	**152,000**	**170,000**	**180,000**	**180,000**	**832,000**	**166,400**	**100%**

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
11	Actual Disbursements:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	9,789	13,684	32,892	30,701	37,430	124,496	24,899
13	Fringe Benefits	2,643	3,695	9,868	10,439	14,224	40,867	8,173
14	*Total Labor*	12,432	17,378	42,760	41,140	51,654	165,363	33,073
15	Indirect @ 10%	1,243	1,738	4,276	4,114	5,165	16,536	3,307
16	**Total Fully Loaded Labor**	**13,675**	**19,116**	**47,035**	**45,253**	**56,819**	**181,899**	**36,380**

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses are for mini grants and the CKG members.

* Both the Workforce Education and the Program Leadership Improvement collections are included together on the Workforce Education budget. 50% of the workforce Education budget has been allocated to the Program Leadership Improvement collection.

Peninsula Library System   **Science & Numeracy**   **X257S000004**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	5 Year Average
1) Center Operations	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%
2) Maintaining Collections	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%	19%
3) Research Activities	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
4) Educ/Training Services	16%	16%	16%	16%	16%	16%
5) Other*	-	-	-	-	-	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	30,000	26,000	26,000	32,000	32,000	146,000	29,200	56%
2	Fringe Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
3	Travel	6,500	7,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	33,500	6,700	13%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	2,000	1,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	7,000	1,400	3%
5	Supplies	1,080	1,080	1,080	1,080	1,080	5,400	1,080	2%
6	Other	1,874	1,874	1,874	1,454	1,454	8,530	1,706	3%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	4,000	8,000	8,000	5,000	11,700	36,700	7,340	14%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	45,454	45,454	45,454	47,034	53,734	237,130	47,426	
9	Indirect @ 10%	4,545	4,545	4,545	4,703	5,373	23,713	4,743	9%
10	Total	49,999	49,999	49,999	51,737	59,107	260,843	52,169	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	148,000	142,000	189,663	87,000	127,004	693,667	138,733

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	30,000	26,000	26,000	32,000	32,000	146,000	29,200
13	Fringe Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Total Labor	30,000	26,000	26,000	32,000	32,000	146,000	29,200
15	Indirect @ 10%	3,000	2,600	2,600	3,200	3,200	14,600	2,920
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	33,000	28,600	28,600	35,200	35,200	160,600	32,120

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses web development, multimedia, and graphics, curriculum development.

Sacramento County Of Education　　　　**Technology Training**　　　**X257S000007**

Percent of Time

	Project Year					
	1	2	3	4	5	5 Year Average
1) Center Operations	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
2) Maintaining Collections	25%	25%	25%	15%	15%	21%
3) Research Activities	35%	35%	35%	20%	20%	29%
4) Educ/Training Services	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
5) Other*	10%	10%	10%	35%	35%	20%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	12,979	33,067	37,711	36,349	38,743	158,849	31,770	63%
2	Fringe Benefits	1,818	5,750	7,630	7,732	7,955	30,885	6,177	12%
3	Travel	1,030	1,538	1,686	1,384	1,600	7,238	1,448	3%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	-	374	-	18	-	392	78	0%
6	Other	1,255	2,120	1,051	9,664	74	14,164	2,833	6%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	1,440	3,960	4,320	4,320	2,250	16,290	3,258	6%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	18,522	46,809	52,398	59,467	50,622	227,818	45,564	
9	Indirect @ a variable rate	1,620	6,216	4,693	6,015	4,378	22,922	4,584	9%
10	Total	20,142	53,025	57,091	65,482	55,000	250,740	50,148	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	17,625	51,315	48,362	55,982	21,687	194,970	38,994

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	12,979	33,067	37,711	36,349	38,743	158,849	31,770
13	Fringe Benefits	1,818	5,750	7,630	7,732	7,955	30,885	6,177
14	Total Labor	14,797	38,817	45,341	44,081	46,698	189,734	37,947
15	Indirect @ a variable rate	1,620	6,216	4,693	6,015	4,378	22,922	4,584
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	16,417	45,033	50,034	50,096	51,076	212,656	42,531

* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses are for consultant services.

| University of Tennessee | Workforce Education | X257S000011 |

Percent of Time

	Project Year					5 Year Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Center Operations	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
2) Maintaining Collections	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
3) Research Activities	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%	35%
4) Educ/Training Services	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
5) Other*	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

DOE Funds

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average	Avg % of Total
		1	2	3	4	5			
1	Personnel	9,789	13,684	32,892	30,701	37,430	124,496	24,899	49%
2	Fringe Benefits	2,643	3,695	9,868	10,439	14,224	40,867	8,173	16%
3	Travel	1,500	2,600	5,000	9,236	4,000	22,336	4,467	9%
	Operations:								
4	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0%
5	Supplies	307	140	1,589	500	250	2,785	557	1%
6	Other	-	622	1,250	2,500	1,355	5,727	1,145	2%
	Support:								
7	Contractual	7,500	1,000	3,750	7,549	6,549	26,348	5,270	10%
8	Direct (lines 1-9)	21,739	21,739	54,348	60,925	63,808	222,558	44,512	
9	Indirect @ 15%	3,261	3,261	8,152	9,139	9,571	33,384	6,677	13%
10	Total	25,000	25,000	62,500	70,063	73,379	255,942	51,188	100%

Award History*

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
11	Actual Disbursements:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Loaded Labor

		Project Year					Total	5 Year Average
		1	2	3	4	5		
	Salaries:							
12	Personnel	9,789	13,684	32,892	30,701	37,430	124,496	24,899
13	Fringe Benefits	2,643	3,695	9,868	10,439	14,224	40,867	8,173
14	Total Labor	12,432	17,378	42,760	41,140	51,654	165,363	33,073
15	Indirect @ 15%	1,865	2,607	6,414	6,171	7,748	24,804	4,961
16	Total Fully Loaded Labor	14,297	19,985	49,173	47,310	59,402	190,167	38,033

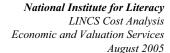* Award history is most recent information available on funds withdrawn. Year 5 totals are partial.

* Contractual expenses are for mini grants and te CKG members.

* Both the Workforce Education and the Program Leadership Improvement collections are included together on the Workforce Education budget. 50% of the workforce Education budget has been allocated to the Program Leadership Improvement collection.

C   PR/Award Numbers

Grantee	Center	Project ID Number (IDN)
N/A	Women's Literacy	None
Correctional Education Association	Correctional Education	X257S000002
Peninsula Library System	Science & Numeracy	X257S000004
World Education Inc	Health & Literacy	X257S000005
Sacramento County Of Education	Technology Training	X257S000007
California Literacy Inc	English as a Second Language	X257S000008
Kent State University	Assessment	X257S000010
University of Tennessee	Program Leadership & Improvement	X257S000011
University of Tennessee	Workforce Education	X257S000011
University of Tennessee	Literacy & Learning w/ Disabilities	X257S000012
Kent State University	Family Literacy	X257S000013
Peninsula Library System	Western-Pacific	X257T000001
University of Tennessee	Equipped for the future	X257T000004
University of Tennessee	Southern	X257T000004
Kent State University	Midwest	X257T000005
Years 1-3: Central Intermediate Unit 10 Years 4-5: Kent State University	Eastern LINCS	X257T000006
University of Idaho	Northwest	X257T020001

D   Comparable Company Business Descriptions

ANTEON INTERNATIONAL CORP

Anteon International Corp. provides information technology solutions and systems engineering and integration services to government customers. The company designs, integrates, maintains, and upgrades state-of-the-art information systems for national defense, intelligence, emergency response and other high-priority government missions. It also provides government clients with the systems analysis, integration and program management skills necessary to manage their mission systems development and operations. At Dec. 31, 2004, the company served over 1,000 U.S. federal government clients, as well as state and foreign governments. Anteon also provides systems engineering and integration services to government clients within the defense community. Defense clients are provided with the systems analysis, integration and program management skills to manage the continuing development of mission systems, including ships, aircraft, weapons, and communications systems. As a solutions provider, the company offers mission area and threat analyses, research and development management, systems engineering and design acquisition management, systems integration and testing, operations concept planning, systems maintenance and training. For certain U.S. Navy systems, threat analysis, operations concept planning, and systems integration and testing are offered, including the radar, missile and command and control systems to protect fleets from ballistic missile attacks. As a total solutions provider, the company maintains the comprehensive information technology skills necessary to support the entire lifecycle of its clients' systems, from conceptual development through operational support. The company offers requirements definition and analysis, process design or re-engineering, systems engineering and design, networking and communications design hardware and software evaluation and procurement, custom software and middleware development, system integration and testing and software maintenance and training services. The company delivers information technology solutions in healthcare programs for the Department of Defense, Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. It supports the research, development, acquisition, and/or fielding of medical equipment and supplies, drugs, vaccines, diagnostics and advanced information technology.

APOLLO GROUP INC

Apollo Group, Inc. provides higher education to working adults. The company operates through its subsidiaries, The University of Phoenix, Inc., Institute for Professional Development, The College for Financial Planning Institutes Corporation, and Western International University, Inc. Apollo offers programs and services at 82 campuses and 137 learning centers in 39 states, Puerto Rico, and Vancouver. Its combined degree enrollment at Aug. 31, 2004, was 255,600. Consolidated enrollment makes the company the largest private institution of higher education in the U.S. University of Phoenix had degree enrollments of apx. 227,800 adult students at Aug. 31, 2004, is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission, and has been a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools since 1978. University of Phoenix has successfully replicated its teaching/learning model while maintaining educational quality at 55 local campuses and 102 learning centers in 33 states, Puerto Rico, and Vancouver. University of Phoenix also offers its educational programs worldwide through its computerized educational delivery system. University of Phoenix has customized computer programs for student tracking, marketing, faculty recruitment and training, and academic quality management. University of Phoenix is the

largest subsidiary, with its tuition revenues representing apx. 95% of consolidated tuition revenues. Institute for Professional Development provides program development and management consulting services to regionally accredited private colleges and universities (client institutions) who are interested in expanding or developing their programs for working adults. These services typically include degree program design, curriculum development, market research, student recruitment, accounting, and administrative services. Institute for Professional Development provides these services at 23 campuses and 32 learning centers in 23 states in exchange for a contractual share of the tuition revenues generated from these programs. Nearly 24,100 degree-seeking students are enrolled in Institute for Professional Development assisted programs as of November 2004. The College for Financial Planning provides financial planning education programs, including the Certified Financial Planner Professional Education Program certification, as well as regionally accredited graduate degree programs in financial planning and analysis, and finance. Western International University offers graduate and undergraduate degree programs to apx. 2,300 students in Arizona as of November 2004.

BRIGHT HORIZONS FAMILY SOLUTIONS

Bright Horizons Family Solutions, Inc. is a provider of workplace services for employers and families, including early care and education and strategic work/life consulting. As of March 2004, the company operated 509 early care and education programs for over 400 clients and had the capacity to serve more than 59,200 children in 37 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom. The early care and education center concept evolved from the more traditional child care center and is designed to serve a broader segment of the work-site population. The company's early care and education centers provide a number of services designed to meet the business objectives of the client and the family needs of the client's employees. The company serves many leading corporations, including 84 Fortune 500 companies at 174 centers. Working Mother's 2003 list of the "100 Best Companies for Working Mothers" includes 50 clients of the company. The company's clients include Abbott Laboratories, Inc., AstraZeneca, Bank of America, Bristol Myers Squibb, British Petroleum, Citigroup, Eli Lilly and Co., the European Commission, Glaxo SmithKline PLC, IBM, Johnson & Johnson, JP Morgan Chase, LandRover, Microsoft Corp., Motorola, Pfizer, Inc., Reebok, SAS, S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc., Starbucks, Timberland, Time Warner, Universal Studios, Inc. and Wachovia Corp. The company also provides services for well-known institutions such as Cambridge University, Duke University, JFK Medical Center, Johns Hopkins University, the International Monetary Fund, MIT, and the PGA and LPGA Tours. The company operates multiple centers for 45 of its clients; 37 of these clients are in the United States and eight of these clients are in the United Kingdom. Although the specifics of the company's contractual arrangements vary widely, they generally can be classified into two forms: the management or cost plus model, where the company manages a work-site early care and education center under a cost-plus agreement with a corporate sponsor; and the profit and loss model, where the company assumes the financial risk of the centers operations. As of March 2004, early care and education centers operating under management model contracts represented approximately 4% of the company's early care and education centers, and the profit and loss model represented approximately 6% of the company's early care and education centers.

CACI INTL INC

CACI International Inc. provides IT and communications solutions to clients in government and commercial markets, primarily throughout North America and the U.K. The company delivers IT

and communications solutions to clients through four areas of expertise or service offerings: systems integration, managed network services, knowledge management and engineering services. Through these service offerings, the company provides comprehensive IT and communications solutions by adapting emerging technologies and continually evolving legacy strengths in such areas as information assurance and security, reengineering, logistics and engineering support, automated debt management systems and services, litigation support systems and services, product data management, software development and reuse, voice, data and video communications, simulation and planning, financial and human resource systems and geo-demographic and customer data analysis. In FY 04 (June), 93.7% of the company's revenue came from U.S. government prime or subcontracts. Of the company's total revenue, 67.4% came from U.S. Department of Defense contracts, 9.4% from contracts with Department of Justice, and 16.9% from other civilian agency government clients. The remaining 6.3% of revenue came from commercial business, both domestic and international, and state and local contracts. Although the company is continuously working to diversify its client base, it will continue to aggressively seek additional work from the DoD. In FY 04, DoD revenue grew by 43.9%, or $235.7 million. The acquisitions of Acton Burnell, Inc., in October 2002, substantially all of the assets of Premier Technology Group, Inc., (PTG) in May 2003, C-CUBED Corp. in October 2003, CMS Information Services, Inc. in March 2004 and certain assets of the Defense and Intelligence Group of American Management Systems, Inc. in May 2004 and other acquisitions accounted for approximately 61.8% of the revenue growth within DoD. Internal growth accounted for the remaining 38.2% of the DoD revenue growth.

CORINTHIAN COLLEGES INC

Corinthian Colleges, Inc. operates as a for-profit, post-secondary education company in the U.S. and Canada, with more than 64,800 students enrolled as of June 30, 2004. At that same date, Corinthian operated 88 colleges in 22 states and 45 colleges and 15 corporate training centers in 7 Canadian provinces, and served the large and growing segment of the population seeking to acquire career-oriented education. Ten Canadian colleges are expected to close during FY 05 (June). The company offers a variety of master's, bachelor's and associate's degrees and diploma programs through four principal operating divisions in the U.S. and one principal operating division in Canada. Additionally, the corporate education division in Canada provides customized training to corporations and government organizations. As of June 30, 2004, the Corinthian Schools division operated 43 primarily diploma-granting schools with curricula primarily in the healthcare, business, electronics and information technology fields and seeks to provide its students the training required for entry-level positions. The Titan Schools division operated 14 campuses which offer diploma and degree programs in the fields of aircraft frame and power plant maintenance, technology and automotive repair and diesel technology. The Rhodes Colleges division operated 17 primarily degree-granting colleges and offers curricula principally in healthcare, business, criminal justice, and information technology and electronics. The University division operated 14 primarily degree-granting colleges and offers curricula principally in healthcare, business, criminal justice, and information technology and electronics. The CDI Education Corporation Post-Secondary Education division operated 45 colleges in Canada which offer diploma programs in allied health, business and information technology. The CDI Education Corporation Corporate Education division operated 15 training centers in Canada providing onsite, outsourcing and e-learning services for the corporate market in the areas of skills development and management for business and technology professionals. Diploma programs generally have a duration of 6-19 months. Associate's degree programs have a duration of 18-24 months, bachelor's degree programs have a duration of 36-48 months and master's

degree programs have a duration of 21 months. As of June 30, 2004, the company enrolled 21,966 (34%) students in associate's programs, 3,084 students (5%) in bachelor's programs, 1,049 students (1%) in master's programs, and 38,711 students (6%) in diploma programs.

CORNELL COMPANIES INC

Cornell Companies, Inc. provides corrections, treatment and educational services outsourced by federal, state and local government agencies. The company provides a diversified portfolio of services for adults and juveniles through three operating divisions: adult secure institutional services; residential and community-based juvenile justice, educational and treatment services; and adult community-based corrections and treatment services. The company's services include incarceration and detention, transition from incarceration, drug and alcohol treatment programs, behavioral rehabilitation and treatment, and grades 3-12 education. As of May 2004, the company had contracts to operate 71 facilities with a total service capacity of 16,644. Facilities are located in 15 states and the District of Columbia. The company's facility service capacity is comprised of the number of beds currently available for service or available upon completion of construction or renovation of residential facilities and the average program capacity of non-residential community-based programs. As of Dec. 31, 2003, the company operated seven facilities with an aggregate service capacity of 5,917 that provide secure services for incarcerated adults. The company's juvenile division provides residential, community-based, behavioral health and alternative education programs to youth, typically between the ages of 10 and 17. Juvenile justice, educational and treatment services consist primarily of specially-designed programs that lead to rehabilitation while providing public safety and holding youths accountable for their decisions and behavior. The company's adult community-based corrections and treatment services division serves individuals who have been granted parole or sentenced to probation. Probationers (individuals sentenced for an offense without incarceration) and parolees (individuals released prior to the completion of their sentence) are typically placed in community-based correctional settings.

DAOU SYSTEMS INC

DAOU Systems, Inc. provides integrated information technology (IT) solutions and services to the U.S. healthcare industry. The company's focus is on providing healthcare organizations with cost effective solutions to extend the useful life of legacy systems through the integration of emerging technologies and applications. By unlocking the potential of their existing systems to support emerging technologies to stay competitive, and then implementing those technologies in a rapid, affordable way that delivers results, the company is helping healthcare organizations solve their biggest IT challenge. The company's services include infrastructure and network services, application implementation and support, application development and integration of Internet-based services, management consulting, and advanced technologies. Since 1987, the company has provided IT services to approximately 1,600 customers. The company provides consultative services to health maintenance organizations (HMOs), health insurers, Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans and independent practice associations. Its provider customers include hospitals, IDNs, medical groups, academic medical centers, physician groups and ancillaries. In addition, the company provides IT services to government healthcare organizations, third-party administrators, medical services organizations, service vendors, software vendors and hardware vendors. The company believes that its key competitive advantage is its core understanding of its clients' complex healthcare environment based on its extensive knowledge and experience in the healthcare industry.

DEVRY INC

DeVry Inc., one of the largest publicly held, international, higher education companies in North America, owns and operates DeVry University, Ross University and Becker Professional Review (Becker). DeVry University includes DeVry undergraduate programs in technology and business, and Keller Graduate School of Management, with graduate programs in management. At the beginning of the spring 2004 semester, which was the final semester in the company's FY 04 (June), approximately 41,135 full- and part-time students were enrolled in DeVry University undergraduate day, evening and online programs. The company's undergraduate programs accounted for about 72% of its revenues in FY 04. In addition, there were approximately 11,140 coursetakers in graduate school programs for the spring term that began in May. Ross University is one of the world's largest providers of medical and veterinary medical education with over 3,300 students. The schools are located in the Caribbean island countries of Dominica and St. Kitts/Nevis, respectively. Becker prepares candidates for the Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Certified Management Accountant (CMA) and Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) professional certification examinations. Becker offers CPA review classes at approximately 250 locations, including sites in more than 30 foreign countries. In all, Becker serves an estimated more than 43,000 students annually through its CPA, CFA and CMA review courses.

EDUCATE INC

Educate, Inc. is a national provider of tutoring and other supplemental education services to pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, or pre-K-12, students. For over 25 years, the company has provided trusted, personalized instruction to its students. The company operates through three business segments, Learning Center, Institutional Services and Online Learning Services, that together served more than 250,000 students in 2003. The Learning Center segment (66.7% of 2003 revenues) develops and delivers personalized tutoring programs to pre-K-12 students through a network of more than 1,000 franchised and company-owned learning centers in North America operating under the Sylvan brand name and more than 940 European franchised and company-owned learning centers. Sylvan Learning Centers provide supplemental, remedial and enrichment instruction, primarily in reading and mathematics, and, to an increasing extent, writing, study skills and test preparation. These programs feature an extensive series of standardized diagnostic tests, personalized instruction, a student motivational program and ongoing involvement of parents and their child's regular school teacher. North American learning center operations are comprised of franchised centers (896 as of June 30, 2004) and company-owned centers (141). The company's European learning center business operates under the Schulerhilfe name and principally provides homework support to primary and secondary students. As of June 30, 2004, Schulerhilfe operated 231 company-owned learning centers and 666 franchised centers in Germany, and 51 franchised centers in Austria. Institutional services (30.1%) are provided through Catapult Learning, formerly known as Sylvan Education Solutions. These services include supplemental instruction programs, primarily in reading and math, to students in schools, school districts and private educational entities (primarily parochial schools) across the country. eSylvan (3.2%) offers online tutoring programs modeled after those provided in Sylvan Learning Centers. These online programs use a technologically sophisticated, Internet-based application that enables teachers and students to talk and interact in real-time over a dial-up or broadband connection. eSylvan's programs are provided to students primarily in the second through ninth grades. The company believes there is significant potential to establish new Sylvan Learning Centers, and also intends to continue to acquire select franchised Sylvan Learning Centers.

EMTEC INC

Emtec, Inc. is a systems integrator focused on providing technology solutions that enable its customers to effectively use and manage their data to grow their businesses. The Company's areas of specialization in information technology (IT) services include enterprise computing, data communications, data access, network design, enterprise backup and storage consolidation, managed services and staff augmentation. Emtec is also reseller of IT products, including workstations, servers, microcomputers, application software and networking and communications equipment. The Company's customers are primarily companies, state and local government, local school districts, and other large and mid-sized companies located principally in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan area and the Southeastern United States. Emtec, Inc. is an e-Business and information technology solutions provider that structures and implements complex, highly integrated systems that enable customers to exchange information with their partners in a purely digital format. For the 9 months ended 12/31/04, total revenues rose 5% to $82.7M. Net income totaled $1.3M, up from $539K. Results reflect higher procurement services revenue due to computer roll-out projects & higher margins.

FIRST CONSULTING GROUP INC

First Consulting Group, Inc. provides outsourcing, consulting, systems implementation and integration, and research services primarily for healthcare, pharmaceutical, and other life sciences organizations throughout North America, Europe, and Asia. First Consulting's principal services consist of outsourcing, consulting, systems implementation and integration. The company offers clients an integrated approach through multi-disciplinary teams with expertise across these areas. In certain of its businesses, First Consulting also offers proprietary software products that are designed to optimize other client systems or processes. In its consulting and systems integration practice, the company is typically engaged on a project basis and assembles client teams from one or more services to match the expertise and service offerings with the overall objectives required by each client and engagement. Many client engagements involve multiple assignments. First Consulting may assemble several client teams to serve the needs of a single client. The company provides services at the client site to senior-level management and other personnel within the client organization. Its services include full IT outsourcing, process and application outsourcing, and discreet functional outsourcing such as call center or help desk services. In 2003, the company provided its services through three business units: Healthcare; Outsourcing; and Life Sciences. The Healthcare business unit is comprised of four practice units: health delivery, health plans, government healthcare, and technology services. In 2003, the healthcare business unit accounted for apx. 42% of the company's consolidated net revenues. First Consulting provides IT outsourcing services that include hiring IT staff of clients as its employees and operating part or all of the IT operations either at the client site, offsite in a consolidated data center, or offshore in a development center. Revenues from the outsourcing business unit represented apx. 37% of 2003 consolidated net revenues. The Life Sciences practice serves pharmaceutical, biotechnology, medical device, and related organizations throughout North America, Europe and Japan. This segment has served more than half of the top 50 global pharmaceutical companies. In 2003, the segment accounted for 21% of consolidated net revenues. On Jan. 30, 2004, the company purchased a remaining interest in FCG Infrastructure Services (formerly Codigent Solutions Group, Inc.) for apx. $2.4 million.

ITT EDUCATIONAL SERVICES INC

ITT Educational Services, Inc. provides technology-oriented postsecondary degree programs including associate, bachelor and master degree programs and nondegree diploma programs to more than 40,000 students in the U.S. The company has 77 institutes in 30 states. Each institute is authorized by the applicable education authorities of the states in which they operate and recruit and is accredited by an accrediting commission recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The company designs its education programs, after consultation with employers, to help graduates prepare for careers in various fields. As of Dec. 31, 2004, more than 99% of ITT's program offerings were degree programs. In 2004, ITT opened new institutes and began using learning sites. A learning site is an institute location where educational activities are conducted and student services are provided away from the institute's campus. The company plans to open three or four new institutes and add up to four new learning sites to existing institutes in the remainder of 2005. In 2004, ITT developed several new residence and online bachelor and associate degree programs. At the end of 2004, all of the company's residence associate degree and bachelor degree programs were being taught on a three-day-per-week class schedule or under its hybrid education delivery model, pursuant to which certain program courses are taught in residence on campus and others are taught online over the Internet (the Hybrid Delivery Model). In 2004, ITT expanded the use of the Hybrid Delivery Model to most of its institutes. In 2004, the company also expanded its alliance with an international educator in China, pursuant to which more of the company's curricula are offered to students in China either by ITT through online programs offered over the Internet or by the international educator through residence programs under a license to use its curricula. ITT intends to continue expanding the number of program offerings at its existing institutes. The company's objective is to offer multiple programs at each institute. According to ITT, the company's 77 institutes provide significant potential for the introduction of existing programs to a broader number of institutes. ITT believes that introducing new programs at existing institutes will attract more students. In 2004, the company added a total of 164 program offerings among 41 existing institutes, and in 2005 ITT intends to add a total of approximately 76 program offerings among 29 existing institutes.

LEARNING CARE GROUP INC

Learning Care Group, Inc., operating through wholly-owned Childtime Childcare, Inc. and Tutor Time Learning Centers, L.L.C., is a for-profit provider of early childhood care and educational services to children between the ages of six weeks and 12 years. As of July 23, 2004, the company operated or franchised a total of 465 centers system-wide under three major lines of business, and had system-wide licensed capacity capable of serving over 50,000 children. The company's three lines of business are: Childtime Learning Centers, with 267 company-operated centers consisting of 258 Childtime centers and nine Childtime-branded centers operated for third parties; 61 company-operated Tutor Time Child Care/Learning Centers; and 137 franchised Tutor Time centers. The Childtime and Tutor Time brands operate in largely distinct market segments. Childtime centers are, on average, smaller and less standardized in construction. They appeal to parents who are looking for a "homey" feel and more intimate experience for their child. Tutor Time centers are larger, more standardized in layout, and designed to appeal to parents who value a more structured educational and developmental experience. Both brands place emphasis on educational quality and content, with the company's education department developing proprietary content distinct to each brand. With their larger size, Tutor Time centers generally deliver the potential for higher economic returns per center. However, Tutor Time centers also require higher investment and are typically fitted with more expensive equipment and supplies (e.g., telephones, intercoms and security cameras in each room, and children's computers). Childtime and Tutor Time corporate centers are located throughout the United States

(in 25 states), and Canada (one location). The vast majority of these centers are operated on leased premises, with typical lease terms ranging from one to 25 years. Thirty-eight of the Childtime centers are operated on company-owned premises. August 18, 2004, the company changed its name from Childtime Learning Centers, Inc. to Learning Care Group, Inc.

LEARNING TREE INTL INC

Learning Tree International, Inc. (Learning Tree) is a worldwide vendor-independent provider of training to information technology (IT) professionals and managers working in business and government organizations. Since its founding in 1974, Learning Tree has provided training to over 1.5 million IT professionals and managers. In FY 04 (Oct.), it provided training to over 87,000 course participants. Approximately two-thirds of Learning Tree participants come from Fortune 1000-level companies, their international equivalents and government organizations, and approximately one-third come from small and medium-size companies. During FY 04, Learning Tree presented courses in 27 countries. Learning Tree offers a broad, proprietary library of intensive two- to five-day instructor-led courses, comprising 146 different course titles representing over 3,600 hours of training at Oct. 1, 2004. Learning Tree courses focus on Web development, operating systems, programming languages, databases, computer networks, computer and network security, object-oriented technology, management and key business skills. Learning Tree designs its own courses to provide participants an unbiased perspective of software and hardware products and the ability to compare and integrate multiple platforms and technologies from various vendors in a single course. It says it uses a well-defined, systematic approach in developing and updating its course library to provide training that is immediately relevant to course participants working in a broad range of applications and industries. Learning Tree's proprietary course development process also allows it to customize its courses for delivery at its customers' sites. Learning Tree courses are highly interactive and are translated into French, Swedish and Japanese. Its courses are recommended for one to two semester hours of college credit by the American Council on Education, and are accepted for college credit at the University of Phoenix. Learning Tree had 655 instructors on Oct. 1, 2004, each of whom was an IT professional combining expert knowledge with extensive practical experience. On average, each expert instructor teaches eight to ten Learning Tree course events per year on an as-needed basis. During the rest of the year, Learning Tree instructors apply the IT skills they teach as either full-time employees for other companies or as independent consultants.

LPA HOLDING CORP

La Petite Academy, Inc., operates 745 La Petite Academy for-profit child care and preschool education centers in 35 states and D.C., mainly in the southern, Atlantic coast, midwestern and western regions of the U.S. La Petite Academy, Inc. is the second largest provider of for-profit preschool education and child care in the U.S. based on the number of academies it operates. During 1997, the company estimated that an average of 86,700 children attended 745 La Petite Academy schools (as of August 30, 1997) located in 35 states and the District of Columbia. La Petite's academies offer educational, developmental and child care programs, which are available on a full-time or part-time basis, for children between six weeks and 12 years old. The academies operate year round, five days per week. Tuition for the programs varies depending upon the location of each academy and is proportionally higher for children attending part-time.

NEW HORIZONS WORLDWIDE INC

New Horizons Worldwide, Inc. operates and franchises computer training centers. It has two reporting units, company-owned training centers and franchising operations. As of Dec. 31, 2003, the company operated 25 training centers, all within the U.S. At that date, its franchisees operated 126 locations in the U.S. and Canada and 101 locations in 48 other countries around the world. An additional 23 franchises had been sold as of Dec. 31, 2003 and are scheduled for future openings. The franchising operations reporting unit earns revenue through the sale of New Horizons master and unit franchises within the U.S. and abroad, on-going royalties in return for providing franchises systems of instruction, sales, and management concepts concerning computer training, and the sale of courseware materials and eLearning products to franchises. The franchising operations reporting unit has places of business in Anaheim, CA; Amsterdam, Netherlands; and Singapore. Each reporting unit operates within the IT training industry. The company believes its franchise network is the largest independent provider of personal computer software application and technical certification instruction within the information technology (IT) training industry. It delivered over 2.3 million student-days of IT training in 2003, generating system-wide revenues, which include both the results of company-owned and franchised operations, of $394 million. The network has apx. 2,100 classrooms, 2,400 instructors and 2,100 account executives. The goal of each New Horizons training center, whether company-owned or franchised, is to provide students with information and skills that have immediate and practical value in the workplace. New Horizons training centers offer a variety of delivery modalities, a broad range of curriculum, and the ability to deliver IT training throughout the world. New Horizons training center customers are predominantly employer-sponsored individuals from public and private corporations, service organizations, government agencies and municipalities seeking to improve and/or maintain the IT skills of their employees and consumers looking to gain information technology certifications to enable them to enter into the IT profession.

NOBEL LEARNING COMMUNITIES INC

Nobel Learning Communities, Inc. provides affordable private education from preschool through twelfth grade. As of Sept. 7, 2004, the company operated 151 schools in 13 states, with an aggregate capacity of apx. 23,900 children. Its schools operate under various names, including Chesterbrook Academy, Merryhill School, Evergreen Academy, Paladin Academy, and Houston Learning Academy. Nobel targets its schools and preschools to meet the needs of middle-income working parents. In most locations, programs are available for children starting at six weeks of age. To complement its programs, the company also operates before- and after-school programs and summer camps at its various school facilities. Nobel supplements its educational programs with sports and other activities, such as field trips and classroom presentations as well as dance, gymnastics and music programs. Paladin Academy schools serve the needs of children with learning challenges. Through these schools, Nobel seeks to improve the learning process and achievement levels of children and adults with dyslexia, attention deficit disorder and other learning difficulties. As of Sept. 7, 2004, the company operated two stand-alone Paladin Academy schools and 13 programs or clinics located within its elementary schools. Nobel is pursuing a three-pronged strategy to take advantage of the significant growth opportunities in the private education market: internal organic growth at existing schools, including expansions of campus facilities; new school development in both existing and new markets; and strategic acquisitions. Nobel bases its pre-elementary and elementary strategy on meeting the educational needs of children, beginning with infancy. The company encourages children to stay with its schools as they advance each school year, within its geographic clusters called "Nobel Learning Communities." During FY 04 (June), Nobel opened one pre-elementary school, and during the

period from July 4, 2004 through September 7, 2004, it opened one pre-elementary school and one elementary school. The funds used to open these schools were provided by cash flow from operations. There are no other school openings planned for FY 05.

PEROT SYSTEMS CORP

Perot Systems Corp. is a worldwide provider of information technology (IT) services and business solutions to a range of customers. The company offers its customers integrated solutions designed around their specific business objectives, chosen from a breadth of services, including technology infrastructure services, applications services, business process services and consulting services. Infrastructure services are typically performed under multi-year contracts in which Perot assumes operational responsibility for various aspects of its customers' businesses, including data center management, web hosting and internet access, desktop solutions, messaging services, network management, program management and security. Applications services include services such as application development and maintenance, including the development and maintenance of custom and packaged application software for customers, and application systems migration and testing, which includes the migration of applications from legacy environments to current technologies, as well as performing quality assurance functions on custom applications. Business process services include services such as claims processing, call center management, energy management, payment and settlement management, security and services to improve the collection of receivables. In addition, business process services include engineering support and other technical services. Consulting services include strategy consulting, enterprise consulting, technology consulting and research. The consulting services typically consist of customized, industry-specific business solutions provided by associates with industry expertise, as well as the implementation of prepackaged software applications.

PROVIDENCE SERVICE CORP

Providence Service Corp. provides and manages government sponsored social services. The state and local government agencies that fund the services the company provides are required by law to provide counseling, case management, foster care and other support services to eligible individuals and families. Providence provides care primarily in the client's home or community, reducing the cost to the government of such services. The company also manages social services provider networks. Since inception, Providence has grown from 1,333 clients served in a single state to over 13,300 clients served, either directly or through managed entities, from 99 locations in 17 states and the District of Columbia as of Dec. 31, 2003. The company provides a continuum of services, directly or through managed entities, pursuant to 202 contracts as of Dec. 31, 2003. Providence provides individual and family counseling in a client's own home. The company also contracts with schools to help them manage at-risk students through training and counseling programs on school grounds. Counselors are professionals or para-professionals who are trained to provide a range of home and community based services, which address marital and family issues, depression, drug or alcohol abuse, domestic violence, hyperactivity, criminal or anti-social behavior, sexual misbehavior, school expulsions or chronic truancy and other disruptive behaviors. Providence actively recruits and trains foster parents and licenses family foster homes to provide 24-hour care to adolescents and children who have been removed from their homes. The company also offers therapeutic foster care to children and adolescents who exhibit serious emotional problems and who could otherwise require institutional treatment. The company also coordinates and manages delivery of government sponsored social services by multiple providers on behalf of the not-for-profit organizations that it manages. Through

government contracts, Providence handles telephone inquiries and conducts interviews to determine a potential client's needs, and if necessary, place the client with an appropriate social services provider. The company also provides case management services. In January 2004, the company acquired Dockside Services, Inc., from which it expects to add about $2.4 million of home and community based revenue for 2004. Providence added 193 clients as a result of this acquisition and also positioned itself for cross selling of foster care services and expansion into other markets in the states of Indiana and Michigan.

SIERRA SYSTEMS GROUP INC

Sierra Systems Group Inc. provides a full range of information technology (IT) services throughout North America and Canada. The Company's Government solutions offer ways for government agencies to initiate programs, provide traditional services and manage their information assets. Its Enterprise solutions allow businesses to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their administrative systems. For the financial services and insurance industries, the Company's products can help extend global reach, reduce costs, lower product development times and speed integration of acquisitions. The Company offers Health solutions, as well as Justice solutions, both of which expedite paperwork related to these fields. Its Telecommunications solutions support customer care, billing and traditional voice and data convergence. It also provides Package implementation and Support services. In January 2004, the Company acquired Eastbridge Consulting Incorporated. For the six months ended 31 March 2005, Sierra Systems Group Inc.'s revenues decreased < 1% to C$73.9M. Net income totaled C$3.8M vs. a loss of C$4.9M. Revenues reflect a decrease the product sales as well as reduced reimbursements. Net income was offset by an increase in the gross margins, decreased compensation and product costs, reduced general and administrative expenses as well as lower amortization expense.

STRAYER EDUCATION INC

Strayer Education, Inc. is an education services holding company which owns Strayer University and certain other assets. The company's mission is to make higher education achievable and convenient for working adults in today's economy. As of the Dec. 31, 2003, the company had more than 20,000 students enrolled in its programs. Founded in 1892, Strayer University is an institution of higher learning that offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in business administration, accounting, information technology, education and public administration at 27 physical campuses in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Strayer University is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, one of the six regional collegiate accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education. As part of its program offering, the University also offers classes via the internet through Strayer University Online, providing its working adult students a more flexible and convenient program offering and allowing students worldwide to take advantage of Strayer University's programs. The company's goal is to open new campuses every year (with five new campuses planned for 2004) by filling out the Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee areas and by expanding into contiguous states that exhibit strong enrollment potential. THe company opened new campuses in Nashville and Memphis, TN for the 2003 spring term. Due to strong demand at the company's Raleigh-Durham, NC campus, it opened a second campus there for the 2003 summer term. The company also opened two new campuses in Philadelphia for the 2003 fall term. The company has sponsorship and reimbursement arrangements of varying sorts with over

90 corporations and government institutions, including AT&T, Boeing, Computer Sciences Corporation, EDS, General Motors, Northrup Grumman, Pepco, UPS, the U.S. Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, the Public Broadcasting Service and the World Bank Group. The company is actively working with other corporations and institutions to increase the number of such arrangements. For the fall 2003 quarter, 65% of students were enrolled in bachelor's degree programs, 22% in master's degree programs and 13% in associate's degree programs.

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS CO

Technology Solutions Co. delivers information technology consulting services that help clients plan, select, install, upgrade and optimize the software systems that run their business operations. Its services include project planning, software selection, reengineering, implementation, systems integration, upgrades, training, and outsourcing, with specialty expertise in product configuration solutions, forensic technology consulting and project turn-arounds as well as new service offerings such as Sarbanes-Oxley compliance and Use Tax technology. Technology Solutions provides services on a client-specific basis. This allows the company to focus on each client's needs as well as offer business process and technology expertise in various functional areas such as Enterprise Resource Planning, supply chain management, customer relationship management, managed IT services and change management and training. The company serves customers in the United States but also supports global deployments and some international clients, with a focus on the commercial markets. Typical clients are firms that generate over $500 million in annual revenue. During 2003, Technology Solutions performed project work for over 80 corporations, including eight of the Fortune 50 companies. In 2003, the top two customers represented 15% (Exxon Mobil Corp.) and 11% (Caterpillar Inc.) of revenues before reimbursements, respectively. The company maintains strategic alliances with key packaged software providers, which support and complement its service offerings. Technology Solutions has partnered with SAP, PeopleSoft, Agile Software and Ariba Inc., as well as others. The company also maintains relationships with other service providers in order to provide integrated solutions to client needs, and to leverage business development opportunities. Beginning in the second half of 2003, the company took steps to refocus and rebuild its business. These steps included investing in a range of specialty services in order to differentiate it from the competition and investing in marketing initiatives to support these specialty services as well as maintaining project personnel headcount at a level to support business growth. January 3, 2005, Technology completed its acquisition of Zamba Corporation, a customer relationship management services company. Stockholders received 0.15 of a share of Technology Solutions common stock for each share held.

TITAN CORP

The Titan Corp. (Titan) functions as a technology developer and systems integrator for the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, intelligence and other key government agencies. The company provides a range of services, systems and solutions, including research and development, design, installation, integration, test, logistics support, maintenance and training. In addition, Titan develops and produces transformational weapons systems, sophisticated satellite communications systems, antennas/telemetry systems, tactical radios, signals intelligence systems, encryption devices, classified systems, and complex computer-based information systems for information processing, information fusion, dissemination, and data mining. Titan's services range from system procurement and acquisition management, program management and systems engineering to information technology network

design, integration, deployment and operations support to test modeling, military and first responder training and operations analysis for nuclear, electro-magnetic and chemical/biological threats. Titan focuses on four markets: C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance), Transformational Military Programs, Enterprise IT, and the War on Terrorism/Homeland Security. C4ISR is the principal business foundation on which Titan has grown over the years. C4ISR can be described as the process of gathering military information through intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance measures, and transmitting this information digitally through high technology communications systems; digitized information to facilitate command and control decision making, and disseminating such commands electronically to military and intelligence platforms for execution. Titan is a key contributor to the significant C4ISR systems that support the Department of Defense, national intelligence agencies, the Department of Homeland Security and other government agencies. Titan is developing transformation systems for the Department of Defense with a focus on security challenges faced by the U.S. and its allies. The company is seeking to win engineering development contracts and ultimately full-scale production contracts to provide low-cost, mission critical transformational systems.
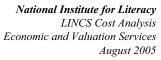
TYLER TECHNOLOGIES INC

Tyler Technologies, Inc. provides integrated information management solutions and services for local governments. The company partners with clients to make local government more accessible to the public, more responsive to the needs of citizens and more efficient in its operations. Tyler has a line of software products and services to address the IT needs of virtually every major area of operation for cities, counties, schools and other local government entities. The company provides a comprehensive and flexible suite of products and services and derives revenues from four primary sources: software licensing; software services; appraisal services; and maintenance and support. The company designs, develops and markets a range of software products to serve mission-critical back-office functions of local governments. Its software applications are designed primarily for use on hardware supporting UNIX/NT operating systems. Many of the software applications include Internet-accessible solutions that allow for real-time public access to a variety of information or that allow the public to transact business with local governments via the Internet. Software products and services are generally grouped in four major areas: financial and city solutions; courts and justice; property appraisal and tax; and document management. Each of the company's core software systems consists of several fully integrated application modules. For customers who acquire the software for use in-house, Tyler generally licenses its systems under standard license agreements which provide the customer with a fully-paid, nonexclusive, nontransferable right to use the software. In some of the product areas, such as financials and property appraisal, the company offers multiple solutions designed to meet the needs of different sized governments. Tyler also offers certain software products on an outsourced basis for customers who do not wish to maintain, update and operate these systems or to make large up-front capital expenditures to implement these advanced technologies. For these customers, the company either hosts the applications and data at one of its data centers, or maintains the hardware and software at the client's site. Customers typically pay monthly fees under multi-year contracts for these services. Following the implementation of software systems, Tyler provides ongoing software support services to assist customers in operating the systems and to periodically update the software. Most support is provided over the phone through help desks staffed by company representatives.

E   Comparable Company Financials

Name: ANTEON INTERNATIONAL CORP
Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		825.83	1,042.47	1,268.14	1,045.48
Cost of Goods Sold		713.23	899.71	1,096.15	903.03
Gross Profit		112.59	142.76	171.99	142.45
SG&A		48.2	58.65	65.96	57.6
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		48.2	58.65	65.96	57.6
Operating Profit		64.39	84.11	106.03	84.85
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	1.93	4.27	2.09	4.1	3.1
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	131.35	189.06	222.94	317.3	215.16
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	12.74	9.99	12.76	12.92	12.1
Total Assets	306.65	364.69	479.28	613.43	441.01
Operating Assets	304.72	360.43	477.19	609.32	437.92
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		7.8%	8.1%	8.4%	8.1%

Name: APOLLO GROUP INC -CL A

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		1,009.46	1,339.52	1,798.42	1,382.46
Cost of Goods Sold		498.45	612.94	755.69	622.36
Gross Profit		511	726.58	1,042.73	760.1
SG&A		257.15	339.32	594.7	397.06
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		257.15	339.32	594.7	397.06
Operating Profit		253.85	387.26	448.02	363.05
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	374.7	610.04	800.03	677.33	615.52
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	27.24	78.62	258.88	330.56	173.82
Accounts Receivable	92.18	99.28	124.57	146.5	115.63
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	102.62	104.29	119.06	169.38	123.84
Total Assets	680.34	979.64	1,378.20	1,452.27	1,122.62
Operating Assets	278.41	290.99	319.29	444.38	333.27
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		25.1%	28.9%	24.9%	26.3%

Name: BRIGHT HORIZONS FAMILY SOLUTION

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		407.53	472.76	551.76	477.35
Cost of Goods Sold		348.02	400.96	460.82	403.27
Gross Profit		59.52	71.8	90.94	74.09
SG&A		33.27	37.22	44.19	38.22
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		33.27	37.22	44.19	38.22
Operating Profit		26.25	34.58	46.75	35.86
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	12.77	28.19	33.9	42.47	29.33
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	26.74	22.56	27.94	26.18	25.86
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	77.76	88.47	98.2	112.64	94.27
Total Assets	161.02	201.29	247.07	296.61	226.49
Operating Assets	148.25	173.1	213.17	254.13	197.16
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		6.4%	7.3%	8.5%	7.5%

Name: CACI INTL INC -CL A
Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		681.94	843.14	1,145.79	890.29
Cost of Goods Sold		421.54	517.97	710.21	549.91
Gross Profit		260.4	325.16	435.58	340.38
SG&A		195.17	242.15	313.66	250.33
Depreciation		12.13	12.6	17.2	13.98
Operating Expense		207.3	254.76	330.86	264.31
Operating Profit		53.1	70.41	104.71	76.07
R&D Expenses		1.16	n.a.	n.a.	1.16
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	14.84	151.07	89.03	63.54	79.62
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	13.69	8.2	8.08	9.44	9.85
Accounts Receivable	125.99	147.78	198.09	348.37	205.06
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	15.69	14.97	18.63	25.49	18.7
Total Assets	284.73	480.66	562.05	1,154.30	620.44
Operating Assets	256.2	321.4	464.94	1,081.32	530.97
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		7.8%	8.4%	9.1%	8.5%

Name: CORINTHIAN COLLEGES INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		338.15	517.29	804.28	553.24
Cost of Goods Sold		175.09	251.37	419.28	281.91
Gross Profit		163.06	265.93	385	271.33
SG&A		100.36	156.25	243.35	166.65
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		100.36	156.25	243.35	166.65
Operating Profit		62.7	109.68	141.65	104.68
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	29.45	66.73	39.81	46.71	45.67
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	1.73	1.22	2	1.93	1.72
Accounts Receivable	24.95	24.77	43.63	72.36	41.43
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	22.92	36.96	77.89	130.96	67.18
Total Assets	138.64	207.81	329.4	552.99	307.21
Operating Assets	107.46	139.85	287.59	504.35	259.81
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		18.5%	21.2%	17.6%	18.9%

Name: CORNELL COMPANIES INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		275.14	271.63	291.02	279.27
Cost of Goods Sold		212.31	213.13	237.05	220.83
Gross Profit		62.84	58.5	53.97	58.43
SG&A		17.28	17.43	20.28	18.33
Depreciation		9.78	10.7	13.55	11.34
Operating Expense		27.06	28.13	33.83	29.68
Operating Profit		35.77	30.36	20.14	28.76
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	56.79	52.61	40.17	81.24	57.7
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	63.29	60.04	56.54	64.86	61.18
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	253.24	255.45	267.9	282.26	264.71
Total Assets	444.81	441.29	448.16	507.63	460.47
Operating Assets	388.01	388.68	407.99	426.4	402.77
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		13.%	11.2%	6.9%	10.3%

Name: DEVRY INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		647.58	679.14	784.72	703.81
Cost of Goods Sold		503.16	550.51	640.11	564.59
Gross Profit		144.42	128.63	144.61	139.22
SG&A		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Depreciation		33.54	40.33	55.58	43.15
Operating Expense		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Operating Profit		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	49.7	78.95	122.75	159.68	102.77
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	25.66	26.05	24.28	28.15	26.04
Inventories	4.9	4.91	4.32	3.28	4.35
Plant, Property & Equipment	205.08	257.63	285.35	286.89	258.74
Total Assets	391.67	467.63	856.64	884.13	650.02
Operating Assets	341.98	388.68	733.89	724.45	547.25
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		17.1%	13.%	11.3%	13.6%

Name: EDUCATE INC-REDH

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		216.31	242.33	300.28	252.97
Cost of Goods Sold		156.62	172.13	215.65	181.47
Gross Profit		59.69	70.19	84.63	71.5
SG&A		31.98	32.22	45.71	36.64
Depreciation		7.9	7.79	7.58	7.75
Operating Expense		39.87	40.01	53.29	44.39
Operating Profit		19.82	30.19	31.34	27.11
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	n.a.	4.91	20.23	14.59	13.24
Investments at Equity	n.a.	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	n.a.	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	n.a.	32.34	39.16	39.73	37.08
Inventories	n.a.	2.27	0.92	2.89	2.03
Plant, Property & Equipment	n.a.	22.5	14.76	15.05	17.44
Total Assets	n.a.	137.97	362.2	381.38	293.85
Operating Assets	n.a.	133.06	341.97	366.79	280.61
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		9.2%	12.5%	10.4%	10.7%

Name: EMTEC INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		69.6	92.26	100.36	87.41
Cost of Goods Sold		59.53	79.51	85.89	74.98
Gross Profit		10.07	12.75	14.47	12.43
SG&A		9.63	12.58	12.91	11.71
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		9.63	12.58	12.91	11.71
Operating Profit		0.43	0.17	1.56	0.72
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		0.31	0.49	0.37	0.39
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	2.39	1.55	1.79	0.01	1.44
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0.55	0.58	0.61	0.57	0.58
Accounts Receivable	13.26	6.59	15.03	15.5	12.59
Inventories	1.02	1.09	2.88	1.6	1.65
Plant, Property & Equipment	0.92	0.7	1.19	0.39	0.8
Total Assets	18.64	11.39	22.33	18.91	17.82
Operating Assets	15.7	9.25	19.93	18.33	15.8
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		0.6%	0.2%	1.6%	0.8%

Name: FIRST CONSULTING GROUP INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		282.73	287.74	287.29	285.92
Cost of Goods Sold		186.38	202.51	199.29	196.06
Gross Profit		96.35	85.23	87.99	89.86
SG&A		85.46	87.85	79.57	84.29
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		85.46	87.85	79.57	84.29
Operating Profit		10.89	-2.62	8.43	5.57
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	51.91	66.35	60.63	40.32	54.8
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	12.2	10.92	9.42	4.54	9.27
Accounts Receivable	48.62	50.15	37.51	37.27	43.39
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	10.63	8.52	8.54	11.83	9.88
Total Assets	145.43	157.31	157.4	140.4	150.13
Operating Assets	81.32	80.05	87.36	95.54	86.07
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		3.9%	-0.9%	2.9%	1.9%

Name: ITT EDUCATIONAL SVCS INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**Average***
Income Statement					
Sales		464.95	522.86	617.83	535.21
Cost of Goods Sold		267.5	280.01	298.75	282.09
Gross Profit		197.44	242.85	319.09	253.13
SG&A		129.13	148.33	174.4	150.62
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		129.13	148.33	174.4	150.62
Operating Profit		68.31	94.52	144.69	102.51
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	110.23	156.71	240.71	350.15	214.45
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	13.47	6.36	4.96
Accounts Receivable	12.68	8.97	9.4	10.43	10.37
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	49.59	62.58	81.5	98.75	73.11
Total Assets	195.4	247.71	363.27	493.39	324.94
Operating Assets	85.17	91	109.1	136.87	105.53
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		14.7%	18.1%	23.4%	19.2%

Name: LEARNING CARE GROUP INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		142.4	177.37	206.11	175.29
Cost of Goods Sold		129.19	157.69	179.54	155.47
Gross Profit		13.21	19.68	26.57	19.82
SG&A		14.78	17.83	20.27	17.63
Depreciation		0	3.53	4.06	2.53
Operating Expense		14.78	21.36	24.33	20.16
Operating Profit		-1.57	-1.68	2.23	-0.34
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		1.22	1.5	2.6	1.77
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	3.38	4.89	2.5	1.38	3.04
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	5.76	7.74	10.08	9.38	8.24
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	36.7	36.98	36.13	36.72	36.63
Total Assets	74.11	74.11	83.95	85.62	79.45
Operating Assets	70.73	69.22	81.45	84.24	76.41
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		-1.1%	-0.9%	1.1%	-0.2%

KPMG

Name: LEARNING TREE INTL INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		174.16	151.9	152.06	159.37
Cost of Goods Sold		79.39	72.39	73.61	75.13
Gross Profit		94.77	79.51	78.45	84.24
SG&A		85	74.69	79.64	79.78
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		85	74.69	79.64	79.78
Operating Profit		9.77	4.82	-1.2	4.46
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	108.54	96.9	86.71	83.91	94.02
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	7.35	7.81	8.33	8.93	8.11
Accounts Receivable	15.99	11.52	11.78	12.9	13.05
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	27.86	23.95	20.77	20.81	23.35
Total Assets	174.98	154.02	140.91	137.43	151.83
Operating Assets	59.08	49.31	45.86	44.59	49.71
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		5.6%	3.2%	-0.8%	2.8%

Name: LPA HOLDING CORP

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		391.2	390.17	383.49	388.29
Cost of Goods Sold		261.13	260.07	259.77	260.32
Gross Profit		130.08	130.1	123.72	127.97
SG&A		113.08	106.08	93.65	104.27
Depreciation		14.66	10.37	8.78	11.27
Operating Expense		127.75	116.45	102.43	115.54
Operating Profit		2.33	13.64	21.29	12.42
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		7.3	4.3	4.4	5.33
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	5.17	19.61	17.52	6.99	12.32
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	0	0	0	0	0
Accounts Receivable	9.98	11.75	11.08	11.51	11.08
Inventories	0	2.96	3.08	3.95	2.49
Plant, Property & Equipment	59.02	46.06	38.11	38.17	45.34
Total Assets	165.73	91.57	78.09	75.86	102.81
Operating Assets	160.56	71.96	60.57	68.87	90.49
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		0.6%	3.5%	5.6%	3.2%

Name: NEW HORIZONS WORLDWIDE INC
Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		140.1	139.15	n.a.	139.63
Cost of Goods Sold		82.31	79.22	n.a.	80.77
Gross Profit		57.8	59.93	n.a.	58.86
SG&A		57.68	58.38	n.a.	58.03
Depreciation		0	0	n.a.	0
Operating Expense		57.68	58.38	n.a.	58.03
Operating Profit		0.11	1.55	n.a.	0.83
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	6.08	8.59	10.85	n.a.	8.5
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	n.a.	0
Other Investments	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Accounts Receivable	22.87	25.09	15.48	n.a.	21.14
Inventories	1.52	1.33	1.28	n.a.	1.38
Plant, Property & Equipment	20.05	17.28	14.38	n.a.	17.24
Total Assets	160.16	109.31	98.35	n.a.	122.61
Operating Assets	154.08	100.72	87.5	n.a.	114.1
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		0.1%	1.1%	n.a.	0.6%

Name: NOBEL LEARNING CMNTYS INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		156.28	149.94	155.16	153.79
Cost of Goods Sold		130.52	126.51	135.23	130.75
Gross Profit		25.76	23.43	19.93	23.04
SG&A		11.78	13.89	14.26	13.31
Depreciation		5.67	5.37	0	3.68
Operating Expense		17.45	19.26	14.26	16.99
Operating Profit		8.31	4.17	5.67	6.05
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	1.32	1.79	4.72	2.72	2.64
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	2.23	2.6	1.5	1.5	1.96
Accounts Receivable	4.69	2.94	6.53	3.25	4.35
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	31.23	33.98	27.46	24.92	29.4
Total Assets	101.78	102.98	97.97	85.86	97.15
Operating Assets	98.24	98.59	91.75	81.65	92.56
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		5.3%	2.8%	3.7%	3.9%

Name: PEROT SYSTEMS CORP

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		1,317.59	1,460.75	1,773.45	1,517.26
Cost of Goods Sold		1,023.04	1,175.84	1,405.15	1,201.34
Gross Profit		294.55	284.91	368.3	315.92
SG&A		175.78	195.17	236.23	202.39
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		175.78	195.17	236.23	202.39
Operating Profit		118.77	89.74	132.07	113.52
R&D Expenses		4.8	4.09	2.66	3.85
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	259.18	212.86	161.37	304.79	234.55
Investments at Equity	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0	0
Other Investments	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Accounts Receivable	160.91	162.37	208.24	233.88	191.35
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	52.43	62.54	142.84	144.43	100.56
Total Assets	757.6	842.31	1,010.60	1,223.61	958.53
Operating Assets	498.42	629.45	849.23	918.82	723.98
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		9.0%	6.1%	7.4%	7.5%

Name: PROVIDENCE SERVICE CORP
Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		32.83	59.28	96.97	63.02
Cost of Goods Sold		27.85	45.37	71.95	48.39
Gross Profit		4.98	13.9	25.02	14.63
SG&A		2.87	6.12	12.12	7.04
Depreciation		0.48	0.9	1.33	0.9
Operating Expense		3.35	7.02	13.44	7.94
Operating Profit		1.63	6.88	11.58	6.7
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	0.69	0.76	19.25	11.44	8.04
Investments at Equity	0	n.a.	n.a.	0	0
Other Investments	0.46	0.46	0.41	1.28	0.65
Accounts Receivable	4.11	7.32	12.78	23.85	12.01
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	0.8	1.07	1.77	2.32	1.49
Total Assets	7.95	24.05	53.29	75.92	40.3
Operating Assets	6.8	22.82	33.63	63.2	31.61
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		5.0%	11.6%	11.9%	10.6%

Name: SIERRA SYSTEMS GROUP INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		129.95	150.92	145.93	142.27
Cost of Goods Sold		107.04	121.18	120.79	116.34
Gross Profit		22.91	29.74	25.14	25.93
SG&A		16.64	19.79	19.79	18.74
Depreciation		3.21	3.36	3.98	3.51
Operating Expense		19.85	23.14	23.77	22.25
Operating Profit		3.07	6.6	1.37	3.68
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	16.73	10.8	4.02	0.97	8.13
Investments at Equity	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	0
Other Investments	0.85	0	0	0	0.21
Accounts Receivable	31.71	36.43	38.59	31.11	34.46
Inventories	0	0	0	6.07	1.52
Plant, Property & Equipment	10.96	10.27	10.7	8.7	10.16
Total Assets	75.68	82.76	81.74	74.35	78.63
Operating Assets	58.1	71.96	77.71	73.37	70.29
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		2.4%	4.4%	0.9%	2.6%

Name: STRAYER EDUCATION INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		116.71	146.45	183.19	148.78
Cost of Goods Sold		41.6	53.12	63.86	52.86
Gross Profit		75.11	93.33	119.33	95.92
SG&A		33.88	42.78	53.85	43.5
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		33.88	42.78	53.85	43.5
Operating Profit		41.23	50.55	65.48	52.42
R&D Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	58.71	67.26	108.04	122.76	89.19
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	8.39	9.45	0	0	4.46
Accounts Receivable	19.01	25.76	36.06	41.7	30.63
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	23.1	36.57	35.93	41.14	34.18
Total Assets	110.49	140.12	182.56	210.11	160.82
Operating Assets	43.39	63.41	74.52	87.36	67.17
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		35.3%	34.5%	35.7%	35.2%

Name: TITAN CORP

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		1,392.16	1,775.01	2,046.53	1,737.90
Cost of Goods Sold		1,129.06	1,478.63	1,729.96	1,445.88
Gross Profit		263.1	296.38	316.56	292.01
SG&A		189.11	175.24	167.29	177.21
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		189.11	175.24	167.29	177.21
Operating Profit		73.99	121.13	149.27	114.8
R&D Expenses		9.56	11.32	15.11	12
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	28.96	34.52	26.97	16.67	26.78
Investments at Equity	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0
Other Investments	93.14	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	93.14
Accounts Receivable	374.73	314.36	387.96	515.39	398.11
Inventories	29.11	31.28	29.41	21.34	27.78
Plant, Property & Equipment	99.11	63.71	65.79	57.54	71.54
Total Assets	1,460.40	1,297.44	1,290.64	1,357.77	1,351.56
Operating Assets	1,338.30	1,262.93	1,263.66	1,341.09	1,301.50
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		5.3%	6.8%	7.3%	6.6%

Name: TYLER TECHNOLOGIES INC

Data Source: Compustat CAN, US, 05/12/05, USD Millions

	2001	2002	2003	2004	Average*
Income Statement					
Sales		133.9	145.45	172.27	150.54
Cost of Goods Sold		89.24	91.55	109.7	96.83
Gross Profit		44.65	53.9	62.57	53.71
SG&A		33.91	38.39	45.45	39.25
Depreciation		0	0	0	0
Operating Expense		33.91	38.39	45.45	39.25
Operating Profit		10.74	15.51	17.12	14.46
R&D Expenses		0.61	1.1	2.5	1.4
Advertising Expenses		n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Selected Assets					
Cash & Equivalents	5.27	13.74	21.94	26.41	16.84
Investments at Equity	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investments	11.47	27.2	0	0	9.67
Accounts Receivable	35.61	33.51	38.41	45.8	38.33
Inventories	0	0	0	0	0
Plant, Property & Equipment	6.97	6.82	6.51	6.62	6.73
Total Assets	147.18	169.85	182.25	190.49	172.44
Operating Assets	130.44	128.91	160.31	164.08	145.93
Unadjusted Profit Level Indicator					
Operating Margin		8.0%	10.7%	9.9%	9.6%

Appendix C

LINCS Website Study
- Tables

Appendix C. LINCS Website Study

Table 1. How did you locate the LINCS website today?

Sources of Information about LINCS Website	Respondents (n=388)
Link from another website	37%
Visited the website before and chose website address in browser	33%
Google or other online search engine	30%

Table 2. If you visited the LINCS website before, where did you learn the LINCS website address?

Sources of Information about LINCS Website	Respondents (n=128)
Google or other online search engine	16%
Link from another website	16%
NIFL/LINCS brochures/written materials	16%
Other	13%
Visited the website before	11%
Conference, workshop, or training	11%
Friend or colleague	11%
Online discussion group or listserv	6%

Table 3. Please rate the following aspects of the LINCS website.

Aspect of LINCS Website	n	Very Good to Excellent
Speed that pages load	458	72%
Clarity/text readability	463	65%
Appearance	465	60%
Ease of moving page to page	458	60%
Locating information	443	46%

Table 4. How satisfactory is the design of the Discussion Lists?

Characteristics of LINCS Discussion Lists	n	Satisfied/Very Satisfied
Ease of reading messages	99	90%
Ease of subscribing/unsubscribing	97	90%
Hyperlink feature	63	83%
Usefulness of the Help and other options	43	79%
Ease of posting messages	74	77%
Finding information on the archives by date, subject or author	65	75%
Searching the archives	61	74%
Clarity of the discussion list	94	73%
Adequacy of the netiquette rules	93	71%

Table 5. What profession or occupation is closest to your own?

Profession/Occupation	LINCS Users (n=510)	Non-users (n=213)
Program director, manager, or coordinator	46%	43%
Teacher/tutor	19%	39%
State administrator or manager	7%	3%
High school, college, or graduate school student	6%	0%
Other (paraprofessional, volunteer)	6%	7%
Researcher	5%	0%
Trainer or technical assistance provider	5%	1%
College or university educator	2%	3%
Librarian	2%	1%
Social service provider	2%	3%

Table 6. Are you affiliated with an ABE program?

Affiliated with an ABE Program	Web Survey	Discussion List Survey	Professional Organization Survey	Adult Education Program Survey	Total
Yes	38%	52%	68%	97%	68%
No	62%	48%	32%	3%	32%

Table 7. What is your primary purpose for visiting the LINCS website?

Primary Purpose for Visiting LINCS	Respondents (n=339)
Managerial/administrative	27%
Instructional	25%
Professional development	23%
Research	20%
Other	3%
Networking	2%

Table 8. How long have you been formally or professionally involved in the adult education/literacy field?

Involvement in Adult Education	Respondents (n=766)
5 years or less	32%
6-15 years	32%
16 years or more	29%
Not professionally involved	7%

Table 9. Which of the organizations is closest to the one in which your Adult Basic Education program is housed?

ABE Affiliations	Respondents (n=414)
LEA	36%
Community-Based Organizations	33%
Community Colleges	17%
Other	10%
Correctional Institutions	4%

Table 10. If you are not affiliated with an ABE program, which of the organizations is closest to the one in which your Adult Basic Education program is housed?

Non-ABE Affiliations	Respondents
Community-Based Organizations	22%
2-year, 4-year, and Community Colleges	15%
LEAs, Even Start, Title I programs	13%
Federal/state Government Agencies	13%

Table 11. What is the approximate size of your program?

Size of Program	Respondents (n=460)
Small (fewer than 500 students enrolled)	66%
Large (more than 1,000 students enrolled)	20%
Medium (500-1,000 students enrolled)	14%

Table 12. Which of the geographic areas best describes your program's location?

ABE Affiliations	Respondents (n=536)
Urban	50%
Suburban	33%
Rural	17%

Table 13. How much time do you spend on the Internet?

Internet Time	Respondents (n=620)
2-5 hours per week	33%
6-10 hours per week	28%
More than 15 hours per week	16%
11-15 hours per week	14%
Less than 1 hour per week	9%

Table 14. How frequently do you use websites in the field of adult education/literacy?

Frequency of Visits	Respondents (n=571)
Monthly	41%
Weekly	30%
Daily	19%
Other	11%

Table 15. On average, how often do you visit the LINCS website?

Frequency of Visits	Respondents (n=494)
Less than 1 visit per month	30%
This is my first visit.	23%
1 visit per month	20%
2 – 5 visits per month	17%
More than 5 visits per month	10%

Table 16. Which resources do you visit most on the LINCS website?

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Respondents
Literacy Resources	414	83%
LINCS Special Collections	420	81%
About Literacy	412	79%
LINCSearch	415	71%
News and Events	397	71%
LINCS Regional websites	406	66%
HOT Sites	401	61%
Adult Reading Components Study	78	60%
NIFL and LINCS	398	60%
Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles	76	57%
America's Literacy Directory	81	56%
Other	59	34%
LINCS Online Discussion Lists	324	29%
My LINCS	392	26%

Table 17. How often do you use or visit the following parts of the LINCS website?

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
LINCS Online Discussion Lists	324	13%	5%	12%	70%
Literacy Resources	337	5%	18%	60%	17%
About Literacy	336	4%	15%	62%	19%
LINCSearch	336	4%	13%	51%	32%
LINCS Special Collections	334	4%	17%	57%	22%
News and Events	317	3%	12%	56%	29%
HOT Sites	326	2%	9%	49%	40%
LINCS Regional websites	330	2%	11%	53%	34%
My LINCS	319	2%	6%	13%	79%
NIFL and LINCS	318	2%	7%	44%	47%
Other	47	4%	9%	25%	62%

Table 18. If you have never visited any other parts of LINCS< what prevents you from doing so?

Reason for Not Visiting LINCS	Respondents (n=47)
Unaware of other parts	57%
No interest in other parts	15%
Other parts don't address my needs	15%
Other	13%
Other websites are more helpful	0%

Table 19. What is your most difficult challenge in locating adult education/literacy information and resources?

Challenge	Respondents (n=561)
Not a challenge to locate adult education/literacy information and resources	31%
Too many and diverse sources	23%
No way to assess information/resource quality	16%
There is no central source	14%
Available information/resources are not relevant to needs	7%

Table 20. In the past year, how often have you looked for the following adult education/literacy resources (on the Internet or elsewhere)?

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
News, and announcements	536	19%	29%	36%	16%
Lessons/lesson plans/learning activities	530	11%	27%	42%	20%
Funding resources	508	9%	17%	38%	36%
Student texts/workbooks	512	9%	17%	45%	29%
Program information and services available	530	8%	26%	51%	15%
Information on public or private organizations and agencies in adult education/literacy	516	7%	15%	55%	23%
Articles in journals, digests	527	6%	19%	50%	25%
Assessment tools	520	6%	16%	52%	26%
Manuals, curriculum guides, handbooks	521	5%	22%	51%	22%
Use of technology in the classroom	506	5%	13%	49%	33%
Federal or state policies, regulations, laws	509	4%	15%	47%	34%
Facts and statistics	532	3%	15%	65%	17%
Technical reports, briefs, practice-based research	509	3%	15%	53%	29%
Scientific research reports	509	2%	10%	47%	41%
Other	50	12%	6%	26%	56%

Table 21. How often do you go to the LINCS website to find the following?

Parts of the LINCS Website	n	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
Lessons/lesson plans/learning activities	285	5%	16%	49%	30%
Funding resources	277	4%	8%	44%	44%
News, and announcements	285	4%	15%	52%	29%
Resources on use of technology in the classroom	274	4%	8%	44%	44%
Articles in journals, digests	277	3%	10%	55%	32%
Facts and statistics	296	3%	12%	65%	20%
Manuals, curriculum guides, handbooks	276	3%	13%	49%	35%
Program information and services available	276	3%	9%	56%	32%
Student texts/workbooks	269	3%	7%	40%	50%
Assessment tools	275	2%	9%	46%	43%
Federal or state policies, regulations, laws	273	2%	8%	42%	48%
Information on public or private organizations and agencies in adult education/literacy	269	2%	5%	49%	45%
Scientific research reports	282	1%	8%	50%	41%
Technical reports, briefs, practice-based research	280	1%	12%	51%	36%
Other	37	8%	11%	11%	70%

Table 22. What type of information do you most want to find TODAY on the LINCS website?

Information Type	Respondents (n=234)
Facts and statistics	23%
Lessons/lesson plans/learning activities	17%
Manuals, curriculum guides, handbooks	8%
Available programs and services	7%
Topical articles in journals, digests	7%
Other (specify):	7%
Resources for use of technology in the classroom	6%
Scientific research reports	6%
Technical, practice-based reports or briefs	6%
Assessment tools	4%
Funding resources	3%
News, and announcements	2%
Public or private organizations and agencies working in adult education/literacy	2%
Federal or state policies, regulations, laws	1%
Student texts/workbooks	1%

Table 23. Which of the following resources do you look for FIRST on the LINCS website before going anywhere else to find them?

Parts of the LINCS Website	n	Respondents
Facts and statistics	160	32%
Lessons/lesson plans/learning activities	107	22%
Articles in journals, digests	82	17%
News, and announcements	85	17%
Program information and services available	75	15%
Scientific research reports	75	15%
Manuals, curriculum guides, handbooks	73	15%
Assessment tools	68	14%
Funding resources	62	13%
Technical reports, briefs, practice-based research	65	13%
Federal or state policies, regulations, laws	58	12%
Use of technology in the classroom	52	11%
Student texts/workbooks	42	8%
Information on public or private organizations and agencies in adult education/literacy	36	7%
None of the above	27	5%
Other	8	2%

Table 24. How often do the following factors influence your decision to obtain and use adult education/literacy information and resources? (Scale. 1=Never, 3=A lot)

Factors Influencing Decision to Use Information	n	Average	S.D.
Endorsement by a federal/state agency	500	2.2	1.0
Endorsement by colleagues	503	2.6	1.0
Endorsement by leaders in the field	494	2.3	1.0
Endorsement by national association/organizations	494	2.3	1.0
Methodological rigor of research or development	475	1.9	1.0
Practical and immediate application	504	2.8	1.0
Product advertisement	474	1.5	.7
Reputation of the source or developer	496	2.4	1.0
Other	35	1.7	1.2

Table 25. How often do you find what you are looking for on the LINCS website?

Frequency	Respondents (n=340)
Most of the time	55%
Some of the time	23%
Always	10%
Occasionally	9%
Never	3%

Table 26. If the LINCS website (including regional LINCS websites) was not available, where would you go NEXT to find adult education/literacy information and resources?

Other Sources of Information	Respondents (n=293)
Adult education/literacy professional organization or association	50%
State Department of Education	42%
U.S. Department of Education and/or Office of Vocational and Adult Education	41%
Research organization	30%
Technical assistance provider	29%
Other	6%

Table 27. After looking on the LINCS website, would you go to other websites, printed materials, or personal contacts to find information or resources?

Other Sources of Information	Respondents (n=293)
U.S. Department of Education and/or Office of Vocational and Adult Education	
Website	28%
Printed materials	5%
Personal contact	4%
State Department of Education	
Website	25%
Personal contact	10%
Printed materials	7%
Adult education/literacy professional organization or association	
Website	35%
Personal contact	11%
Printed materials	6%
Technical assistance provider	
Website	11%
Personal contact	6%
Printed materials	3%
Research organization	
Website	13%
Personal contact	3%
Printed materials	5%
Other	
Website	6%
Personal contact	3%
Printed materials	3%

Table 28. How often have the following aspects of LINCS contributed to your professional skills and knowledge?

Contribution to Professional Skills/Knowledge	n	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
LINCS discussion lists	281	12%	5%	16%	67%
Materials/resources	305	6%	13%	72%	9%
Other LINCS-related activities	133	3%	3%	22%	72%
LINCS-sponsored workshops	275	1%	2%	25%	72%
LINCS presentations at conferences	277	1%	2%	32%	65%
Online courses on LINCS	277	1%	3%	14%	82%
Technical assistance from LINCS staff	273	1%	3%	11%	85%

Table 29. How much have your visits to the LINCS website improved the following aspects of your work or practice?

	n	A lot	Some	Not at all	Does not apply
Instruction	254	22%	52%	7%	19%
Program planning	250	22%	53%	9%	16%
Administration or management	252	18%	51%	10%	21%
Research projects	243	16%	42%	15%	27%
Application of technology	243	14%	42%	21%	23%
Issue advocacy	240	14%	43%	18%	25%
Networking with others	234	14%	28%	30%	28%
Assessment	239	13%	48%	18%	21%
Participation in conferences/trainings	245	11%	38%	36%	25%
Counseling or guidance	237	8%	27%	24%	41%
Other (specify).	20	20%	15%	0	65%

Table 30. How much have your visits to the LINCS website improved your knowledge of the following aspects of adult education/literacy?

Aspects of Adult Education/Literacy Knowledge	n	A lot	Some	Not at all	Does not apply
Research	269	33%	46%	6%	15%
Other websites	240	31%	53%	6%	10%
Content or subject matter	277	30%	58%	4%	8%
Current news and activities	268	30%	48%	9%	13%
People in the field that you can contact	257	17%	40%	21%	22%
Organizations or agencies	258	16%	56%	12%	16%
Instructional approaches	268	24%	59%	6%	11%
Other	21	33%	14%	0	53%

Table 31. How successful do you believe LINCS is in providing….

Type of Resource	n	Respondents
Variety of adult education/literacy information and resources	224	88%
High quality adult education/literacy information and resources	219	87%
Adult education/literacy information and resources that are comprehensive	218	86%

Table 32. How likely are you to return to the LINCS website or recommend the website to others?

Response	Return (n=496)	Refer (n=489)
Very likely	72%	68%
Somewhat likely	23%	24%
Somewhat unlikely	3%	5%
Not at all likely	1%	3%

Table 33. How important is it that …

	n	Very Important/ Important
The information on the LINCS website is current and up to date.	288	95%
Information on the LINCS website is comprehensive.	278	93%
Information on the LINCS website is based on or related to scientific research findings	258	87%
You find what you are looking for on the LINCS website instead of on another website or resource.	253	85%

Table 34. Are there any changes you would like to make to the LINCS website?

Response	Respondents (n=237)
Yes	24%
No	76%

Appendix D

Content Analysis of Discussion Lists

KPMG

National Institute for Literacy
**Content Analysis of
Discussion Lists**

Contents

List of Tables

1 Overview of Task and Approach[1]

RMC, Inc., as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the National Institute for Literacy's ("NIFL" or "the Institute") *LINCS*[2] system engaged KPMG LLP ("KPMG") to prepare an analysis of the Discussion Lists ("DLs" or "DL") maintained by NIFL in order to address the following issues:

- Determine the extent to which postings contain messages of advocacy, and

- Examine the impact the DLs have had on the delivery of services or program outcomes.

Our approach to addressing these issues involved a quantitative and qualitative analysis of each of the DLs. The former involved the use of descriptive statistics covering a variety of subscriber use measures, whereas the latter applied a content analysis of the active LINCS DLs. These two approaches enable us to gain insight into the content and purpose of postings and the extent to which listserv technology offers the literacy field an effective and topical communication network. Below we explain our analytical approach.

1.1 General Analytical Approach

Though LINCS, NIFL supports thirteen publicly accessible DLs, some of which date back to 1995. As of the end of calendar year 2003, current subscribers numbered over 6,400. For this analysis, KPMG collected all postings recorded to the thirteen DLs from their inception through and including February 29, 2004. When examining and viewing trends, we typically did so on an annual basis and would then limit the data through the end of December 2003.

The activity recorded for each of the DLs has resulted in a substantial number of text postings, almost forty-one thousand items, constituting a very large amount of electronic data available for consideration. An item-by-item approach to the analysis was simply not feasible, that is, having a group of analysts read through reams and reams of discussion list postings is simply too labor-intensive of an approach. Alternatively, a statistically designed sample greatly reduces the number of items to be examined. By employing a sampling design, we were able to create a manageable number of representative postings. Therefore, KPMG employed a statistical sampling method designed to provide both an estimate of the item of interest, and a statistical statement regarding the accuracy (or precision) of the resulting estimate.

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[1] This analysis relies on factual information provided by NIFL to KPMG. While KPMG believes that the information used in this study is accurate, KPMG has not independently verified the information in all cases and does not warrant its accuracy. If any of the facts, circumstances, or assumptions is not entirely complete or accurate, it is imperative that KPMG be informed immediately, as the inaccuracy or incompleteness could have a material effect on the conclusions.

[2] LINCS stands for the Literacy Information and Communication System, NIFL's web-based, on-line information dissemination system.

1.2   Report Contents

This report contains the following sections. Following this overview of task and approach, **Section 2** presents an overview of NIFL and LINCS operations. **Section 3** presents the issues discovered during the text data preparation. **Section 4** contains the descriptive presentation of discussion lists. **Section 5** contains the legislative advocacy analysis. The impact analysis is in **Section 6**. In **Section 7** we present our findings and conclusions.

2 Overview of NIFL and LINCS

In the following subsection, KPMG presents a brief overview of NIFL and LINCS.

2.1 NIFL[3]

The activities of NIFL to strengthen the Nation's literacy skills are authorized by the U.S. Congress under two laws, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act ("AEFLA") in the Workforce Investment Act of 1993 and the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB") of 2001. The AEFLA directs the Institute to: provide national leadership regarding literacy, coordinate literacy services and policy, and serve as a national resource for adult education and literacy programs. More recently, the NCLB law also directs the Institute to disseminate information on scientifically based reading research pertaining to children, youth, and adults, as well as information about development and implementation of classroom reading programs based on the research.

NIFL supports programs and services designed to improve the quality of literacy programs nationwide and by statute is administered by the Secretaries of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. NIFL's primary activities are the following:

- Bringing technology to the literacy field through LINCS, a state-of-the-art, Internet-based information and communication system. LINCS operates through a network of partners nationwide to provide a single point of access to a broad array of literacy-related information and public discussion lists as well as technology training opportunities.

- Improving services to adults with learning disabilities through *Bridges to Practice*, a four volume research-based guide. The Institute has provided training in more than 30 states in the use of *Bridges to Practice* and is now focusing on training trainers.

- Promoting adult literacy system reform through *Equipped for the Future* ("EFF"), a long-term initiative that developed content standards to ensure that every adult can gain the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill real-world responsibilities in his or her role of worker, parent, and citizen.

- Connecting those in need of adult, child, and family literacy services with information about programs in their communities through America's Literacy Directory, an easy-to-use, on-line searchable database.

- Providing copies of NIFL publications through the Hotline and Clearinghouse, where English- and Spanish-speaking operators are available between 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. Hotline operators also make program referrals using America's Literacy Directory.

- Offering policy information to government agencies, Congress, and the adult literacy field through briefings, Policy Updates on developments of national importance, and State Policy Updates on issues of concern to state and local literacy programs.

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[3] Source: http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/about_nifl.html.

■ Developing and disseminating scientifically-based reading research and research-based products to educators, parents, policymakers, and others through the *Partnership for Reading*, a collaborative effort among NIFL, the US Department of Education ("ED"), and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development ("NICHD"), and the US Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS").

2.2   LINCS[4]

LINCS is the premier on-line information and communications network for adult and family literacy. LINCS has enhanced the ability of all states to:

■ use information technologies in the context of literacy instruction,

■ created a rich database of local, regional, and nationally developed materials,

■ trained thousands of practitioners in applying technology in teaching and professional development, and

■ leveraged several million dollars for regional, State, and local literacy agencies.

With the addition of the *Partnership for Reading* to the NIFL's agenda, LINCS has become one of the principal locations for literacy-related information for children, youth, and adults.

LINCS is a cooperative electronic network of national, regional, state, and local partners. This network includes: NIFL, five regional LINCS partners, representative organizations from 45 states and territories, 12 content development partners, and several major national organizations.   The coordinated efforts of LINCS partners have provided a national infrastructure for the literacy community to access a comprehensive collection of family and adult basic skills research and teaching/learning/training resources.

LINCS' two main focuses are the following:

1   Meet the teaching and learning needs of literacy practitioners (teachers, tutors, program managers, etc.) and adult learners and other literacy stakeholders by:

■ Enhancing the knowledge base of the literacy community through systematic collection and organization of literacy resources,

■ Facilitating development of web-based and multimedia products by providing resources and support to practitioners to develop web-based teaching/learning materials such as templates, cyber development sites,

■ Providing high quality, expert reviewed specialized sites through its Special Collections,

■ Bridging the gap between research and practice and building community, and

■ Meeting the information needs of the literacy community.

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[4] Source: http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/about/about.html.

2   Building capacity and strengthening the literacy community by:

- Creating a robust national technical infrastructure that has resulted in a seamless integration of the work of all LINCS partners in the network,

- Building capacity by setting standards and tools for organizing and access,

- Building capacity by providing technology training and technical assistance training, and

- Building capacity through building partnerships.

LINCS and other aspects of the work of the Institute are subjects of research tasks associated with RMC's overall project. We refer the interested reader to the following related reports:

- *Interim Report: Review of LINCS Discussion Lists* (December 15, 2003)

- *Regional LINCS Grantee Summary Report* (December 15, 2003)

- *Interim Report: Review of LINCS Regional Technology Center Grant Program* (June 3, 2004)

- *Interim Report: Review of LINCS Special Collections* (June 16, 2004)

3   Data Integrity and Data Quality Control

In order to conduct our quantitative and qualitative analyses, KPMG developed a software tool to manage the approximately forty-one thousand text files that represent the DL history under analysis. A key aspect of the tool was the process of each posting and the identification of only the new text of each discussion list posting. Generally, when a user participates in a DL, he or she replied to a previously posted item, and all of the previous discussion ("thread") is carried along in the posting. It was the users provision of new information that was of primary concern for advocacy analysis and much of the impact analysis. In doing so, KPMG discovered three issues when preparing the text data that can be classified into the following three following categories:

- Duplicate messages,
- Date issues, and
- Methods of reply.

Each data issue is described in further detail in the subsections below.

3.1   Duplicate Messages

Within the LINCS discussion list messages, KPMG discovered that during the years of 1995 though 1997, a subset of messages was posted twice to the discussion lists. This occurred because messages were posted by the email sender in addition to a NIFL "Newsgroup" that was also in operation In order to avoid double counting messages that were inadvertently posted twice to a DL, KPMG removed all messages that were posted via the Newsgroup. As such, KPMG included only unique email postings in our analyses.[5]

3.2   Date Issues

Within each discussion list, items (or postings) are grouped by year. KPMG discovered that some postings identified by the DL as originating in one year, were actually posted, that is sent, in a different year. To deal with the various dates associated with each individual posting, KPMG employed a consistent assignment rule based on the date the posting was sent by the user.[6]

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[5] An example of a duplicate message is included in **Appendix A.1**. You will notice that in example 1(a) a message was posted by the newsgroup and that in example 1(b) the exact same message was posted by the email sender. The posting examples are from the 1995 Family discussion list (http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-family/1995/).

[6] An example of a message with a date issue is included in **Appendix A.2**. You will notice that in example 1 a message that was posted to the list serve in 1997 appears in the 1995 Family discussion list (http://www.nifl.gov/nifl-family/1995/0005.html). For the purposes of KPMG's analysis, this message would be included in the 1997 Family discussion list rather than the 1995 Family discussion list.

3.3   Methods of Reply

When analyzing the discussion list messages, KPMG discovered that discussion list members were quite creative in the methods employed to respond to a posting. For example, some individuals would *add* their response to the initial posting at the beginning (most common practice), other *append* their comments at the end. Still other individuals would *amend* their comments throughout the original email message as sort of a running commentary. In order to analyze only the new text of each posting (and not double count the text from the initial posting), KPMG was able to programmatically removed most of the "old" text from each discussion list message.[7]

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[7] Because our analysis is exploratory in nature, KPMG employed the "80-20" rule in developing program rules to "scrub" the text. In fact, our preliminary analysis indicates that the percent of postings successfully scrubbed of "old" text by our program was in the mid-nineties.

4 Descriptive Presentation of Discussion Lists[8]

From the four DLs established in 1995 to the 13 currently now operating,[9] the very simple Internet technology of listservs provides thousands of literacy stakeholders opportunities to discuss the literacy field's critical issues; share resources, experiences, and ideas; ask questions of subject experts; and keep up-to-date on literacy issues. Each national LINCS discussion list is moderated by a national organization with expertise in the topic area.

In **Section 6.5**, we present an impact analysis where we reviewed a three percent sample of the postings in the three most active discussion lists, as measured by the average number of annual postings. For each item in the sample, we use a controlled vocabulary to assign values to "types of communication," "subject of email," and the "type of impact" if any. In doing so, KPMG determined that the majority of messages reviewed were used to either solicit help or information, provide a response to a question, or participate in a discussion, all of which demonstrates the importance of the NIFL discussion list in sharing information and networking in the field of literacy.

For the three selected DLs subject to the impact analysis (ESL, Family, and WomenLit), we present a segment of the impact analysis related to the "type of communication" in addition to the other descriptive information provided for each DL. These DLs are presented first in **Sections 4.1** through **4.3**.

In conducting the initial descriptive analysis, KPMG examined the following 13 NIFL discussion lists:

(1) Adult Literacy Professional Developers ("AALPD"),

(2) Assessment ("Assessment"),

(3) Equipped for the Future ("EFF"),

(4) Homelessness & Literacy ("Homeless"),

(5) English as a Second Language ("ESL"),

(6) Family Literacy ("Family"),

(7) Focus on Basics ("Fobasics"),

(8) Health & Literacy ("Health"),

(9) Learning Disabilities ("LD"),

(10) Poverty, Race, & Literacy ("Povracelit"),

(11) Technology & Literacy ("Technology"),

(12) Women & Literacy ("Womenlit"), and

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[8] Source: http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html.

[9] The Program Leadership Improvement discussion list was not included in KPMG's analysis because it began in March of 2004. In addition, both the Adult Numeracy Network and Library Literacy discussion lists were not included as they are not managed by NIFL and therefore KPMG did not have the appropriate data to include them in the analysis.

(13)   Workplace Literacy ("Workplace").

Table 1 below presents for each DL, the number of annual postings that are quantitatively and qualitatively described in subsequent tables.

TABLE 1. Number of Postings by Discussion List[10]

Discussion List	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004[11]	Total Postings[12]	Postings per Year
EFF	-	-	1	436	321	492	537	281	389	50	2,457	409
ESL	150	425	1,015	1,205	1,137	1,489	1,448	1,709	1,386	212	9,964	1,227
Homeless	-	153	231	111	93	168	70	28	25	-	879	104
Health	-	261	413	700	827	673	752	369	488	33	4,483	603
Fobasics	-	-	-	-	202	124	151	199	240	56	916	179
Family	303	509	552	447	802	710	932	881	398	54	5,534	654
Assessment	-	-	-	-	-	-	65	179	93	21	337	136
Workplace	208	356	639	519	760	667	397	239	150	38	3,935	466
Womenlit	-	-	-	-	435	682	773	610	382	55	2,882	612
Technology	-	-	95	382	305	784	719	553	374	86	3,212	520
Povracelit	-	-	-	-	-	334	381	317	261	51	1,293	320
AALPD	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	877	243	877	N/A
LD	147	267	350	505	1,239	849	511	292	65	16	4,225	510
TOTALS	*808*	*1,971*	*3,296*	*4,305*	*6,121*	*6,972*	*6,736*	*5,657*	*5,128*	*915*	*40,994*	*N/A*

The table above shows that the ESL, Family, WomenLit, and Health discussion lists have the highest average postings per year, with the ESL, Family, Health and LD discussion lists having the highest number of total postings since inception. Out of the thirteen discussion lists that KPMG examined, ESL, Family, Workplace, and LD have been active since 1995.

In the sub-sections below, KPMG provides further qualitative and quantitative details regarding the 13 discussion lists. In addition, we provide detailed descriptive statistics highlighting the types of communications present in a sampling of the discussion list postings from the ESL, Family, and WomenLit discussion lists. These three discussion lists where selected for a more in-depth analysis because they had the highest average postings per year, thereby identifying a

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[10] This set of counts was conducted on the data subsequent to the data quality controls described in Section 3.

[11] Includes postings up through 02/28/2004.

[12] Does not include 2004 postings. This column is used to calculated the average postings per year.

significant amount of activity present in those discussion lists.[13]   The detailed descriptive statistics are based on the impact analysis presented in **Section 6.5** where we reviewed a three percent posting sample of the three aforementioned discussion lists. For further details on KPMG's impact analysis please refer to **Section 6.5**.

The tables below present a quantitative and qualitative overview of each of the 13 LINCS discussion lists.

4.1   English as a Second Language

The ESL discussion list is a discussion forum focusing on ESL instruction for adults. This list is being moderated by staff from the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) at the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC. Discussions include such topics as: instructional practices, program design, research, and policy.

The following table presents quantitative review of the ESL discussion list.

TABLE 2. ESL Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
No. of Postings	150	425	1015	1205	1137	1489	1448	1709	1386	212	10,176
Unique Users	61	134	263	338	323	371	350	344	284	90	
Postings per User	2.46	3.17	3.86	3.57	3.52	4.01	4.14	4.97	4.88	2.36	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	746,203	2,156,199	3,328,627	1,572,518	322,469	8,126,016
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	183.3%	138.8%	18.7%	-5.6%	31.0%	-2.8%	18.0%	-18.9%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	119.7%	96.3%	28.5%	-4.4%	14.9%	-5.7%	-1.7%	-17.4%	N/A	
Growth in web hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	189.0%	54.4%	-52.8%	N/A	

As previously mentioned, KPMG reviewed a three percent sample of the ESL discussion list postings. In the review of 278 items, we assessed the type of communication present in each posting (e.g., "requesting help or information," "announcement," "introducing self," etc.). Below we list the types of communication for which the sample results were than five percent of the ESL postings examined.

- Participating in Discussion of a Topic (41.0% of postings reviewed)

- Responding to Request for Help or Information (20.5%)

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[13] Refer to **TABLE 1**, for details on the average posting per year for the 13 discussion lists. The ESL, Family, and WomenLit discussion lists had, on average, 1,227, 654, and 612 posting per year, respectively.

- ■ Requesting Help or Information (12.6%)

- ■ Announcement (10.4%)

- ■ Not Relevant to Discussion List (6.8%)

Nearly 75 percent of the ESL postings reviewed contained messages where an individual was soliciting help, providing advice, or participating in a discussion, which demonstrates the importance of the ESL discussion list in sharing information and networking.

4.2   Family Literacy

The Family discussion list is comprised pf adult and early childhood education instructors, parent educators, family literacy practitioners, administrators, researchers, policy developers, and any other parties interested in family literacy. This discussion list features targeted discussion in the area of family literacy and focuses on: instructional practices, program design, research and policy. The Family discussion list provides a forum to raise question, discuss issues, and share information about family literacy. Topics include:

- ■ Parent-child interaction,

- ■ Recruitment and retention,

- ■ Family literacy in the workplace,

- ■ Infant/toddler learning and programming,

- ■ Family literacy in the school setting,

- ■ Parent information, and several others.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Family discussion list.

TABLE 3. Family Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	303	509	552	447	802	710	932	881	398	54	5588
Unique Users	88	126	153	167	226	229	272	208	136	28	
Postings per User	3.44	4.04	3.61	2.68	3.55	3.10	3.43	4.24	2.93	1.93	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	542,917	1,282,855	2,277,085	991,459	197,354	5,291,670
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	68.0%	8.4%	-19.0%	79.4%	-11.5%	31.3%	-5.5%	-54.8%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	43.2%	21.4%	9.2%	35.3%	1.3%	18.8%	-23.5%	-34.6%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	136.3%	77.5%	-56.5%	N/A	

KPMG also reviewed a three percent sample of the Family discussion list postings. Similar to the ESL evaluation, we assessed the type of communication present in each of 148 messages reviewed.. Below, we list the types of communication present in more than five percent of the Family postings from the sampling of messages that KPMG reviewed.

- Participating in Discussion of a Topic (27.0% of postings reviewed)

- Announcement (23.6%)

- Responding to Request for Help or Information (16.2%)

- Requesting Help or Information (15.5%)

- Administering Discussion List (6.1%)

Over 58 percent of the ESL postings reviewed contained messages where an individual was soliciting help, providing advice, or participating in a discussion. These are all types of communications that demonstrate the facilitation role played by the ESL discussion list. In addition, 23.6 percent of the postings examined were announcements where individuals were able to effectively disperse information to a cohort of individuals interested in family literacy.

4.3   Women & Literacy

The WomenLit discussion list is designed for: providers, advocators, researchers, learners, policy makers, and all other persons who are interested in exploring the linkages between women's lives and their level of literacy. Recent topics have included writing and women learners, domestic violence and its intersection with literacy, women's literacy levels and its ties

to economics and welfare of families, and connections between women's literacy and public policy.

The following table presents quantitative review of the WomenLit discussion list.

TABLE 4. WomenLit Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	435	682	773	610	382	55	2,937
Unique Users	94	124	103	80	78	14	
Postings per User	4.63	5.50	7.50	7.63	4.90	3.93	
Web Hits	N/A	29,136	430,331	899,799	419,696	81,325	1,860,287
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	56.8%	13.3%	-21.1%	-37.4%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	31.9%	-16.9%	-22.3%	-2.5%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	1377.0%	109.1%	-53.4%	N/A	

The three percent sample analyzed 84 items. Similar to the ESL and Family evaluations, we assessed the type of communication present in each message post. Below, we list the types of communication present in more than five percent of the WomenLit postings from the sampling.

- Participating in Discussion of a Topic (47.6% of postings reviewed)

- Announcement (21.4%)

- Responding to Request for Help or Information (8.3%)

- Requesting Help or Information (6.0%)

Over 61 percent of the WomenLit postings reviewed contained messages where an individual was soliciting help, providing advice, or participating in a discussion. Again, this finding is consistent with the results of the ESL and Family findings that the discussion list is very active and supportive to the facilitation of discussion and sharing of information. Similar to the Family discussion list, over 20 percent of the postings examined were announcements where individuals were able to effectively disperse information to people interested in women literacy.

4.4   Equipped For The Future

The EFF discussion list features targeted discussion about the standards-based Adult Literacy System Reform Initiative. Programs and staff members participating in the EFF initiative can post questions, issues, concerns, and discoveries that they would like to share and get feedback about from other projects involved in the standards development process. EFF's goals are the following:

- To refocus our adult literacy and lifelong learning system on delivering results that really matter in the lives of adults,

- To make sure that all adults who seek to strengthen their knowledge and skills will have access to a system that is explicitly designed to equip them for the future, and

- To accelerate our progress, as a nation, toward achieving the national adult literacy and lifelong learning goal.

The following table presents quantitative review of the EFF discussion list.

TABLE 5. EFF Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	1	436	321	492	537	281	389	50	2,507
Unique Users	1	121	98	123	144	94	84	16	
Postings per User	1.00	3.60	3.28	4.00	3.73	2.99	4.63	3.13	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	144,488	555,132	1,657,586	1,527,670	274,141	4,159,017
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	N/A	-26.4%	53.3%	9.1%	-47.7%	38.4%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	N/A	-19.0%	25.5%	17.1%	-34.7%	-10.6%	N/A	
Growth in web hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	284.2%	198.6%	-7.8%	N/A	

4.5   Homelessness & Literacy

The Homeless discussion list is offered by the NIFL in collaboration with *Homes for the Homeless* of New York. The list features discussion focused on the issues surrounding literacy among the homeless population, including: facts about this growing field, innovative and effective program design, policy suggestions and legislative updates, and informational and technical assistance resources for service providers. The goals for the Homeless discussion list include:

- Promoting awareness among the service providing, policymaking and academic communities of the interrelated issues of homelessness and literacy,

- Encouraging exchange of ideas and experiences among those grappling with these issues, and

- Developing and maintaining an ongoing network among the community dealing with homelessness and literacy to foster future exchange and collaboration.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Homeless discussion list.

TABLE 6. Homeless Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	153	231	111	93	168	70	28	25	0	879
Unique Users	28	45	28	28	43	16	10	15	0	
Postings per User	5.46	5.13	3.96	3.32	3.91	4.38	2.80	1.67	N/A	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	131,981	319,893	431,233	186,293	39,970	1,109,370
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	51.0%	-51.9%	-16.2%	80.6%	-58.3%	-60.0%	-10.7%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	60.7%	-37.8%	0.0%	53.6%	-62.8%	-37.5%	50.0%	N/A	
Growth in web hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	142.4%	34.8%	-56.8%	N/A	

4.6 Health & Literacy

The Health discussion list features information and discussion about literacy issues in health care settings and health issues in literacy programs. This discussion list serves as a forum to address ways health and literacy systems can work together to improve health care communication. Topics on the Health discussion list include, but are not limited to:

- Literacy initiatives in health care settings,

- Health education initiatives in literacy programs,

- Collaborations between health care settings and literacy programs, and

- Health literacy tools and resources.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Health discussion list.

TABLE 7. Health Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	261	413	700	827	673	752	369	488	33	4,516
Unique Users	63	109	195	195	172	179	135	144	16	
Postings per User	N/A	3.79	3.59	4.24	3.91	4.20	2.73	3.39	2.06	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	386,155	1,081,310	1,659,385	736,605	138,867	4,002,322
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	58.2%	69.5%	18.1%	-18.6%	11.7%	-50.9%	32.2%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	73.0%	78.9%	0.0%	-11.8%	4.1%	-24.6%	6.7%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	180.0%	53.5%	-55.6%	N/A	

4.7   Focus on Basics

The Fobasics discussion list is designed to provide a forum for discussion about the articles published in the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy's (NCSALL) quarterly publication. It is intended as a place to:

- Converse with colleagues about the themes examined and critique issues raised in the publication,

- Get questions answered and to pose them, and to

- Share relevant experiences and resources.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Fobasics discussion list.

TABLE 8. Fobasics Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	202	124	151	199	240	56	972
Unique Users	92	59	45	62	83	24	
Postings per User	2.20	2.10	3.36	3.21	2.89	2.33	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	114,150	250,130	132,000	27,285	523,565
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	-38.6%	21.8%	31.8%	20.6%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	-35.9%	-23.7%	37.8%	33.9%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	119.1%	-47.2%	N/A	

4.8   Assessment

The Assessment discussion list is for adult educators working or interested in assessment. This list features targeted discussion about assessment issues such as: instruction, curricula, self-assessment, alternative assessment, the GED, and the National Reporting System (NRS). The Assessment discussion list has three primary goals:

- First, provide a forum for professionals and volunteers in the field to discuss issues relevant to multiple forms of assessment as they relate to Adult Literacy.

- Second, provide the field with information and resources that can be used to develop, expand, and inform the Adult Literacy field on assessment issues. This forum/list should be the first place that people in the field turn to when they have a question or need a solution in the area of assessment.

- Third, enrich and improve public policies related to assessment by providing an open forum for the exchange of relevant policy ideas.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Assessment discussion list.

TABLE 9. Assessment Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	65	179	93	21	358
Unique Users	28	46	48	11	
Postings per User	2.32	3.89	1.94	1.91	
Web Hits	6,478	142,290	241,646	48,040	438,454
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	175.4%	-48.0%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	64.3%	4.3%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	2096.5%	69.8%	N/A	

4.9   Workplace Literacy

The Workplace discussion list is a forum for adult educators working or interested in workplace literacy and workforce education to discuss issues such as: marketing, funding, program design, instruction, curricula, assessment, evaluation, staff training, research, and policy. This discussion list is intended to serve as a springboard for discussion and suggesting resources in the area of Workforce Education. The Workplace discussion list has three primary goals:

- Provide a forum for professionals and volunteers in the field to discuss issues and share information relevant to workplace literacy and workforce education,

- Provide the field with information and resources that can be used to develop, expand, and improve workplace literacy and workforce education programs and practices; this forum should ideally be the first place that people turn when they have a question or need a solution in the area of workplace literacy or workforce education, and

- Enrich and improve public policies related to workplace literacy or workforce education by providing an open forum for the exchange of relevant policy ideas; these discussions can and should improve policy, practice, and research.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Workplace discussion list.

TABLE 10. Workplace Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	208	356	639	519	760	667	397	239	150	38	3973
Unique Users	77	122	164	147	189	183	97	74	60	18	
Postings per User	2.70	2.92	3.90	3.53	4.02	3.64	4.09	3.23	2.50	2.11	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	456,371	1,441,653	1,741,437	747,335	133,346	4,520,142
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	71.2%	79.5%	-18.8%	46.4%	-12.2%	-40.5%	-39.8%	-37.2%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	58.4%	34.4%	-10.4%	28.6%	-3.2%	-47.0%	-23.7%	-18.9%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	215.9%	20.8%	-57.1%	N/A	

4.10   Technology & Literacy

The Technology discussion list online discussion list has three primary goals, which are discussed below:

The first goal is to improve the use of technology in literacy practice by fostering discussions and information exchanges among professionals and volunteers in the field. The Technology discussion list seeks to develop a series of discussions focused on best technology practices, technology capacity and infrastructure, technical assistance and support, and innovative uses of technology in adult literacy.

The second goal is to enrich and improve the public policies related to technology and adult literacy by providing an open forum for the exchange of relevant policy ideas involving technology. These discussions can and should improve policy, practice, and research.

The third goal is to provide the field with a first-stop resource on issues related to adult literacy and technology. The forum/listserv is intended to be the first place that people in the field turn to when they have a question or need a solution in the area of technology and adult literacy.

The following table presents quantitative review of the Technology discussion list.

TABLE 11. Technology Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	95	382	305	784	719	553	374	86	3,298
Unique Users	41	153	132	223	173	133	117	38	
Postings per User	2.32	2.50	2.31	3.52	4.16	4.16	3.20	2.26	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	144,635	613,593	1,084,981	474,973	92,598	2,410,780
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	302.1%	-20.2%	157.0%	-8.3%	-23.1%	-32.4%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	273.2%	-13.7%	68.9%	-22.4%	-23.1%	-12.0%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	324.2%	76.8%	-56.2%	N/A	

4.11   Poverty, Race, & Literacy

The PovRaceLit discussion list is designed for: providers, advocates, researchers, learners, policy makers, and all other persons who are interested in exploring the linkages between poverty, race, and literacy. The discussion list has the following three goals:

- The first goal is to foster discussion and information exchanges on poverty, race, and literacy among people who are separated by distance and therefore not typically able to interact.

- The second goal is to share resources on issues related to poverty, race, and literacy.

- The third goal is to encourage an exploration of potential research projects in the area of poverty, race, and literacy, by providing an open forum for the exchange of relevant ideas.

The following table presents quantitative review of the PovRaceLit discussion list.

TABLE 12. PovRaceLit Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	334	381	317	261	51	1,344
Unique Users	74	74	72	58	20	
Postings per User	4.51	5.15	4.40	4.50	2.55	
Web Hits	N/A	176,224	364,752	183,907	37,642	762,525
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	14.1%	-16.8%	-17.7%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	0.0%	-2.7%	-19.4%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	107.0%	-49.6%	N/A	

4.12   Association for Adult Literacy Professional Developers

The AALPD discussion list is open to all adult educators working or interested in professional development. This list contains information and discussion about planning and implementing professional development to address issues such as: new teacher preparation, needs assessment and evaluation, using technology and distance learning, and designing professional development to support local, state and national initiatives and program improvement efforts. The AALPD has three primary purposes:

- To build a network of professional developers to share information and communicate fresh ideas and promising practices,

- To provide professional development for professional developers based on their needs and interest, and

- To contribute the voice of field to shaping policy initiatives.

The following table presents quantitative review of the AALPD discussion list.

TABLE 13. AALPD Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	877	243	1,120
Unique Users	201	59	
Postings per User	4.36	4.12	
Web Hits	200,314	109,906	310,220
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	

4.13   Learning Disabilities

The LD discussion list facilitates targeted discussion in the area of literacy and learning disabilities and their impact on the provision of literacy services. The discussion list serves as an information exchange network for the sharing of: information, research, expertise, and resources regarding the relationship between adult literacy and learning disabilities. Discussion topics have included: causes and consequences of LD, legal issues related to serving adults with LD, classroom methods and materials, GED testing and accommodations, and training.

The following table presents quantitative review of the LD discussion list.

TABLE 14. LD Discussion List

Numbers are units, expect percents as noted.

TOPIC	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number of Postings	147	267	350	505	1239	849	511	292	65	16	4,241
Unique Users	64	102	114	177	225	186	141	70	32	11	
Postings per User	2.30	2.62	3.07	2.85	5.51	4.56	3.62	4.17	2.03	1.45	
Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	427,076	1,194,463	1,866,787	862,017	176,149	4,526,492
Growth of Discussion List	N/A	81.6%	31.1%	44.3%	145.3%	-31.5%	-39.8%	-42.9%	-77.7%	N/A	
Growth of Participants	N/A	59.4%	11.8%	55.3%	27.1%	-17.3%	-24.2%	-50.4%	-54.3%	N/A	
Growth in Web Hits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	179.7%	56.3%	-53.8%	N/A	

5 Analysis of Legislative Advocacy

The purpose of the legislative advocacy analysis is to determine the degree to which postings that are primarily advocating a position on pending legislation, are present in the various discussions lists.

In conducting this analysis, KPMG examined the following NIFL discussion lists:

(1)   Adult Literacy Professional Developers ("AALPD"),

(2)   Assessment ("Assessment"),

(3)   Equipped for the Future ("EFF"),

(4)   Homelessness & Literacy ("Homeless"),

(5)   English as a Second Language ("ESL"),

(6)   Family Literacy ("Family"),

(7)   Focus on Basics ("Fobasics"),

(8)   Health & Literacy ("Health"),

(9)   Learning Disabilities ("LD"),

(10)   Poverty, Race, & Literacy ("Povracelit"),

(11)   Technology & Literacy ("Technology"),

(12)   Women & Literacy ("Womenlit"), and

(13)   Workplace Literacy ("Workplace").

5.1 Prevalence of Legislative Advocacy Messages

In order to determine the magnitude of legislative advocacy messages present on the NIFL discussion lists, we begin with defining our key terms. Within the U.S. Code, the following is offered in the context of defining what constitutes lobbying with Federally appropriated moneys:

> intended or designed to influence in any manner a Member of Congress, a jurisdiction, or an official of any government, to favor, adopt, or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation, whether before or after the introduction of any bill, measure, or resolution proposing such legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation.[14]

Within that context, and based on discussion of the legislation and its meaning among KPMG, RMC, and NIFL, we take the view that a posting is legislative advocacy if its message is the encouragement of others to support or act for (against) a specific political issue, position, or piece of legislation. Thus, for this analysis, we would classify a posting as an "legislative advocacy posting" if its intent is to encourage others to contact members of Congress via letter, e-mail, or office visits in order to advocate for a specific political position.

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[14] U.S, Code Title 18, Crimes and Criminal Procedure, Part 1, Chapter 93, Section 1913.

To begin this analysis, KPMG identified five postings from four discussion lists that met our broad definition of legislative advocacy.[15] For example, the following text contains excerpts from the five identified postings:

1   "If you are interested in this ***amendment***, or support or oppose it, please ***contact*** your ***senator*** prior to the June 21 date."[16]

2   "IMMEDIATE ***ACTION*** NEEDED! Senate proposes Even Start ***funding*** cut – ***Contact*** your ***Representatives*** and ***Senators*** now!"[17]

3   "I hope you believe, as I do, that adult education should benefit from this allocation of Star Schools funding. I urge you to ***contact*** your ***Senators*** and ***House*** members and ask them to restore ***funding*** for the Star Schools program in the appropriations bills."[18]

The full text of these five posting are included in **Appendix A.3**. KPMG examined the five postings for overlap of key words and phrases in order to develop a search strategy to be used against for the entire set of postings. This resulted in our the following "legislative advocacy search" string:

<center>SENAT and FUND and CONTACT and AMENDMENT.[19]</center>

Using this search string in each of the 13 subject discussion lists, KPMG found and reviewed a total of 32 target postings. Upon review, we identified 20 of the target postings as containing legislative advocacy messages. Thus, we found that 62.5 percent of the potential or target postings turned out , in fact, to be postings that meet the legislative advocacy criteria.

The table below presents a summary of the initial search results:

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[15] KPMG found these five legislative advocacy postings by using the WAIS search engine located on the NIFL web-site http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html. We conducted a search with "contact" and "advocate." We then read the through the matched items until we found five that met our definition. The incidence by DL of the postings were: 1 in Learning Disabilities, 2 in English as a Second Language, 1 in Family Literacy, and 1 in Workplace Literacy.

[16] Refer to **Appendix A.3**, example 1, for the full text of the posting. As is seen in this example, the poster is not advocating that the reader take a specific position, just that they contact their senator if they are interested in the amendment (support or oppose). As is illustrated in this example, KPMG cast the search net wide in order to identify as many potential legislative advocacy messages as possible.

[17] Refer to **Appendix A.3**, example 3, for the full text of the posting.

[18] Refer to **Appendix A.3**, example 4, for the full text of the posting.

[19] KPMG used "stemming" in order to allow for possible variations. For example, by using *senat* in the search string, matches result for postings that include words that include the letters such as: senate, senator, or senators.

TABLE 15. Initial Legislative Advocacy Search Outcome and Analysis

Discussion List	Potential Messages	Actual Legislative Advocacy Messages	Percent of Potential Confirmed
ESL	11	7	63.6%
Family	9	4	44.4%
Homeless	6	4	66.7%
LD	2	2	100.0%
Workplace	4	3	75.0%
Total	**32**	**20**	**62.5%**

The above table shows that nearly two-thirds of the 32 messages identified by the search string were in fact legislative advocacy postings. **Appendix A.1** contains five tables that note which of the messages reviewed were classified by KPMG as containing legislative advocacy messages from the initial search outcome and analysis.

KPMG then undertook a second text analysis of the 20 messages classified as legislative advocacy postings. As a result of that text analysis, we *broadened* the search string to include additional key words that were found to be common in the 20 reviewed messages. In order to cast the search net as wide as possible, KPMG expanded the search by identifying potential messages as those having one matched word from each of three key word groups. The expanded search string was follows:

(SENAT or CONGRESS or HOUSE or REPRESENTATIVE) and

(CONTACT or CALL or FAX or ACTION) and

(AMENDMENT or BILL).

This expands the previous search in the following ways:

1. Stemming on SENAT is expanded to include stemming on CONGRESS, HOUSE, or REPRESENTATIVE,

2. A match on FUND is eliminated, and

3. Stemming on FUND is expanded to include CALL, FAX, or ACTION.

This revised search criteria resulted in the identification of 544 postings as candidates for legislative advocacy postings, a substantial increase over the 32 first identified. As a first pass, we examined a five percent random sample from each of the thirteen sets. This selection was conducted on the set of results sorted by year. A sorted sampling design results in a higher probability of selection for those years in which the level of activity was the greatest.

The table below presents a summary of the five percent analysis.

TABLE 16: 5% Sample of Expanded Legislative Advocacy Search

Discussion List	Potential Messages	5% Sample of Potentials[20]	Number in Sample as Advocacy	% of Sample found to be Advocacy
ESL	134	7	5	71.4%
Family	139	7	3	42.9%
Homeless	51	3	1	33.3%
LD	13	1	1	100.0%
Workplace	103	6	0	0.0%
AALPD	7	1	0	0.0%
Assessment	8	1	0	0.0%
EFF	9	1	0	0.0%
Fobasics	6	1	0	0.0%
Health	8	1	0	0.0%
Povracelit	17	1	0	0.0%
Technology	9	1	0	0.0%
Womenlit	40	2	1	50.0%
Total	**544**	**33**	**11**	**33.3%**

Based on the examination of postings identified by the search strategies, the first criteria resulted in a potential set of which approximately 63% were legislative advocacy postings. The expanded criteria identified a potential set of which only approximately 33% were legislative advocacy postings. The latter set also identified over *ten times* as many potential items. Thus, we conclude that (pushing the fishing analogy) the expanded search criteria does in fact cast the net wide yet, does not do so at the expense of fishing in poorly stocked waters.

5.2 Detailed Analysis of ESL and Family DLs

To further examine how robust the results depicted in the previous table are, KPMG conducted an additional analysis on the ESL and Family discussion lists. These two lists were identified for a more in depth analysis because collectively they comprise just over 50 percent of the 544

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[20] The 5 percent sample size is the number of messages that KPMG reviewed from the discussion lists.

postings matching the criteria of the expanded search, that is, 132 for ESL and 139 for Family. For this analysis, we selected a 15 percent random sample of the potential postings.[21]

The tables below present the results of the additional analysis of the ESL and Family discussion list potential legislative advocacy messages.

TABLE 17: Detailed ESL Legislative Advocacy Analysis[22]

Year	Total Postings	Potential Messages	Potential Messages as % of Postings	Potential Messages Containing Advocacy	15% of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Advocacy as % of Potential Advocacy Messages	Extrapolated: Advocacy as % of Total Postings
1995	150	8	5.3%	0			
1996	425	17	4.0%	0			
1997	1,015	9	0.9%	0			
1998	1,205	2	0.2%	0			
1999	1,137	9	0.8%	0			
2000	1,489	23	1.5%	1			
2001	1,448	34	2.3%	1			
2002	1,709	14	0.8%	1			
2003	1,386	16	1.2%	0			
Total	**9,964**	**132**	**1.3%**	**3**	**20**	**15.0%**	**0.2%**

As presented above, our search criteria identified 132 postings from the 9,964 postings contained in the ESL discussion list over the nine-year period examined, or roughly 1.3 percent of all postings. Our examination of 20 (15 percent) of these potential messages identified three as meeting our legislative advocacy criteria. Our sample statistic then for the proportion of the potential messages that are legislative advocacy postings is 15 percent. Thus, of the 132 potential postings, one would expect 20 to actually be legislative advocacy postings. These 20 items represent just 0.2 percent of the ESL activity from 1995 to 2003.

The table below presents the results of our more detailed analysis of the Family discussion list.

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[21] Each item in the set was assigned a random number that was generated using the random number function in *STATA* version 7.0. The set was then sorted by the random number. A selection scheme was then designed using a fixed skip interval on a random starting point to generate the appropriate sample.

[22] **Appendix A.5**, example 1, contains a potential legislative advocacy message identified in our detailed ESL analysis. As is seen in this example the poster is not advocating that the reader take a specific position, which demonstrates that KPMG cast the advocacy net wide in order to identify as many potential legislative advocacy messages as possible.

TABLE 18. Detailed Family Legislative Advocacy Analysis[23]

Year	Total Postings	Potential Messages	Potential Messages as % of Postings	Potential Messages Containing Advocacy	15% of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Advocacy as % of Potential Advocacy Messages	Extrapolated: Advocacy as % of Total Postings
1995	303	4	1.3%	0			
1996	509	10	2.0%	0			
1997	552	23	4.2%	1			
1998	447	16	3.6%	0			
1999	802	17	2.1%	0			
2000	710	18	2.5%	1			
2001	932	16	1.7%	1			
2002	881	19	2.2%	1			
2003	398	16	4.0%	0			
Totals	5,534	139	2.5%	4	21	19.0%	0.5%

As presented above, our search criteria identified 139 postings from the 5,534 postings contained in the Family discussion list, that is, about 2.5 percent of all postings over the nine year period examined. Our examination of 21 (15 percent) of these potential postings identified four as legislative advocacy postings. Our sample statistic then for the proportion of the potential postings that are legislative advocacy postings is 19 percent. Thus, of the 139 potential postings, one would expect 26 to actually be legislative advocacy postings. These 26 items represent just 0.5 percent of the Family activity from 1995 to 2003.

5.3   Analysis of Most Recent Activity

KPMG undertook an additional analysis to examine whether the incidence of legislative advocacy related postings has changed in any significant manner in the most recent three-year period. To test whether the sub period 2001 through 2003 is representative of the entire period examined in the preceding analyses, KPMG examined a sample of over 40 percent of the ESL and Family potential postings that were dated between 2001 through 2003. KPMG undertook this detailed, over-sampling analysis, in recognition that the concern of legislative advocacy activity on NIFL sponsored lists is the result of attention paid mostly recently to discussion list postings.

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[23] **Appendix A.5**, example 2, contains a potential message identified in our detailed Family legislative advocacy analysis. This message also serves as an example of a cross-posting across the Family and Workplace discussion lists (see **Appendix A.3**, example 4, to view the posting that was posted to the Workplace discussion list).

The tables below present the results of both the ESL and Family analyses examining potential postings from list activity over the 2001 through 2003-time period.

TABLE 19: ESL Legislative Advocacy Analysis for 2001 to 2003

Discussion List Postings	Potential Messages	Potential Advocacy Messages as % of Postings	Number of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Potential Advocacy Messages Containing Advocacy	Advocacy as % of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Extrapolated: Advocacy as % of Postings
4,543	64	1.4%	27	5	18.5%	0.3%

The table above shows that 18.5 percent of the 27 matches examined contained legislative advocacy messages. This suggests that approximately 0.3 percent of the postings from 2001 through 2003 contain advocacy messages, which is comparable to the 0.2% finding for the period from 1995 through 2003.

TABLE 20: Family Legislative Advocacy Analysis for 2001 to 2003

Discussion List Postings	Potential Messages	Potential Advocacy Messages as % of Postings	Number of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Potential Advocacy Messages Containing Advocacy	Advocacy as % of Potential Advocacy Messages Examined	Extrapolated: Advocacy as % of Postings
2,211	51	2.3%	24	4	16.7%	0.4%

The table above shows that 16.7 percent of the 24 potential messages examined contained legislative advocacy messages. This suggests that approximately 0.4 percent of the postings from 2001 through 2003 contain advocacy messages, which is comparable to the 0.5% finding for the period from 1995 through 2003.

5.4 Findings and Recommendations on Legislative Advocacy

The results of both our analyses indicate that the incidence of legislative advocacy activity within the NIFL sponsored discussion lists is properly characterized as minimal. Further, there is no indication that there has been any increase in activity in the most recent three-year period compared to the activity over the entire period of discussion list operations.

Based on the estimated incidence and stability of the estimate, it is our finding that no action need be taken in addition to any current activities and practices promoted by the Institute.

6 Analysis of Impact

The purpose of this NIFL impact analysis was to examine what, if any, indications of impact can determined directly from the DL postings. Although the DLs were not intended, nor are promoted, as mechanisms to capture program related impacts, the collection of over eight years worth of commentary may in fact contain evidence of positive change in the practice of literacy education, program outcomes, or professional development activities. We have provided examples of potential messages of impact in **Section 6.5.2**.

6.1 Impact Analysis Framework

To explore what evidence of impact may lie in the DL collections, we used a framework that postulates a positive impact would be evidenced by postings discussing a change or improvement in at least one of the following areas:

- *Program operation*: such as rates of attrition, literacy gains, employment placements, etc.

- *Professional development*: such as changes in networking, Q&A, increased dissemination of research, etc.

- *Professional practice*: such as more effective pedagogy or the application of research, etc.

In conducting this exploratory analysis, KPMG used a sequence of four approaches, each intended to add a bit more to our understanding of how the DLs may be used to demonstrate impact. The four approaches presented in more detail below are as follows:

- Key word search of Impact oriented controlled vocabulary

- Searches informed by interviews with DL Moderators

- Item by item classification of a three percent on selected DLs

6.2 Key Word Search

The first analysis utilized the WAIS search engine, which is available on the LINCS website. Included in KPMG's preliminary impact analysis are the following NIFL discussion lists:

(1)   Adult Literacy Professional Developers ("AALPD"),

(2)   Assessment ("Assessment"),

(3)   Equipped for the Future ("EFF"),

(4)   Homelessness & Literacy ("Homeless"),

(5)   English as a Second Language ("ESL"),

(6)   Family Literacy ("Family"),

(7)   Focus on Basics ("Fobasics"),

(8)   Health & Literacy ("Health"),

(9)   Learning Disabilities ("LD"),

(10)   Poverty, Race, & Literacy ("Povracelit"),

(11)   Technology & Literacy ("Technology"),

(12)   Women & Literacy ("Womenlit"), and

(13)   Workplace Literacy ("Workplace").

6.2.1   Key Word Search of ESL DL.

Our first attempt to determine if the DLs contain indicators of impact was to employ a controlled vocabulary to search all postings within the ESL discussion list. The ESL DL was chosen for first pass because it is one of the longest operating DLs, established in 1995, and it represents the single largest collection of postings, almost 10 thousand. IN conducting this search, we used the NIFL WAIS search engine.[24]

KPMG developed a set of terms that, based on our experience as researchers and program evaluators, are most often used to describe program impact.   We employed several search strategies that used various keyword combinations containing a subset of the following terms to identify potential impact messages[25]:

- Success*
- Progress*
- Confiden*
- Impact*
- Affect*
- Improve*
- Gain*

Using various search strategies, such as:

(1) success* AND progress* AND affect*

(2) impact* AND success* AND affect*

KPMG examined many of the resulting potential ESL impact postings against the criteria for impact established in Section 6.1. None of the postings we examined met the criteria. Thus, our next effort was to expand our controlled vocabulary.

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[24] The WAIS search engine is available at the following website: www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/discussions.html.

[25] KPMG used "stemming" in order to allow for possible variations. For example, by using *accompl* in the search string, matches result for postings that include words such as: accomplish, accomplishing, accomplishment, or accomplished.

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In examining the postings that matched our various implementations of the Step 1 controlled vocabulary, we found that there were several postings containing conference announcements. Therefore, KPMG further examined several postings resulting from the following three search strategies, which excluded the keyword 'conference*':

Strategy (1):   progress* AND success* AND affect* NOT conference*

Strategy (2):   progress* AND confiden* NOT conference*

Strategy (3):   improve* AND gain* NOT conference*

The table below presents a summary of the search results when applied to the ESL DL:

TABLE 21: Impact Step 2 ESL Search Outcome and Analysis

Search Strategy	Matches	Matches Meeting Impact Criteria	Representative Posting Topics of Matches
Strategy (1)	25	0	■ Staff diversity in ABE ESOL Programs ■ Using poetry and songs to teach grammar and pronunciation
Strategy (2)	29	0	■ Using poetry and songs to teach grammar and pronunciation ■ TESOL standards
Strategy (3)	37	0	■ Battered immigrant women's protection act of 1999 ■ Adult Education ESOL Program Standards

Of the several postings KPMG examined using the above three search strategies, no impact messages were found in the ESL discussion list.

6.2.2   Key Word Search Across Additional Discussion Lists.

As no impact postings were identified in the ESL discussion list using our initial search strategies, KPMG applied the following set of search strategies to the Family and Women & Literacy discussion lists:

(1) progress* AND success* AND affect* NOT conference*

(2) progress* AND confiden* NOT conference*

(3) impact* AND success* AND affect* NOT conference*

The tables below presents a summary of the search results for both the Family and Women & Literacy discussion lists:

TABLE 22: Impact Step 3 Search Outcome and Analysis for Family DL

Search Strategy		Number of Impact Messages	Posting Topics
Strategy (1)	8	0	▪ Message regarding a book discussing when children succeed ▪ Connect for Kids weekly ▪ Family literacy helping families succeed[26]
Strategy (2)	0	0	
Strategy (3)	11	0	▪ Kids campaign weekly

TABLE 23: Impact Step 3 Search Outcome and Analysis for Women DL

Search Strategy	Matches	Number of Impact Messages	Posting Topics
Strategy (1)	3	0	▪ Message regarding a thesis discussing improvements in language acquisition among women and Hispanics ▪ Women's edge publication
Strategy (2)	0	0	
Strategy (3)	4	0	▪ Women's edge publication ▪ Women in foreign policy

Of the several postings KPMG examined using the above three search strategies, no impact messages were found in the Family or Women & Literacy discussion lists.

6.3 Searches informed by interviews with DL Moderators.

To gain additional insight into the terms and topics related to impact that DL participants may use, KPMG conducted interviews with two current NIFL DL moderators. These were Noemi Aguilar, moderator of the Family discussion list, and Lynda Terrill, moderator of the ESL discussion list. In each interview we reviewd the work presented in the previous section, and

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[26] Please note that Family Literacy is not referring to the Family discussion list.

discussed how to broaden our search strategy in light of their experience with the field, users, and familiarity with the postings.

As a result of these discussions,, we identified the following additional keywords:

- Feedback
- In need of
- Resources
- Research based
- Professional development opportunity
- Strategies
- Curriculum

Using the keywords identified in our impact discussion, KPMG developed the following six search strategies listed below:

(1) "research based" AND strateg*

(2) "professional development opportunity"

(3) feedback NOT conference

(4) resource* AND strateg* NOT conference

(5) resource* AND strateg* AND curricu* NOT conference[27]

(6) "in need of"

KPMG applied the above six search strategies to the Family, ESL and Women & Literacy discussion lists.

The tables below presents a summary of the search results for all three discussion lists:

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[27] KPMG could only apply the keyword curricu* instead of curricul* because there is a character search limit in the Wais search engine.

TABLE 24: Expanded Impact Search on Family DL

Search Strategy	Matches	Number of Impact Messages	Posting Topics
Strategy (1)	0	0	■ Message regarding a book discussing when children succeed ■ Connect for Kids weekly ■ Family literacy helping families succeed[28]
Strategy (2)	5	0	
Strategy (3)	>100	0	■ Kids campaign weekly
Strategy (4)	>200		
Strategy (5)	51		
Strategy (6)	55		

Of the several postings KPMG examined using the above search strategies, no impact messages were found in the Family discussion lists.

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[28] Please note that Family Literacy is not referring to the Family discussion list.

TABLE 25: Expanded Impact Search on ESL DL

Search Strategy	Matches	Number of Impact Messages	Posting Topics
Strategy (1)	0	0	
Strategy (2)	2	0	■ Workshop RE: teaching limited English speaking adult learners
Strategy (3)	>200		■ People soliciting feedback (not relating to impact)
Strategy (3a)[29]	6	1	■ Teacher training videos ■ State directors of adult education asked for feedback on adult education curriculum, which should be sent to the NIFL ESL discussion list.***
Strategy (4)	124	0	■ Multiliteracy ■ Video based learning ■ Staff diversity
Strategy (5)	16		■ Announcement RE: expert discussion
Strategy (6)	35	1	■ Student in need of tutor ■ NIFL is soliciting feedback from discussion list members RE: proposed action to educate policy makers about adult and ESL education***

Of the several postings KPMG examined using the above search strategies, two messages were found in the ESL discussion list that related to impact.[30] The fist message was regarding state directors of adult education asking for feedback on adult education curriculum and for the feedback to be sent to the NIFL ESL discussion list. While this posting does not show quantitatively the impact of the ESL discussion list, it does demonstrate that the discussion list is being used to facilitate impact on education curriculum. The second impact posting is regarding NIFL soliciting feedback from discussion list members regarding proposed action to educate policy makers about adult and ESL education. Similar to the first impact posting, this message demonstrates how the ESL discussion list is being used to impact policy.

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[29] As there were over 200 matches using search strategy (3), KPMG added the following additional keyword phrase: "discussion list."

[30] The posting descriptions related to impact are followed by ***.

TABLE 26: Expanded Impact Search on Women DL

Search Strategy	Matches	Number of Impact Messages	Posting Topics
Strategy (1)	0	0	
Strategy (2)	0	0	
Strategy (3)	66	0	■ Soliciting feedback on resources instructing women experiencing domestic violence ■ Purpose of the listserve
Strategy (4)	57	0	■ Home buying resource on-line guide ■ Excerpts from "Thursday Notes" ■ LGBT issues in adult education
Strategy (5)	21	0	■ Curriculum ■ Money management
Strategy (6)	10	0	■ Washington literacy council (teaches basic English to adult native English speakers)

Of the several postings KPMG examined using the above search strategies, no impact messages were found in the Family discussion lists.

6.4 Results of Controlled Vocabulary Searches

In summary, our controlled vocabulary search using the WAIS search engine proved to be non-conclusive as no messages of impact were found. KPMG therefore expanded the exploratory impact research to an item-by-item review of a representative sample of selected DLs. The approach is described in detail in following section.

6.5 Three Percent Sample Review for Impact

Because the discussion lists have been promoted and operated more as on-line communities within which to discuss issues and concerns, as opposed to a research orientation of program outcome commentary, it is not surprising to find that essentially no incidence of a research outcomes vocabulary is contained in the postings. The next step in an exploratory text analysis then, is to relax the "key word" match criteria for posting review that we applied in the previous analysis. To do this, we simply begin with a random sample of all postings and then conduct a review of the individual postings.

Unlike the previous analysis that began with a set of terms that we, as researchers, know are used to describe outcomes and impacts, this approach is one that is based solely on observation.

We review a sufficient number of representative postings and observe what it is that has been discussed. This review results in an inventory of attributes from which a broad-brush characterization can be made about what has been happening within the list community over the past several years. We are then able to see if any of that activity offers insights or evidence of impact.

To conduct this analysis, we need first to define a set of attributes to describe each posting. For each attribute it is also important to create a controlled vocabulary so that results can be compared across DLs. Finally, because of the amount of information and the labor intensity of this type of review, we need a tool to facilitate the selection, presentation, and recording of our decisions. These are discussed in turn below.

6.5.1   Attributes, Controlled Vocabulary, and Review Tool.

For this impact analysis, we reviewed a three percent sample of all of the postings from the following three discussion lists, the number of postings examined is listed for each:[31]

- ESL – 278 items.
- Family – 148 items.
- WomenLit – 84 items.

Using the client-server tool, KPMG was able to capture the following five attributes of each discussion list posting reviewed:[32]

1. Type of communication in the post (e.g., "requesting help or information," "announcement," "introducing self," etc.)

2. Subject of the post (e.g., "literacy resources," "practices," "literacy event," etc.)

3. Primary aspect of the post (e.g., "information access/sharing," "pedagogy," "assessment," etc.)

4. Type of impact (e.g., "program effectiveness," policy change," "community building," etc.)

5. Degree of impact (e.g., "unknown," "strong," "weak," etc.)

KPMG created an electronic tool to make the process of drawing various size sample from any of the DLs and the coding of the item-by-item review as least time intensive as possible for the reviewing analyst.[33] The tool was designed as a client-server tool specifically for this analysis and allows:

- Capture five attributes (see below)
- Analysts control the vocabulary of the attributes

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[31] The three percent sample of the above discussion list involved analyzing 510 postings.

[32] See Appendix A.5 for a complete listing of the controlled vocabulary associated with each attribute.

[33] KPMG created a client-server VB front end to Microsoft Access DB. The tool was demonstrated to Institute staff during a briefing on October 4, 2004.

English as a Second Language (ESL)		
Program Operation	20	7.2%
Discussion List Management	16	5.8%
Assessment	16	5.8%
Professional Development	11	4.0%
Type of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	214	77.0%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	51	18.3%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	5	1.8%
Community Building	4	1.4%
Policy Change	4	1.4%
Degree of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	227	81.7%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	51	18.3%

Following is a representative excerpt from the postings that were found to suggest an impact facilitated by the existence of the ESL discussion list in relation to program effectiveness (i.e., performance outcomes):

"I have stumbled in on this discussion late, but am quite stunned by the tenor of the following comment: '...the teacher is at fault if any bonding takes place.' I would advise the reading of works by Nel Noddings on the role of care in teaching, and that of Belenky, et al, (Women's Ways of Knowing) who detail the concept of connected teaching (and that is just a beginning!)... And, to emphasize Mex Butler's well-said comment re: 'Students learn quickest when they are comfortable, physically and emotionally. Natural bonding between teacher and student is not a causality of good teaching but a necessity.'"

This excerpt is suggestive of an impact because it offers a comment on practice supported with a reference.

Appendix A.5, example 1, contains the complete posting of the excerpt above.

TABLE 28: Attribute Frequencies of Family DL

Family Literacy		
Type of Communication in Post	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Participating in Discussion of a Topic	40	27.0%
Announcement	35	23.6%

Family Literacy		
Responding to Request for Help or Information	24	16.2%
Requesting Help or Information	23	15.5%
Administering Discussion List	9	6.1%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	6	4.1%
Cross-posting	4	2.7%
Initiating Discussion of a Topic	3	2.0%
Introducing Self	2	1.4%
Introducing/Networking Others	2	1.4%
TOTAL	**148**	
Subject of Post (Frequency of 9 or more)	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Literacy Resources	45	30.4%
Practices	10	6.8%
Literacy Event	9	6.1%
Discussion List Management	9	6.1%
Primary Aspect (Frequency of 9 or more)	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Information Access/Sharing	90	60.8%
Program Operation	12	8.1%
Discussion List Management	11	7.4%
Type of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	115	77.7%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	16	10.8%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Policy Change	6	4.1%
Community Building	3	2.0%
Degree of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	134	90.5%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Strong	4	2.7%
Secondary	1	0.7%
Weak	1	0.7%

From the 16 postings found to be suggestive of an impact facilitated by the existence of the Family discussion list in relation to program effectiveness (i.e. performance outcomes), the following is a representative excerpt:

"May 12, 2003 -- New York, NY -- The Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy has released a new publication, titled Equipped for the Future: Tools & Standards for Building & Assessing Quality Adult Literacy Programs. Written by Gail Spangenberg and Sarah Watson --the publication reviews the developmental history of EFF and discusses its accomplishments, implementation, and work in progress… the Foreword says, 'this publication tells a remarkable story, about Equipped for the Future -- a singularly important resource developed by the National Institute for Literacy that can be tremendously beneficial to states wanting to improve the effectiveness of their adult literacy services.'"

While this excerpt is not directly related to the Family discussion this, it is suggestive of an impact because it states the importance of the NIFL's EFF resource and how it benefits states who want to improve the effectiveness of the their adult literacy services, that might lead to higher performance outcomes.

Appendix A.5, example 2, contains the complete posting of the excerpt above.

Below is a second excerpt from another Family discussion list posting that is suggestive of an impact facilitated by the existence of the Family discussion list:

"I am helping do develop a component to our Family Literacy program and could use some help… The goal is to get parents excited and comfortable with children's books, which, hopefully, will result in parents reading more to their children. We have used (and loved) the Family Read materials (New Readers Press) and to some degree the MotherRead/FatherRead program. Next year our program will be expanding :-) and have several families that will continue to use the program. We have exhausted the materials in Family Read and find the MotherRead program lacking. I would like ideas on where I can get information on bringing children literature to the parents or what other programs are out there. Does any one have ideas on where I can look?"

This excerpt is suggestive of an impact because it is using the discussion list to solicit reading materials to expand the reading program that could result in increased literacy gains for adults and children.

Appendix A.5, example 3, contains the complete posting of the excerpt above.

TABLE 29: Attribute Frequencies of Women DL

Women & Literacy (WomenLit)		
Type of Communication in Post	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Participating in Discussion of a Topic	40	47.6%
Announcement	18	21.4%
Responding to Request for Help or Information	7	8.3%
Requesting Help or Information	5	6.0%
Administering Discussion List	4	4.8%

Women & Literacy (WomenLit)		
Cross-posting	4	4.8%
Initiating Discussion of a Topic	3	3.6%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	2	2.4%
Planning/Preparing for Offline Group Meeting or Conference	1	1.2%
TOTAL	**84**	
Subject of Post (Frequency of 9 or more)	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Literacy Resources	18	21.4%
Primary Aspect (Frequency of 9 or more)	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Information Access/Sharing	52	61.9%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Type of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	62	73.8%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	2	2.4%
Community Building	1	1.2%
Degree of Impact	**Frequency**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	65	77.4%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%

Following is a representative excerpt from the two postings that are suggestive of an impact facilitated by the existence of the WomenLit discussion list in relation to program effectiveness (i.e., performance outcomes):

"To help math teachers develop a theoretical background for their instructional choices, mathematics teacher and researcher Kathy Safford provides an overview of current theories in math education, and a few steps that teachers can follow to deepen their knowledge… Aydin Durgunoglu and Banu Oney did research on the impact participation in a basic education program in Istanbul, Turkey, had on learners. They found that learners had strong emotional reactions to learning mathematics skills that helped them make sense of the world. Those interested in improving their instruction -- but struggling with how to do so --- will find ideas in the article by the Mathematics Education Group (MEG) of New York City."

This impact suggested here is one related to program design and/or pedagogy that is supported by a citation to (presumably) a researched based finding.

Appendix A.5, example 4, contains the complete posting of the excerpt above.

6.6   Results of Three Percent Sample Review

While the results of the item-by-item review also do not support any direct statements on impacts, it does offer information on the use of the DLs. We provide comments by attribute below.

Type of Communication: Of the nine choices associated with this attribute, each of the three DLs had the same top four, and each had the same top item by frequency, "Participating in a Discussion of a Topic," form 47% for WomenLit, to 41% for ESL, to 27% for Family. The top four characterization of "Type" are also all consistent with the hypothesis that the DLs support and maintain the opportunity for discussion of issues and request for additional information. That type of activity is also a prerequisite for establishing a meaningful discussion to support, for example, the adoption of change in practice – which is what is needed to effect an impact.

Subject of Post: This attribute, as expected, required the creation of the most items for a controlled vocabulary (see **Appendix A.5** for complete list). Topics did cover a broad range within the domain of a DL, for example ESL topics. The most common topic is associated with request for information, and that is a posting characterized to be about "Literacy Resources." There were a fair number of postings that get cross posted to a DL or are just a submission that is not directly within the DL topic; these we classified as "Not Relevant to the Discussion List" and represented 23% for Women, 18% for ESL, and a negligible amount for Family.

Primary Aspect: This attribute captures what aspect of literacy is being discussed. The overwhelming aspect that each of the three shared as the top results was "Information Access/Sharing," with for 46% for ESL, 61% for Family, and 62% for Women. "Program Operation" also made a fair representation on ESL (7%) and Family (8%). This are also consistent with what you would expect is necessary for a meaningful discussion that could lead to, or result in, impacts on delivery, outcomes, or professional development.

Type of Impact: For just over three-quarters of the postings we examine, the content of the postings was not sufficient for us to make a determination of what, if any, impact has occurred. This is consistent with the results of the "Key Word" search analysis described in the previous section. There were a small number of posting that did indicate that a change or impact did occur, but the numbers are too small to draw any system –wide conclusions.

Degree of Impact: Same as previous.

7 Findings and Recommendations

Based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis conducted by KPMG, the following findings and recommendations are presented:

Findings:

- Over the past seven years, NIFL has supported thirteen discussions lists, which have enjoyed growth and sizeable use.

- The number of hits recorded by the DL archives are substantial and indicate the collected body of postings are viewed as a valuable resource by the literacy community.

- The incidence of postings that are advocacy in nature, and thereby a misuse of the DL by the poster, do not represent any meaningful level (less than 1%) of activity.

- The DLs do not contain numbers, figures, or descriptions of activities that enable one to qualitatively or quantitatively describe the direct impact of the DLs on practice, outcomes, or professional development.

- The DLs do contain discussions and content that are necessary to the dissemination of information that if acted upon, would be associated with impacts.

Recommendations:

- NIFL should use this report as a means to establish a baseline on how to describe the operations of the DLs. NIFL should generate regular (monthly or quarterly) activity reports to track usage of current postings as well as searches of the archives. Heeding the adage, "You manage what you measure," such reports will provide NIFL and DL moderators meaningful numbers to assess how marketing campaigns, hosted "expert discussion," or other DL related events are impacting the literacy community.

- DL moderators could be encouraged to host an 'Impact Month,' that is, a month where the community is encouraged to discuss how access to, and information obtained from, the DLs have led to changes in program operation, outcomes, professional development, etc.

- NIFL should explore ways to have the archives accessible to the various public search engines such as Google. This should include the use of "meta tags" or other content enriching search terms.

■ Given the observed level of use by the public of the DL archives, NIFL should investigate an upgrade to its search engine. While the WAIS search engine has served the Institute well, it has noted limitations in its ability to be configured for ever more user-friendly interfaces.

■ While the use of a publicly funded resource like the DLs cannot require participants to provide descriptive information, it is allowable for such systems to capture voluntarily user-provided information. Collecting location information (such as ZIP codes or county) or size of program affiliation would add an important level of understanding of the community being served. Such information could be of use to the moderators in planning speakers or other DL specific events.

■ NIFL should regularly sample the DLs to track the nature of the discussions. By using a sampling scheme like the one employed in this exploratory analysis, and a further refinement o the attributes and related controlled vocabulary, the Institute could create quarterly or semi-annual reports to the moderators and the field.

■ Further content analysis. This report establishes that the archived postings contain a wide range of information. NIFL should extend the content analysis to all DLs and consider supplementing the analysis with targeted surveys and or focus groups held at key Literacy conferences. By understanding where the needs of the field have been, to what extent the DLs have been able to meet those needs, and where the trends in needs are currently, NIFL will be in a better position to allocate its limited resources to the maximum benefit of the literacy field. This exploratory analysis demonstrates that the DLs offer the opportunity for NIFL to obtain such a level of understanding.

Appendices

A.1   Duplicate Messages

---Example 1(a)---

From: *NCFLRGS@aol.com*
Date: Fri Dec 29 1995 - 11:10:23 EST

Received: (news@localhost) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.6.8/940311.01ccg) id LAA13136 for nifl-family@novel.nifl.gov; Fri, 29 Dec 1995 11:10:24 -0500
Path: literacy.nifl.gov!nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
From: NCFLRGS@aol.com
Newsgroups: nifl.family
Subject: Winter Ho Hums
Date: 29 Dec 1995 11:10:23 -0500
Organization: National Institute for Literacy
Lines: 16
Sender: listproc@literacy.nifl.gov
Distribution: nifl
Message-ID: <951229111009_101558209@mail02.mail.aol.com>
Reply-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
NNTP-Posting-Host: literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Apparently-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Status: O
X-Status:

Staff members working on the Bureau of Indian Affairs Family and Child
Eduation Programs Winter Newsletter are looking for ideas, articles and other
resources that might assist families in resisting the winter blues and blahs.
 (January 15 due date).
Thanks in advance for any contributions.

Have a happy healthy 1996!

Ronna Spacone
NCFL_RGS@aol.com
National Center For Family Literacy
325 West Main Street, Suite 200
Louisville KY 40402
Phone 502-584-1133
Fax 502-584-0172

---Example 1(b)---

From: *NCFLRGS@aol.com*
Date: Fri Dec 29 1995 - 11:10:10 EST

Received: from mail02.mail.aol.com (mail02.mail.aol.com [152.163.172.66]) by literacy.nifl.gov
(8.6.8/940311.01ccg) with ESMTP id LAA13083 for <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>; Fri, 29 Dec
1995 11:08:19 -0500
From: NCFLRGS@aol.com
Received: by mail02.mail.aol.com (8.6.12/8.6.12) id LAA07303 for nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov;
Fri, 29 Dec 1995 11:10:10 -0500
Date: Fri, 29 Dec 1995 11:10:10 -0500
Message-ID: <951229111009_101558209@mail02.mail.aol.com>
To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Subject: Winter Ho Hums
Status: O
X-Status:

Staff members working on the Bureau of Indian Affairs Family and Child
Eduation Programs Winter Newsletter are looking for ideas, articles and other
resources that might assist families in resisting the winter blues and blahs.
 (January 15 due date).
Thanks in advance for any contributions.

Have a happy healthy 1996!

Ronna Spacone
NCFL_RGS@aol.com
National Center For Family Literacy
325 West Main Street, Suite 200
Louisville KY 40402
Phone 502-584-1133
Fax 502-584-0172

A.2 Date Issues

---Example 1(a)---

From: Vidya Thirumurthy (*vxthirum@olympic.ctc.edu*)
Date: Wed Feb 12 1997 - 19:49:40 EST

Received: from ctc.ctc.edu (root@ctc.ctc.edu [134.39.2.118]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.7.6/8.7.3)
with ESMTP id UAA13266 for <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>; Wed, 12 Feb 1997 20:20:14 -0500
(EST)
Received: from olympic.ctc.edu (olympic.ctc.edu [134.39.35.11]) by ctc.ctc.edu with SMTP
(8.7.5/8.7.3) id RAA24310 for <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>; Wed, 12 Feb 1997 17:18:01 -0800
(PST)
Date: Wed, 12 Feb 1997 16:49:40 -800 (PST)
From: Vidya Thirumurthy <vxthirum@olympic.ctc.edu>
To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
cc: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: Re: xpost: literacy kits
In-Reply-To: <970210100941_1677885926@emout12.mail.aol.com>
Message-ID: <Pine.SCO.3.90.970212164900.610A-100000@olympic.ctc.edu>
Content-Type: TEXT/PLAIN; charset=US-ASCII
Sender: vxthirum@olympic.ctc.edu
Status: RO
X-Status:

please unsubscribe my list server account
vidya

On Mon, 10 Feb 1997 RJurczyk@aol.com wrote:

> The following is x-posted from nifl-workplace.
> Robin Jurczyk
> nifl-family moderator
> rjurczyk@aol.com
> ******************
>
> Dear Literacy Friend:
>
>   Most of you are aware of the Literacy Public Awareness Campaign that
>   NIFL is sponsoring. The following [long message] contains information
>   on:
>
>   * Campaign purpose
>   * Campaign theme/First Public Service Announcement
>   * Launch dates * State Coordination

> * Campaign Kits
>
> Purpose
>
> The campaign attempts to redefine literacy for the general public,
> policymakers, and business leaders in order to increase their
> understanding of literacy as part of the solution to our most pressing
> problems.
>
> Campaign theme/First Public Service Announcement (PSA)
>
> The campaign theme will be: "Literacy. It's a Whole New World."
> The first campaign PSA will feature 3 adult learners, telling in their
> own words why literacy is important in their lives -- in the family,
> workplace, and community. This message is aimed at the general public.
>
> Launch Dates
>
> The campaign will be launched in early March, probably the 4th or the
> 11th. The second and third launch dates will occur in June and
> September. [Those messages will be aimed at policymakers and business
> leaders respectively.]
>
> State Organization
>
> We are in the process of assembling campaign coordinators in each
> state who will take the lead over local activities. The campaign,
> while being coordinated and placed at national levels, will be MUCH
> more successful with the help of people at state and local levels.
> State coordinators, with training and support from NIFL, will help
> individuals in each state in placing messages. Once State
> Coordinators are in place, NIFL will refer individuals to those
> coordinators for specific campaign implementation discussions.
> SLRCs and State Directors of Adult Education have been asked to
> nominate these chairs. If you are interested in chairing or being
> on a task force, contact your SLRC, State Director of Adult
> Education, or Sharyn Abbott at NIFL [202/632-1503].
>
> Campaign Kits
>
> Limited numbers of media kits are being produced will be provided to
> the coordinators in each state. Unfortunately, despite requests, we
> have not been able to increase the number of media kits produced, due
> to budget constraints. We are working hard to have strong and
> responsive state mechanisms in place to ensure that every literacy
> worker and organization that wants to be involved, can be involved.
> Hotline Information Kits will be available in Mid-February through the

> National Literacy Hotline at 1-800-228-8813. These kits will contain:
>
> * the brand new NIFL general information brochure,
> * a letter from Andy thanking the calling for his/her interest in
> literacy,
> * "25 things you can do to support literacy,"
> * an NIFL Board and staff list
> * Factsheets on
> * literacy in general
> * family literacy
> * workplace literacy
> * ESL/ESOL/ELL
> * Literacy and corrections
> * Literacy and welfare
> * Case studies on successful public/private literacy partnerships
> * a feedback form: Was this information helpful? What did you do with
> it? How are you supporting literacy in your community?, etc..
>
> Thanks to everyone from the field who has been involved. Your ideas
> have been invaluable!
>
> -- Carolyn Staley
> National Institute for Literacy

A.3   Initial Five Advocacy Messages

---Example 1---

From: *Glenn=Young%OFS.ARA%ACF.SEA@ban-gate.ACF.DHHS.Gov*
Date: Mon Jun 19 1995 - 13:45:26 EDT

Received: from ban-gate.ACF.DHHS.Gov ([158.71.1.13]) by literacy.nifl.gov
(8.6.8/940311.01ccg) with SMTP id NAA00728 for <nifl-alld@literacy.nifl.gov>; Mon, 19 Jun
1995 13:49:24 -0400
From: Glenn=Young%OFS.ARA%ACF.SEA@ban-gate.ACF.DHHS.Gov
Message-Id: <199506191749.NAA00728@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: by ban-gate.ACF.DHHS.Gov with VINES ; Mon, 19 Jun 95 13:49:35 EDT
Date: Mon, 19 Jun 95 13:45:26 EDT
Subject: re: Allow me to introduce myself...
To: nifl-alld@literacy.nifl.gov
Status: RO
X-Status:

Today, I received a notice from the Learning disabilities Association
expressing their concern over the Ashcroft amemndent to the Seant's Job
COsolidation Bill. The amendemnt if approved would limit access to federally
funded job training programs to only those with a high school degree or a
GED. The LDA is very worried of how this would affect those with LD and
urges people to contact there Senator, prior to the vote of June 21.

If you are interested in this amendment, or support or oppose it, please
contact your senator prior to the June 21 date.

Thank you

---Example 2---

From: Barb Van Horn (*blv1@psu.edu*)
Date: Mon Aug 07 1995 - 11:26:13 EDT

Received: from genesis.ait.psu.edu (genesis.ait.psu.edu [146.186.142.4]) by literacy.nifl.gov
(8.6.8/940311.01ccg) with ESMTP id JAA03124 for <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>; Mon, 7 Aug
1995 09:24:14 -0400
Received: from [128.118.73.106] (ppp106.cac.psu.edu [128.118.73.106]) by
genesis.ait.psu.edu (8.6.12/8.6.12) with SMTP id JAA15526 for <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>;
Mon, 7 Aug 1995 09:24:10 -0400
Message-Id: <199508071324.JAA15526@genesis.ait.psu.edu>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Date: Mon, 7 Aug 1995 09:26:13 -0600
To: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
From: blv1@psu.edu (Barb Van Horn)
Subject: legislative action
Status: RO
X-Status:

Last week I attended a PA Association for Adult Continuing Education
(PAACE) Legislative Committee meeting. We were encouraged to work together
and with others in the field to contact our legislators on a **regular**
basis to voice our concerns and to make sure they know who we are and what
we do. [They want to hear our complaints--but also good things that are
happening!]

Suggestions for letter-writing or phone calls included:

1. Contact Senators to encourage their support for the Jeffords-Pell
amendment to SR 143, Workforce Development Act. This amendment will insure
a fair division of resources within the bill for both adult education and
vocational education in the States. The amendment would establish a 22%
adult education--78% vocational education split of the portion of the Act
that would go directly to SDEs. That %age is roughly the current division
of funds between adult and vocational education.

2. Continue to support Representative Goodling's version of the bill in the
House of Representatives (HR 1617, the CAREERS Act.

3. Contact legislators concerning the appropriations bill for FY 96--we can
expect cuts to our programs, but we must ask for as few cuts as possible to
an already underfunded program!

Barb Van Horn
blv1@psu.edu

---Example 3---

From: Tony Peyton (*tpeyton@famlit.org*)
Date: Fri Jan 24 2003 - 17:40:42 EST

Return-Path: <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.10.2/8.10.2) with SMTP id h0OMegP17968; Fri, 24 Jan 2003 17:40:42 -0500 (EST)
Date: Fri, 24 Jan 2003 17:40:42 -0500 (EST)
Message-Id: <009501c2c3f9$1b3e0e80$2c881a0a@tpeyton>
Errors-To: listowner@literacy.nifl.gov
Reply-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: "Tony Peyton" <tpeyton@famlit.org>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-FAMILY:1376] Even Start Funding Alert
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit
X-Mailer: Microsoft Outlook, Build 10.0.4510
Content-Type: text/plain;
Status: O
Content-Length: 2073
Lines: 46

Friday, January 24, 2003

IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED!

Senate Proposes Even Start Funding Cut
Contact your Representatives and Senators Now!

The Senate has approved a $56 million funding cut for the Even Start Family
Literacy Program. The Senate's proposal would fund Even Start at $194
million. The Senate arrived at this amount by taking the President's
proposed $200 million and applying a 2.9% cut.

The House of Representatives earlier approved level funding for Even Start,
which is currently funded at $250 million.

The differences will be resolved in Conference Committee soon. Senate
Conferees have been named and are listed at the end of this message. The
House Conferees will be named on Monday.

What You Should Do:

Contact your Members of Congress and ask them to urge the Conferees (if they are not a conferee) to "ACCEPT THE HOUSE POSITION ON EVEN START FUNDING," which in the aggregate is within the President's total spending limit. It is important that if your Member is not on the Conference Committee that you urge them to contact Chairmen Young or Regula or Rep. Obey in the House and Chairmen Stevens or Specter or Sen. Harkin in the Senate.

It is imperative Congress hears from the family literacy field now to avert this funding cut.

Again, please ask each Member to urge the Conferees to maintain Even Start funding at $250 million. Due to the urgency of this situation, the best forms of communication are telephone calls and faxes.

To find your Member of Congress and their contact information, go to http://www.house.gov/writerep/ for Representatives and http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm for Senators. You can also call the U.S. Capitol switchboard. Call (202) 224-3121 for Senators and (202) 225-3121 for Representatives.

Senate Conferees: Senators Stevens, Cochran, Specter, Domenici, Bond, McConnell, Burns, Shelby, Gregg, Bennett, Campbell, Craig, Hutchison, DeWine, Brownback, Byrd, Inouye, Hollings, Leahy, Harkin, Mikulski, Reid, Kohl, Murray, Dorgan, Feinstein, Durbin, Johnson, Landrieu.

---Example 4---

From: Noreen Lopez (*nlopez@PBS.ORG*)
Date: Mon Sep 22 1997 - 15:34:52 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-workplace@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost.nifl.gov [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.8.7/8.8.5) with
SMTP id PAA25380; Mon, 22 Sep 1997 15:34:52 -0400 (EDT)
Date: Mon, 22 Sep 1997 15:34:52 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <3.0.2.32.19970922152951.006b66d8@nature.pbs.org>
Errors-To: lmann@literacy.nifl.gov
Reply-To: nifl-workplace@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-workplace@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-workplace@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: Noreen Lopez <nlopez@PBS.ORG>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-workplace@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-WORKPLACE:1736] Action needed
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Light Version 3.0.2 (32)
Status: RO

About a year ago, the Star Schools program of OERI at USDE funded three
national adult literacy projects for five years of development, field
testing and programming for distance learning for adults. This probably
represents one of the largest commitments to adult literacy outside the
Division of Adult Ed and Literacy, with approximately $45 million for the
five years. All three projects are developing different alternatives, from
high school credit by satellite courses, or internet courses to GED and
pre-GED/Workplace essential skills programming by TV broadcast and internet.
Unfortunately, this infusion of new money into adult education for the
development of media based programs and materials is seriously jeopardized
by the recent Gorton amendment to the Senate Appropriations. The Gorton
amendment places all Star Schools funding and most other Dept. of Ed
programs into a block grant to go directly to the states. As you can
imagine, the states are not likely to place this money back into adult
education, much less into national programs that benefit adult education.
To make matters worse, the House appropriations bill has zeroed out the
Star Schools program budget (as it has the last 3 years). Other years, the
House receded to the Senate levels and continued funding Star Schools.
Because of the addition of the Gorton Amendment to the Senate
Appropriations, it is no longer that simple.

I hope you believe, as I do, that adult education should benefit from this
allocation of Star Schools funding. I urge you to contact your Senators and
House members and ask them to restore funding for the Star Schools program
in the appropriations bills. The conference committee to finalize the

appropriations bill will probably meet later this week so there is not much time.

Specific Action:
Ask House members to work through the House-Senate Conference for the FY98 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill to restore funding for Star Schools to the level originally approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee ($26 million)

Ask the Senators to work to reverse the Gorton Amendment and restore funding levels originally approved by the Senate ($26 million), in the House-Senate conference for the FY 98 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill.

I've included a little information about this Star Schools project at PBS, LiteracyLink. If you'd like more information email me directly at nlopez@pbs.org or visit our Web site at: www.pbs.org/literacy

Star Schools
Star Schools is providing the second year of a five-year grant for a new PBS project, LiteracyLink. There has already been an investment of $3 million. LiteracyLink would build on public television's long standing commitment to improving literacy levels in the adult population. The current GED on TV series is available on TV or videocassette in forty-eight states and several territories. Approximately 88,000 adults annually enroll in this program through their local public TV stations. LiteracyLink would create a new Workplace Essential Skills and new GED series with video and on-line components that stations would be able to offer to their communities. Five stations (Iowa Public TV; KCET, Los Angeles; KET, Kentucky; KNPB, Reno; and WNED, Buffalo) are currently participating as innovations sites to ensure the efficacy of all materials. Both video series are being produced by KET.

Recent research shows that 39% of the adult population has less than adequate literacy skills to meet the demands of most jobs, hampering their ability to become the most productive workers and citizens. LiteracyLink would be a major tool in addressing this problem on a local and national basis, using the latest research on adult learning and multiple technologies to reach and serve a large number of students and teachers. Traditional adult literacy programs can reach only a small percentage of adults who need service. Distance learning opportunities under Star Schools offer a new alternative for reaching large numbers of adults in a cost effective manner.

Noreen Lopez
nlopez@pbs.org

---Example 5---

From: Fran Keenan (*fran@cal.org*)
Date: Thu Sep 19 1996 - 11:25:17 EDT

Received: from cal.org (cal.org [204.240.146.10]) by literacy (8.7.5/8.7.3) with SMTP id
LAA00238 for <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>; Thu, 19 Sep 1996 11:28:02 -0400 (EDT)
Received: from CAL-Message_Server by cal.org with Novell_GroupWise; Thu, 19 Sep 1996
11:27:13 -0400
Message-Id: <s2412e10.001@cal.org>
X-Mailer: Novell GroupWise 4.1
Date: Thu, 19 Sep 1996 11:25:17 -0400
From: Fran Keenan <fran@cal.org>
To: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Subject: Senate Action/Letters Needed
Status: RO
X-Status:

This message has been sent out by the National Coalition for Literacy
with a request that it get shared widely.

Priority: Urgent Action Requested
Summary: Senate Republicans propose an ADDITIONAL $110M for AEA
Basic State Grants. Letters needed to White House and Secretary
Riley -- Senate leaders too if you have time.

Senate Republicans are attempting to remove education as a campaign
issue by attempting to send him a veto-proof education
appropriations bill. The Lott Education Amendment to the Labor, HHS
& Education appropriations bill would add an additional $2.3B.

The Lott amendment would include an additional $110M for the Adult
Education Act Basic State Grants. However, it would not include any
additional funding for vocational education. Senator Harkin is
sponsoring a similar amendment on behalf of the Democrats. Senator
Harkin's amendment includes NO ADDITIONAL funding for adult
education. It does include an additional $78M for vocational
education. (See table at the end of this communication.)

ACTION NEEDED
The literacy field MUST WEIGH IN ASAP on these proposed amendments.
Senate Republicans want to cut a deal with the Democrats on
compromise by week's end.

We must thank Senate Republicans so they don't bargain away the
$110M. We must urge Senate Democrats, the President, and the
Department of Education to support $110M in additional funding for

adult education. (What's wrong with this picture?)

This extraordinary and unanticipated opportunity is the result of the field's cumulative advocacy efforts to date. IF WE ALL ACT NOW, we stand a stronger chance of getting additional funding than we ever did before.

A number of us met by conference call Wednesday afternoon. We developed the following four part strategy. LEADERS OF NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ... Please note your immediate action is needed in parts 1, 2 & 3.

PART 1 ...
National organizations ... Mobilize your membership to urge their two U.S. Senators to sign onto a Senate letter and Congressperson to sign onto a House letter to their respective leadership teams. These letters will inform the leadership that there is strong support for additional adult education funding. I will post a separate electronic Washington Update on this subject as soon as we confirm who the principal sponsors of the letters are in the Senate and House.

PART 2 ...
National organizations ... Mobilize your membership in states where their Senators are on the leadership team. In the table below, for Senators with a (*) in front of their name, urge your members to call thanking them for supporting additional funding for adult education & encourage them not to bargain it away. For Senators with a (#) in front of their name, urge your members to call and advocate for $110M additional funding for adult education.

* Trent Lott (R-MS)??202-224-6253
* Mark Hatfield (R-OR)?202-224-3753
* Arlen Specter (R-PA)?202-224-4254
# Tom Daschle (D-SD?202-224-2321
# Robert Byrd (D-WV)?202-224-3954
# Tom Harkin (D-IA)??202-224-3254

Tell your local folks that it is likely they will only be able to leave a message with the receptionist. Therefore it is important they advocate for "additional $110M in adult education funding as part of the education amendment to the appropriations bill for Labor, HHS & Ed."

PART 3 ...
National organizations ... Fax letters to the White House and U.S. Dept. of Education urging them to support $110M in additional

funding for adult education. Feel free to use the letters sent by the National Coalition for Literacy (see part 4) as models. If you can, fax letters to Senate leaders too.

KPMG

A.4   Initial Advocacy Search Outcome and Analysis

Discussion List: ESL

Search String: senat* AND fund* AND contact* AND amendment*
The (i) body of the posting (not including quotes of previous postings) and (ii) subject line were searched.

	File Name	Date	Year	Time	Submitter	Posting Subject	Advocacy
1	1995/0145.html	8/7/1995	1995	9:24:15	blv1@psu.edu	legislative action	Yes
2	1995/0184.html	10/5/1995	1995	10:18:58	fran@cal.org	jeffords/pell review	Yes
3	1996/0162.html	3/19/1996	1996	11:06:32	fran@cal.org	senate vote today (xpost)	Yes
4	1996/0326.html	6/24/1996	1996	15:57:22	ncflrgs@aol.com	immigration legislation update	Yes
5	2000/0692.html	6/19/2000	2000	17:26:36	alzbec@interaccess.com	immigration policy update	Yes
6	2000/0695.html	6/20/2000	2000	23:42:15	alzbec@interaccess.com	national immigration forum update	Yes
7	2000/1264.html	10/6/2000	2000	18:04:29	alzbec@interaccess.com	national immigration forum update	Yes
8	2001/0040.html	1/17/2001	2001	16:35:51	alzbec@interaccess.com	national immigration forum update	No
9	2001/1190.html	10/23/2001	2001	16:48:06	azbecker@mindspring.com	a nation of immigrants rebuilds	No
10	2002/0238.html	1/28/2002	2002	20:50:28	azbecker@mindspring.com	immigration policy update	No
11	2002/1014.html	8/7/2002	2002	14:53:01	azbecker@mindspring.com	immigration policy update	No

Discussion List: Family

Search String: senat* AND fund* AND contact* AND amendment*
The (i) body of the posting (not including quotes of previous postings) and (ii) subject line were searched.

	File Name	Date	Year	Time	Submitter	Posting Subject	Advocacy
1	1995/0214.html	8/7/1995	1995	9:57:25	ajohnson@nifl.gov	legislative action	Yes
2	1995/0216.html	8/7/1995	1995	9:25:00	blv1@psu.edu	legislative action	Yes
3	1997/0453.html	9/18/1997	1997	15:13:51	rjurczyk@aol.com	xpost: edinfo	No
4	1997/0456.html	9/22/1997	1997	16:42:37	nlopez@pbs.org	action needed	Yes
5	1997/0473.html	10/5/1997	1997	20:52:37	rjurczyk@aol.com	x-post ed. initiatives 74, oct. 3, 1997	No
6	1998/0179.html	5/5/1998	1998	17:07:13	azaheer@famlit.org	policy issues discussed at the seventh annual nationalconference	No
7	1999/0700.html	12/2/1999	1999	12:31:04	tpeyton@famlit.org	even start program extension	No
8	1999/0758.html	12/2/1999	1999	12:31:04	tpeyton@famlit.org	even start program extension	No
9	2001/0269.html	4/16/2001	2001	10:24:53	tpeyton@famlit.org	federal legislation	Yes

KPMG

KPMG

Discussion List: **Homeless**

Search String: senat* AND fund* AND contact* AND amendment*
The (i) body of the posting (not including quotes of previous postings) and (ii) subject line were searched.

	File Name	Date	Year	Time	Submitter	Posting Subject	Advocacy
1	1997/0089.html	3/10/1997	1997	11:00:07	hn4061@handsnet.org	homeless hotline 3/7/97	Yes
2	1997/0106.html	3/25/1997	1997	16:37:32	hn4061@handsnet.org	homeless hotline 3/21	Yes
3	1997/0195.html	8/6/1997	1997	16:33:49	hn4061@handsnet.org	policy alert 8/4: 1	No
4	1997/0196.html	8/6/1997	1997	16:43:41	hn4061@handsnet.org	nch homeless hotline 8/4	Yes
5	1998/0028.html	2/2/1998	1998	15:26:49	hn4061@handsnet.org	xpost ccc policy alert # 112	Yes
6	1998/0069.html	4/9/1998	1998	21:38:31	hn4061@handsnet.org	legislative alert 2	No

Discussion List: **LD**

Search String: senat* AND fund* AND contact* AND amendment*
The (i) body of the posting (not including quotes of previous postings) and (ii) subject line were searched.

	File Name	Date	Year	Time	Submitter	Posting Subject	Advocacy
1	1995/0065.html	6/19/1995	1995	13:49:25	glenn=young%oofs.ara%oacf.sea@ban-gate.acf.dhhs.gov	allow me to introduce myself…	Yes
2	1995/0141.html	8/7/1995	1995	9:25:43	blv1@psu.edu	legislative action	Yes

KPMG

Discussion List: **Workplace**

Search String: senat* AND fund* AND contact* AND amendment*
The (i) body of the posting (not including quotes of previous postings) and (ii) subject line were searched.

	File Name	Date	Year	Time	Submitter	Posting Subject	Advocacy
1	1997/0628.html	9/22/1997	1997	15:52:37	nlopez@pbs.org	action needed	Yes
2	1997/0633.html	9/25/1997	1997	22:05:44	blv1@psu.edu	legislative alert	Yes
3	2001/0120.html	4/6/2001	2001	21:28:21	blv1@psu.edu	increase workforce development funding	Yes
4	2001/0165.html	5/11/2001	2001	16:03:09	haw6@psu.edu	thursday notes 5/10/2001	No.

A.5 Advocacy Analysis: Sample of Potential Advocacy Postings from the ESL and Family Discussion Lists

---Example 1---

From: *fyi@americanliteracy.com*
Date: Thu Sep 21 2000 - 11:38:39 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.10.2/8.10.2) with SMTP id e8LFcd908291; Thu, 21 Sep 2000 11:38:39 -0400 (EDT)
Date: Thu, 21 Sep 2000 11:38:39 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <20000921153813.17099.qmail@pb151.postoffice.net>
Errors-To: listowner@literacy.nifl.gov
Reply-To: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: <fyi@americanliteracy.com>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-ESL:5134] Re: [Re: FW: Latino Fairness Bill in Danger--vote by house tomorrow]
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
X-Mailer: USANET web-mailer (MaintM3.3.0.77)
Status: O
Content-Length: 2534
Lines: 52

Loren McGrail <lmcgrail@mindspring.com> wrote:
Heide,

Thank you for these recent updates, not surprising if you look back
over the history of immigration policy in this country. Your updates
also provide us opportunities for civic action so that we can model
the kind of behavior we are asking of others. They also provide rich
content for those of us looking for real or authentic texts to bring
into our civic education classrooms.

These issues are particularly relevant for me here in North Carolina
where there is a demand for both kinds of workers and evidence that
both sets of immigrant workers experience discrimination once they are
brought here though I would say the farmworkers experience far more
heinous abuses. I believe the passage of the Act would provide the
base support for a new amnesty something that even the AFL-CIO is in
favor of. This would have a profound effect on our adult ESOL system

bringing in yet more learners to an already over crowded system. It would push the boundaries of what it means to provide civic education.

I believe this bill ushers in a new era of not just reinstating the old "braceros" (spanish for arms) program but something equally abusive which is to use people just for their minds. This is why India and other countries which are supplying most of these new workers refer to the effects of this kind of globilization as a "brain drain."

So what's an ESOL teacher to do besides write their representatives? When we talk about citizenship do we dare talk about what it means to be a citizen in a market economy where the the system is dependent on cheap or cheaper labor? When we teach about the Bill of Rights do we also include universal Human Rights? Do we connect the dots? Why should we? What will happen to us if we do or don't?

I have no answers to these questions but I believe we should be asking them and figuring out ways to bring them into our practice.
I would love to hear from other people about what they think when they get these kinds of policy updates or what they are doing in their own civic lives or classrooms.
--
Loren McGrail
lmcgrail@mindspring.com

Not responding to Loren so much as the previous message. At the risk of being labeled a racist, i believe the law should be enforced. If i hear that the law is unjust in some specific way, i may well go to the front of the line of people attempting to fight the law. Until then, i favor the enforcement of immigration laws.

Joe Little
fyi@americanliteracy.com

---Example 2---

From: Noreen Lopez (*nlopez@PBS.ORG*)
Date: Mon Sep 22 1997 - 16:35:40 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost.nifl.gov [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.8.7/8.8.5) with SMTP id QAA25752; Mon, 22 Sep 1997 16:35:40 -0400 (EDT)
Date: Mon, 22 Sep 1997 16:35:40 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <3.0.2.32.19970922161526.00693988@nature.pbs.org>
Errors-To: lmann@literacy.nifl.gov
Reply-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: Noreen Lopez <nlopez@PBS.ORG>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-FAMILY:1167] Action needed
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
X-Mailer: QUALCOMM Windows Eudora Light Version 3.0.2 (32)
Status: RO

About a year ago, the Star Schools program of OERI at USDE funded three national adult literacy projects for five years of development, field testing and programming for distance learning for adults. This probably represents one of the largest commitments to adult literacy outside the Division of Adult Ed and Literacy, with approximately $45 million for the five years. All three projects are developing different alternatives, from high school credit by satellite courses, or internet courses to GED and pre-GED/Workplace essential skills programming by TV broadcast and internet. Unfortunately, this infusion of new money into adult education for the development of media based programs and materials is seriously jeopardized by the recent Gorton amendment to the Senate Appropriations. The Gorton amendment places all Star Schools funding and most other Dept. of Ed programs into a block grant to go directly to the states. As you can imagine, the states are not likely to place this money back into adult education, much less into national programs that benefit adult education. To make matters worse, the House appropriations bill has zeroed out the Star Schools program budget (as it has the last 3 years). Other years, the House receded to the Senate levels and continued funding Star Schools. Because of the addition of the Gorton Amendment to the Senate Appropriations, it is no longer that simple.

I hope you believe, as I do, that adult education should benefit from this allocation of Star Schools funding. I urge you to contact your Senators and House members and ask them to restore funding for the Star Schools program in the appropriations bills. The conference committee to finalize the appropriations bill will probably meet later this week so there is not much time.

Specific Action:
Ask House members to work through the House-Senate Conference for the FY98
Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill to restore funding for Star Schools
to the level originally approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee
($26 million)

Ask the Senators to work to reverse the Gorton Amendment and restore
funding levels originally approved by the Senate ($26 million), in the
House-Senate conference for the FY 98 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill.

I've included a little information about this Star Schools project at PBS,
LiteracyLink. If you'd like more information email me directly at
nlopez@pbs.org or visit our Web site at: www.pbs.org/literacy

Star Schools
Star Schools is providing the second year of a five-year grant for a new
PBS project, LiteracyLink. There has already been an investment of $3
million. LiteracyLink would build on public television's long standing
commitment to improving literacy levels in the adult population. The
current GED on TV series is available on TV or videocassette in forty-eight
states and several territories. Approximately 88,000 adults annually enroll
in this program through their local public TV stations. LiteracyLink would
create a new Workplace Essential Skills and new GED series with video and
on-line components that stations would be able to offer to their
communities. Five stations (Iowa Public TV; KCET, Los Angeles; KET,
Kentucky; KNPB, Reno; and WNED, Buffalo) are currently participating as
innovations sites to ensure the efficacy of all materials. Both video
series are being produced by KET.

Recent research shows that 39% of the adult population has less than
adequate literacy skills to meet the demands of most jobs, hampering their
ability to become the most productive workers and citizens. LiteracyLink
would be a major tool in addressing this problem on a local and national
basis, using the latest research on adult learning and multiple
technologies to reach and serve a large number of students and teachers.
Traditional adult literacy programs can reach only a small percentage of
adults who need service. Distance learning opportunities under Star Schools
offer a new alternative for reaching large numbers of adults in a cost
effective manner.

Noreen Lopez
nlopez@pbs.org

A.6 Impact Analysis: Postings Related to Program Effectiveness (Performance Outcomes)

---Example 1---

From: *PASISSEL@ualr.edu*
Date: Fri Apr 18 1997 - 11:20:15 EDT

Return-Path: <PASISSEL@ualr.edu>
Received: from mbox.ualr.edu ([144.167.10.38]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.8.5/8.8.5) with ESMTP id LAA24318 for <nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov>; Fri, 18 Apr 1997 11:19:39 -0400 (EDT)
From: PASISSEL@ualr.edu
Received: from calvin.ualr.edu by UALR.EDU (PMDF V4.2-11 #15587) id <01IHUIMVD9NK0044VM@UALR.EDU>; Fri, 18 Apr 1997 10:20:17 CDT
Date: Fri, 18 Apr 1997 10:20:15 -0500 (CDT)
Subject: RE: Bond!
To: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Cc: PASISSEL@ualr.edu
Message-id: <970418102015.c836@ualr.edu>
X-Envelope-to: nifl-esl@literacy.nifl.gov
Content-type: TEXT/PLAIN; CHARSET=US-ASCII
Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT
Status: RO

Date sent: 18-APR-1997 10:02:25

Subj: RE: Bond!

I have stumbled in on this discussion late, but am quite stunned by the tenor
of the following comment:

 "...the teacher is at fault if any bonding takes place."

I would advise the reading of works by Nel Noddings on the role of care in
teaching, and that of Belenky, et al, (Women's Ways of Knowing) who detail the
concept of connected teaching (and that is just a beginning!).
Furthermore, the idea of creating "communities of learners" which foster
connection (i.e. bonding) between teachers and students and among students
is a well respected one in both ABE and higher education circles.

And, to emphasize Mex Butler's well-said comment re:

"Students learn quickest when they are comfortable, physically and emotionally.
Natural bonding between teacher and student is not a casualty of good
teaching but a necessity. When a teacher is attuned to the students,
she/he can more easily see the needs to be met, and target the learning to the lack."

Regarding this, I have an article coming out in the Spring issue of Adult Education Quarterly which details the necessity of connection between teachers and learners as it relates to retention and participation, and enhancement of learning.

I would urge the quoted colleague to become familiar with the research literature before espousing such an unfriendly perspective which only serves to distance teachers from learners, and which negates and denigrates learners' humanity!

Peggy

---Example 2---

From: Gail Spangenberg (*gspangenberg@caalusa.org*)
Date: Mon May 12 2003 - 16:38:04 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.10.2/8.10.2) with SMTP id h4CKc3C06065; Mon, 12 May 2003 16:38:04 -0400 (EDT)
Date: Mon, 12 May 2003 16:38:04 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <p05100300bae5b5a636d2@[67.31.56.148]>
Errors-To: listowner@literacy.nifl.gov
Reply-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: Gail Spangenberg <gspangenberg@caalusa.org>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-FAMILY:1544] New CAAL publication on EFF
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii" ; format="flowed"
Status: O
Content-Length: 1376
Lines: 31

May 12, 2003 -- New York, NY -- The Council for Advancement of Adult
Literacy has released a new publication, titled Equipped for the
Future: Tools & Standards for Building & Assessing Quality Adult
Literacy Programs. Written by Gail Spangenberg and Sarah Watson --
the publication reviews the developmental history of EFF and
discusses its accomplishments, implementation, and work in progress.
Some 16 experienced national, state, and local EFF users were
interviewed for the publication. Their responses and the questions
posed make up the main body of the new work.

A Foreword to the publication notes that one of CAAL's founding
purposes is to promote more effective policy, practice, and resource
development at the state level. "In keeping with that broad
purpose," the Foreword says, "this publication tells a remarkable
story, about Equipped for the Future -- a singularly important
resource developed by the National Institute for Lteracy that can be
tremendously beneficial to states wanting to improve the
effectiveness of their adult literacy services."

The document can be downloaded from the CAAL website at
http://www.caalusa.org. At the home page, scroll down the left
column and click on the applicable title.
--

Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy
1221 Avenue of the Americas - 50th Floor
New York, NY 10020
212-512-2363

---Example 3---

From: *PTrnka@aol.com*
Date: Tue Jun 02 1998 - 20:13:20 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov
(8.9.0.Beta5/8.9.0.Beta5/980425bjb) with SMTP id UAA22770; Tue, 2 Jun 1998 20:13:20 -
0400 (EDT)
Date: Tue, 2 Jun 1998 20:13:20 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <a454c94.3574943c@aol.com>
Errors-To: azaheer@famlit.org
Reply-To: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: PTrnka@aol.com
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-family@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-FAMILY:1564] Children's Literature and Parents
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
X-Mailer: AOL 3.0 16-bit for Windows sub 86
Content-transfer-encoding: 7bit
Content-type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII

I am helping do develop a component to our Family Literacy program and could
use some help. Part of our Family Literacy program includes a children's
literature piece where we introduce children's literature to the parents. We
focus on the genre of the literature and the reading strategies that can be
used; plus we also attempt to use the stories as a springboard for parent
discussions. The goal is to get parents excited and comfortable with
children's books, which, hopefully, will result in parents reading more to
their children. We have used (and loved) the Family Read materials (New
Readers Press) and to some degree the MotherRead/FatherRead program.

Next year our program will be expanding :-) and have several families that
will continue to use the program. We have exhausted the materials in Family
Read and find the MotherRead program lacking. I would like ideas on where I
can get information on bringing children literature to the parents or what
other programs are out there. Does any one have ideas on where I can look?
Or have any of you included a component like this to your family literacy
program?

Thanks,
Pat Adams
St. Francis ISD 15
Adult Basic Education
padams@ties.k12.mn.us or
ptrnka@aol.com

---Example 4---

From: Daphne Greenberg (*ALCDGG@langate.gsu.edu*)
Date: Mon Aug 21 2000 - 09:28:53 EDT

Return-Path: <nifl-womenlit@literacy.nifl.gov>
Received: from literacy (localhost [127.0.0.1]) by literacy.nifl.gov (8.10.2/8.10.2) with SMTP id e7LDSr815234; Mon, 21 Aug 2000 09:28:53 -0400 (EDT)
Date: Mon, 21 Aug 2000 09:28:53 -0400 (EDT)
Message-Id: <s9a0f732.012@langate.gsu.edu>
Errors-To: alcrsb@langate.gsu.edu
Reply-To: nifl-womenlit@literacy.nifl.gov
Originator: nifl-womenlit@literacy.nifl.gov
Sender: nifl-womenlit@literacy.nifl.gov
Precedence: bulk
From: "Daphne Greenberg" <ALCDGG@langate.gsu.edu>
To: Multiple recipients of list <nifl-womenlit@literacy.nifl.gov>
Subject: [NIFL-WOMENLIT:932] New issue of Focus on Basics
X-Listprocessor-Version: 6.0c -- ListProcessor by Anastasios Kotsikonas
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 8bit
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII
X-Mailer: Novell GroupWise Internet Agent 5.5.3.1
Status: O
Content-Length: 2700
Lines: 25

I have been asked to pass this along:
The new issue of Focus on Basics, Volume 4, Issue B, is now available on the NCSALL web site <http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~ncsall>.
The printed copies will be mailed this week.
The topic of the issue is mathematics instruction.
Mary Jane Schmitt makes an eloquent argument in the cover article for change in the nature of mathematics instruction.
To help math teachers develop a theoretical background for their instructional choices, mathematics teacher and researcher Kathy
Safford provides an overview of current theories in math education, and a few steps that teachers can follow to deepen their knowledge.
Learning disabilities specialist Rochelle Kenyon describes dyscalculia, a learning disability specific to math, and provides strategies for mathematics teachers to use when working with learning-disabled math students, whether the disabilities be
dyscalculia or reading-related. In addition, she provides a list of resources from which to learn more. Linda Huntington, who teaches learning-disabled math students, and Catherine Cantrell, a technology specialist and staff developer, work with learners who are at opposite ends of the educational spectrum.
Regardless of the differences in their students' abilities, the same theme emerges in these teachers' accounts of their classrooms: Math

must be relevant. Lessons should be developed around math that springs from the learners' lives. Adult basic education learners around the world want relevant math content. Aydin Durgunoglu and Banu Oney did research on the impact

participation in a basic education program in Istanbul, Turkey, had on learners. They found that learners had strong emotional reactions to

learning mathematics skills that helped them make sense of the world.

Those interested in improving their instruction -- but struggling with how to do so --- will find ideas in the article by the Mathematics Education Group (MEG) of New York City. MEG works from the theory that adult basic education teachers --- most of whom, it is safe to say, do not have advanced training in mathematics --- need improved knowledge of math as well as a progressive instructional approach. Their model for teacher education is one that should be replicated in communities across the country.

We hope that this issue of Focus on Basics proves to be a useful introductory resource for those committed to change in mathematics instruction for learners at all levels of ability.

****

Barbara Garner   phone (617) 482-9485
World Education   fax   (617) 482-0617
44 Farnsworth Street   e-mail bgarner@worlded.org
Boston, MA 02210-1211

A.7 Impact Analysis: Definition of Attributes

In reviewing individual postings, the five attributes were used to classify the content:

- Type of Communication in Post
- Subject of Post
- Primary Aspect
- Primary Aspect
- Degree of Impact

A controlled vocabulary was developed for each of these attributes. We emphasize that this work was exploratory in nature. Consistent with the exploratory nature of this text analysis, the reader will notice that for the "Subject of Post" attribute, we leaned toward being more inclusive on the development of the controlled vocabulary for the content.

I. Type of Communication in Post

Not Relevant to Discussion List
Administering Discussion List
Introducing Self
Introducing/Networking Others
Requesting Help or Information
Responding to Request for Help or Information
Initiating Discussion of a Topic
Participating in Discussion of a Topic
Announcing Offline Group Meeting or Conference
Planning/Preparing for Offline Group Meeting or Conference
Reporting on Offline Group Meeting or Conference
Planning/Initiating Offline Interaction by Individuals
Reporting on Offline Interaction by Individuals
Announcing Publication of Book, Article, etc.
Advocacy
Announcing Program
Cross-posting
Announcement

II. Subject of Post

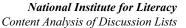Not Relevant to Discussion List
Practices
Political Events

Legislation, Bill or Law
Occupation/Activity of Poster or Poster's Organization
Practitioner Training

Funding, Finances, Budgets

Literacy Software

Literacy Resources

Terminology usage.

Literacy Event

Program Evaluation Activities

Censorship of Discussion List

Grant Competition Program

Discussion List Welcome Message

Research

contact information

Student and Teacher Relationships

Discussion List Management

Program Operations

Social Identities

Philosophy of literacy

Funds

Language loss

Word spellings

Cultural Contexts in Teachings

ESL Certification

Phonics and Whole Language

ESL for Non-Residents

Student Status

Census

Literacy Tests

Test Statistics

ESL Job Postings

Lesson Plans

Citizenship Preparation

Survey

Curriculum

Multilingualism

Language Interference

Teaching Immigrants

Importance of Good Teachers

Learning Disabilities in the adult ESL Learner

Phonetics and Second Language Learning

Stereotyping

Language Dialects

Phonetics

Health Literacy

Open Enrollment

Language Learning

Grammar

Reading Level of Public Resources for Terrorist Attack

Democratic Rights in the Classroom

Bogus TEFL Certification

English Only

Reading Exercise

Community Involvement

Staff Diversity in ABE ESOL Programs

Word Definitions

Fall Introduction

AELS programs

Literacy Programs

Women and Reading

Metaphors

Literacy and Liberation

Knowledge of Countries

Immigrants

Privileged Woman

High School Aged Latinas

Definition of Literacy and Labels

Literacy Class Discussions of Current U.S. Policies

Family Literacy and Sexual Orientation

Literacy and Poverty

First Language Fluency

Name of Center Change

Domestic Violence and Male Learners

ADHD

Prison Literacy Programs

Disabilities

Technology

Family Learning

Youth in Adult Education Programs

Bookmarks

Distance Learning

Arts

Literacy Jobs

Thursday Notes

Barriers to Family Literacy

Family Literacy

Reaching Children in At-Risk Environments

Public Education Network Weekly NewsBlast

Even Start

Teacher Observations

NIFL News Letter

Head Start - Male Literacy Involvement Program

III. Primary Aspect

Not Relevant to Discussion List

Professional Development

Pedagogy

Program Operation

Information Access/Sharing

Policy

Event A

Censorship

Discussion List Management

Advocacy

Assessment

IV. Type of Impact

Not Relevant to Discussion List

Retention Rates

Community Building

Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)

Cannot be determined

Policy Change

V. Degree of Impact

Not Relevant to Discussion List

Strong

Secondary

Weak

Unknown - needs more study

A.8   Impact Analysis: Attribute Frequencies

This appendix presents three tables, one each for the DLs that were used for a three percent sample analysis. The DLs examined and the number of postings contained in the sample are:

■   ESL: 278

■   Family: 148

■   WomenLit: 84

Each table is presents the frequency (or count) of each of the possible selections associated with the five attributes used to categorize the information in the posting. These attributes are:

■   Type of Communication in Post

■   Subject of Post

■   Primary Aspect

■   Primary Aspect

■   Degree of Impact

English as a Second Language (ESL)		
Type of Communication in Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Participating in Discussion of a Topic	114	41.0%
Responding to Request for Help or Information	57	20.5%
Requesting Help or Information	35	12.6%
Announcement	29	10.4%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	6.8%
Initiating Discussion of a Topic	10	3.6%
Administering Discussion List	8	2.9%
Cross-posting	6	2.2%
Subject of Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Literacy Resources	71	25.5%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	49	17.6%
Practices	24	8.6%
Discussion List Management	14	5.0%
Literacy Event	11	4.0%
Literacy Tests	11	4.0%
Literacy Software	9	3.2%
Phonetics	6	2.2%
Practitioner Training	5	1.8%
Program Operations	5	1.8%

English as a Second Language (ESL)		
Citizenship Preparation	5	1.8%
Terminology usage.	4	1.4%
Program Evaluation Activities	4	1.4%
Grammar	4	1.4%
Legislation, Bill or Law	3	1.1%
Curriculum	3	1.1%
Censorship of Discussion List	2	0.7%
contact information	2	0.7%
Social Identities	2	0.7%
Word spellings	2	0.7%
Cultural Contexts in Teachings	2	0.7%
Phonics and Whole Language	2	0.7%
ESL for Non-Residents	2	0.7%
Lesson Plans	2	0.7%
Teaching Immigrants	2	0.7%
Learning Disabilities in the adult ESL Learner	2	0.7%
Reading Level of Public Resources for Terrorist Attack	2	0.7%
English Only	2	0.7%
Political Events	1	0.4%
Grant Competition Program	1	0.4%
Research	1	0.4%
Student and Teacher Relationships	1	0.4%
Philosophy of literacy	1	0.4%
Funds	1	0.4%
ESL Certification	1	0.4%
Student Status	1	0.4%
Census	1	0.4%
Test Statistics	1	0.4%
ESL Job Postings	1	0.4%
Survey	1	0.4%
Multilingualism	1	0.4%
Language Interference	1	0.4%
Importance of Good Teachers	1	0.4%
Phonetics and Second Language Learning	1	0.4%
Stereotyping	1	0.4%
Language Dialects	1	0.4%
Health Literacy	1	0.4%
Open Enrollment	1	0.4%
Language Learning	1	0.4%
Democratic Rights in the Classroom	1	0.4%
Bogus TEFL Certification	1	0.4%
Reading Exercise	1	0.4%
Community Involvement	1	0.4%

English as a Second Language (ESL)		
Staff Diversity in ABE ESOL Programs	1	0.4%
Primary Aspect	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Information Access/Sharing	127	45.7%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	51	18.3%
Pedagogy	26	9.4%
Program Operation	20	7.2%
Discussion List Management	16	5.8%
Assessment	16	5.8%
Professional Development	11	4.0%
Policy	8	2.9%
Censorship	2	0.7%
Advocacy	1	0.4%
Type of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	214	77.0%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	51	18.3%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	5	1.8%
Community Building	4	1.4%
Policy Change	4	1.4%
Degree of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	227	81.7%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	51	18.3%

Family Literacy		
Type of Communication in Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Participating in Discussion of a Topic	40	27.0%
Announcement	35	23.6%
Responding to Request for Help or Information	24	16.2%
Requesting Help or Information	23	15.5%
Administering Discussion List	9	6.1%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	6	4.1%
Cross-posting	4	2.7%
Initiating Discussion of a Topic	3	2.0%
Introducing Self	2	1.4%
Introducing/Networking Others	2	1.4%
Subject of Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Literacy Resources	45	30.4%
Practices	10	6.8%

Family Literacy		
Literacy Event	9	6.1%
Discussion List Management	9	6.1%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Program Evaluation Activities	5	3.4%
Program Operations	5	3.4%
Legislation, Bill or Law	4	2.7%
Occupation/Activity of Poster or Poster's Organization	4	2.7%
Literacy Software	4	2.7%
Grant Competition Program	4	2.7%
Even Start	4	2.7%
Funding, Finances, Budgets	3	2.0%
Research	3	2.0%
Family Learning	3	2.0%
Thursday Notes	3	2.0%
Censorship of Discussion List	2	1.4%
contact information	2	1.4%
Word Definitions	2	1.4%
Literacy Jobs	2	1.4%
Barriers to Family Literacy	2	1.4%
Family Literacy	2	1.4%
Public Education Network Weekly NewsBlast	2	1.4%
Curriculum	1	0.7%
Fall Introduction	1	0.7%
Technology	1	0.7%
Youth in Adult Education Programs	1	0.7%
Bookmarks	1	0.7%
Distance Learning	1	0.7%
Arts	1	0.7%
Reaching Children in At-Risk Environments	1	0.7%
Teacher Observations	1	0.7%
NIFL News Letter	1	0.7%
Head Start - Male Literacy Involvement Program	1	0.7%
Primary Aspect	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Information Access/Sharing	90	60.8%
Program Operation	12	8.1%
Discussion List Management	11	7.4%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Professional Development	8	5.4%
Pedagogy	8	5.4%
Advocacy	4	2.7%
Assessment	3	2.0%
Policy	2	1.4%

Family Literacy		
Censorship	2	1.4%
Type of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	115	77.7%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	16	10.8%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Policy Change	6	4.1%
Community Building	3	2.0%
Degree of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	134	90.5%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	8	5.4%
Strong	4	2.7%
Secondary	1	0.7%
Weak	1	0.7%

Women & Literacy (WomenLit)		
Type of Communication in Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Participating in Discussion of a Topic	40	47.6%
Announcement	18	21.4%
Responding to Request for Help or Information	7	8.3%
Requesting Help or Information	5	6.0%
Administering Discussion List	4	4.8%
Cross-posting	4	4.8%
Initiating Discussion of a Topic	3	3.6%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	2	2.4%
Planning/Preparing for Offline Group Meeting or Conference	1	1.2%
Subject of Post	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Literacy Resources	18	21.4%
Research	8	9.5%
Literacy Event	5	6.0%
Practices	4	4.8%
Terminology usage.	2	2.4%
Discussion List Management	2	2.4%
Survey	2	2.4%
Metaphors	2	2.4%
Occupation/Activity of Poster or Poster's Organization	1	1.2%
Grant Competition Program	1	1.2%
Discussion List Welcome Message	1	1.2%

Women & Literacy (WomenLit)		
contact information	1	1.2%
Program Operations	1	1.2%
Literacy Programs	1	1.2%
Women and Reading	1	1.2%
Literacy and Liberation	1	1.2%
Knowledge of Countries	1	1.2%
Immigrants	1	1.2%
Privileged Woman	1	1.2%
High School Aged Latinas	1	1.2%
Definition of Literacy and Labels	1	1.2%
Literacy Class Discussions of Current U.S. Policies	1	1.2%
Family Literacy and Sexual Orientation	1	1.2%
Literacy and Poverty	1	1.2%
First Language Fluency	1	1.2%
Name of Center Change	1	1.2%
Domestic Violence and Male Learners	1	1.2%
ADHD	1	1.2%
Prison Literacy Programs	1	1.2%
Disabilities	1	1.2%
Primary Aspect	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Information Access/Sharing	52	61.9%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Pedagogy	4	4.8%
Program Operation	4	4.8%
Discussion List Management	3	3.6%
Professional Development	2	2.4%
Type of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Cannot be determined	62	73.8%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%
Program Effectiveness (performance outcomes)	2	2.4%
Community Building	1	1.2%
Degree of Impact	**Freq**	**Percent of Total**
Unknown - needs more study	65	77.4%
Not Relevant to Discussion List	19	22.6%

Appendix E

_____

LINCS Discussion List Study
- Tables
- *LINCS Discussion Lists Moderators'*
  Interviews – March 2005:
  Summary Report

Appendix E. LINCS Discussion Lists Study

Table 1. What profession or occupation is closest to your own?

Profession/Occupation	Respondents (n=86)
Program direct/manager/coordinator	37%
Teacher/tutor	13%
High school/college/grad student	11%
State admin/manager	11%
Trainer/TA provider	9%
Social services provider	7%
College/university educator	2%

Table 2. Are you affiliated with an ABE program?

Affiliated with an ABE Program	Respondents (n=82)
Yes	52%
No	48%

Table 3. If you are not affiliated with an ABE program, which of the organizations is closest to the one in which your Adult Basic Education program is housed?

Other Affiliations	Respondents (n=47)
Other	28%
Federal or state government agency	17%
National literacy organization	15%
State literacy resource center	15%
Four-year college	13%
Consulting firm	11%
National professional organization	2%

Table 4. How long have you been formally or professionally involved in the adult education/literacy field?

Involvement in Adult Education	Respondents (n=85)
16 years or more	34%
5 years or less	25%
11-15 years	22%
6-10 years	15%
Not professionally involved	4%

Table 5. What were your reasons for subscribing to a Discussion List?

Reason	n	A lot	Somewhat	Not at all
Keep informed of developments	123	71%	28%	1%
Strengthen subject knowledge/skills to improve instruction	121	65%	28%	7%
Learn about instructional programs	120	51%	45%	4%
Keep informed of professional events/opportunities	121	40%	51%	9%
Network with colleagues	124	40%	45%	15%
Discuss critical issues relevant	122	41%	48%	11%
Learn about legislation and discuss policy	123	32%	48%	20%

Table 6. How often do you visit the Discussion List Archives?

Frequency of Visit	Often or Occasionally (n=112)
Occasionally	45%
Often	39%
Seldom	11%
Never	5%

Table 7. If you visited the Archives, how often did you visit to:

Purpose	n	Often or Occasionally
Find info on a particular subject	71	37%
View a particular message thread	63	24%
Reference an earlier message that I received	65	22%
View messages/seek information from lists to which you were not subscribed	68	16%
Find messages from specific author	66	15%
Find messages from specific date or time period	64	9%

Table 8. How did you hear about the LINCS Discussion Lists?

Source of Awareness of Discussion Lists	Respondents (n=123)
LINCS website/written materials	29%
Friend or colleague	20%
Conference, workshop, other professional development activity	12%
Other	11%
Internet search	9%
State of local education agency	9%
Professional literacy organization	7%
Another discussion list	2%
Literacy newsletter	1%

Table 9. How long have you been a subscriber to the LINCS Discussion Lists?

Length of Time Subscribed	Respondents (n=126)
1-3 years	42%
4-6 years	33%
7-9 years	10%
6-12 months	9%
1-6 months	6%

Table 10. Have you ever unsubscribed from a LINCS Discussion List?

Unsubscribed from a List	Respondents (n=112)
No	69%
Yes	31%

Table 11. Do you subscribe to any other discussion lists related to adult education/literacy?

Subscribe to Other Adult Education/Literacy Lists	Respondents (n=107)
Yes	52%
No	48%

Table 12. How frequently did you read messages posted to each list?

Name of Discussion List	n	Often	Never
Technology and Literacy	41	68%	32%
Adult Literacy Professional Developers	65	63%	22%
English as a Second Language	50	62%	16%
Equipped For the Future	50	52%	24%
Health and Diversity	53	51%	30%
Focus on Basics	45	47%	20%
Assessment	46	46%	24%
Family Literacy	41	46%	24%
Learning Disabilities	36	44%	36%
Workplace and Literacy	41	44%	32%
Women and Literacy	38	40%	34%
Poverty, Race, and Literacy	37	38%	38%
Program Leadership and Improvement	40	28%	38%
Homelessness and Literacy	21	10%	71%

Table 13. How frequently do you post messages to this list?

Frequency	Respondents (n=117)
Seldom	48%
Never	40%
Occasionally	7%
Often	5%

Table 14. If you have not posted messages to the list, why not?

Reason	Respondents (n=59)
No interest in posting	34%
Nothing to add	22%
Other	22%
Afraid to ask dumb questions	17%
No interest in content	5%

Table 15. Have you received responses to your postings?

	n	Respondents
Have not received responses to postings	24	42%
Received responses through list	15	26%
Received responses through list and privately	13	23%
Received responses privately	5	9%

Table 16: Please rate the effectiveness of the methods used by LINCS Discussion Lists moderators to facilitate discussion and manage the lists.

Moderator Activities	n	Not Effective	Effective	Somewhat Effective	Very Effective
Monitoring/screening messages	80	8%	26%	21%	45%
Posting questions, articles, other resources	84	2%	14%	53%	31%
Responding to subscribers' questions	79	3%	15%	54%	28%
Arranging for guest speakers	62	9%	21%	47%	23%
Dealing with inappropriate postings	74	8%	24%	46%	22%
Offering technical assistance to users of the list	66	9%	29%	41%	21%
Posting information about NIFL and LINCS	79	4%	19%	56%	21%
Sharing their own expertise and experience	83	6%	14%	59%	21%
Keeping/redirecting the focus of discussion on a topic	75	1%	28%	52%	19%
Providing guidance on list participation	82	6%	26%	52%	16%
Clarifying LINCS policies and procedures	72	6%	26%	53%	15%
Scheduling special list events	63	4%	21%	62%	13%

Table 17. How satisfactory is the content of the Discussion Lists?

Aspects of LINCS Discussion Lists	n	Not Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall value of the Discussion Lists to the adult education/literacy community	91	5%	12%	40%	43%
Moderating practices used to manage the lists	87	8%	19%	43%	30%
Usefulness of the message content to your job	91	5%	27%	40%	28%
Reliability of information	91	1%	20%	53%	26%
Relevance of the message content to instructional practice	82	4%	26%	47%	23%
Appropriateness of message content	92	4%	23%	52%	21%
Quality of the message content	91	3%	23%	53%	21%
Networking opportunities	79	9%	25%	46%	20%
Professional development opportunities	72	4%	28%	50%	18%
Content focus of discussions	90	12%	31%	40%	17%
Providing guidance on list participation	82	6%	26%	52%	16%
Activity level or frequency of messages	88	10%	21%	58%	11%
Mix of stakeholders represented on a list	84	13%	29%	48%	10%
Frequency of discussions between subscribers	87	9%	31%	52%	8%
Number of subscribers posting messages	83	16%	34%	44%	6%

Table 18. How effective are the LINCS guidelines and policies related to ensuring appropriate content and participation?

Frequency	Respondents (n=72)
Somewhat effective	56%
Effective	24%
Not effective	17%
Very effective	4%

5

Table 19. How clear is LINCS in defining what constitutes an advocacy or lobbying message posted on the site?

Frequency	Respondents (n=83)
Clear	35%
Somewhat clear	27%
Very clear	24%
Not clear	15%

Table 20. How frequently do you find what you are looking for on the LINCS Discussion Lists?

Frequency	Respondents (n=92)
Most of the time	41%
Occasionally	39%
Always	10%
Never	10%

Table 21. If you don't find what you are looking for, where do you go next?

Source	Respondents (n=49)
Internet search	41%
Other parts of LINCS website	20%
Other websites	20%
Friend or colleague	6%
Professional literacy organization	2%
Another discussion list	4%
Professional books or journals	4%
Other	2%

Table 22: To what extent do these activities contribute to the field of adult education/literacy?

Activities	n	Respondents
Materials/resources on LINCS	110	90%
LINCS discussion lists	44	38%
Other LINCS related activities	19	35%
LINCS presentations at conferences	39	34%
LINCS-sponsored workshops	30	27%
Online courses	22	20%
One-on-one technical assistance from LINCS staff	20	18%

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Table 23. How often have the following aspects of LINCS contributed to your professional skills and knowledge?

Contribution to Professional Skills/Knowledge	n=	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
LINCS discussion lists	281	12%	5%	16%	67%
Materials/resources	305	6%	13%	72%	9%
Other LINCS-related activities	133	3%	3%	22%	72%
LINCS-sponsored workshops	275	1%	2%	25%	72%
Online courses on LINCS	277	1%	3%	14%	82%
Technical assistance from LINCS staff	273	1%	3%	11%	85%
LINCS presentations at conferences	277	1%	2%	32%	65%

Table 24. Rate the usefulness of the LINCS Discussion Lists for each content area.

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Not Useful	Somewhat Useful	Useful	Very Useful
Hearing from experts in the field	98	6%	25%	23%	46%
Knowledge about adult learners	97	6%	20%	33%	41%
Classroom curriculum and instructional practice	90	4%	26%	30%	40%
Web-based and other types of classroom resources	92	3%	24%	37%	36%
Research findings and reports	97	4%	32%	32%	32%
Networking opportunities to share expertise/experiences.	92	9%	31%	30%	30%
Assessment tools	86	6%	37%	28%	29%
News and announcements	94	5%	34%	34%	27%
Legislation and policy information	90	10%	32%	33%	24%
Grants and funding opportunities	90	18%	32%	29%	21%
Program info and available services	88	12%	32%	35%	21%
Professional development opportunities	88	8%	43%	29%	19%
Professional organization and agency info	89	10%	42%	37%	11%
Job opportunities	73	40%	34%	19%	7%

Table 25. How important are discussion lists in general to improving instructional practice in the adult education/literacy field?

Frequency	Respondents (n=84)
Very important	43%
Important	32%
Somewhat important	20%
Not important	5%

Table 26: To what extent has your participation in the LINCS discussion lists contributed to your professional knowledge?

Aspects of Professional Knowledge	n	A lot	Somewhat	Not at all
Current news and activities	84	43%	49%	8%
People in the field you can contact	82	38%	54%	8%
Research studies	86	34%	60%	6%
Content or subject matter	89	32%	63%	5%
Instructional methods/practice	85	28%	62%	9%
Literacy organizations/agencies	82	22%	71%	7%

Table 27. To what extent has participation in the Discussion Lists contributed to your professional practice?

Aspects of Adult Education/Literacy Knowledge	n	A lot	Somewhat	Not at all
Other	142	100%		
Program planning	71	32%	45%	23%
Teaching and instruction	74	24%	68%	8%
Application of technology	69	22%	62%	16%
Assessment	72	22%	63%	15%
Networking with colleagues	77	22%	58%	20%
Research projects	72	22%	60%	18%
Participation in professional development	71	20%	53%	27%
Admin or management	62	19%	60%	21%
Counseling or guidance	60	7%	58%	35%

Table 28. How would discontinuing LINCS Discussion Lists create information or experiential gaps for the adult education/literacy field?

Possible Gaps	n	No Gap	Some Gap	Significant Gap
Other	12	25	17	58
Opportunities for networking with colleagues	81	16	31	53
Opportunities for professional development	82	14	43	43
Improvement of instructional practice	82	7	38	55
Development of content knowledge	82	6	40	54

Table 29. How do the LINCS Discussion Lists compare to other lists?

	LINCS DLs	n=	Other DLs	n=
"Often" read messages posted to lists	46%	43	72%	67
"Often"post messages to lists	5%	117	17%	64

Table 30. How much overlap or duplication do you see between the LINCS Discussion Lists and this other list?

Frequency	Respondents (n=64)
Occasionally	50%
Often	48%
Seldom	2%

Table 31. How useful are the LINCS Discussion Lists compared to this other list?

Frequency	Respondents (n=62)
Often	58%
Occasionally	27%
Seldom	15%

Table 32. Is National Institute for Literacy the most appropriate organization for providing discussion lists for adult education/literacy community?

Frequency	Respondents (n=75)
Yes	87%
No	13%

LINCS Discussion Lists Moderators' Interviews – March 2005

Summary Report

Background

The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) is a multi-faceted organization whose activities include, among others, "bringing technology to the literacy field through [the **L**iteracy **I**nformation a**N**d **C**ommunication **S**ystem (LINCS)], a state-of-the-art Internet-based information and communication system. LINCS operates through a network of partners nationwide to provide a single point of access to a broad array of literacy-related information and public discussion lists as well as technology training opportunities." (http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/about_nifl.html#primary) NIFL first created the Discussion Lists as a component of LINCS in 1995 to link research, practice, and the adult education community by providing a means for literacy stakeholders to discuss critical issues in the literacy field, share resources, ask questions of experts in the field, and keep abreast of current information. The LINCS Discussion Lists are subscription-based, email lists. Each LINCS Discussion List is moderated by a national organization with expertise in the topic area. Subscribers from across the nation and as far away as the United Kingdom and Australia use their email accounts to receive and post messages. The posted messages are archived on the LINCS website and serve as an information resource for non-subscribers to view. The 13 current public discussion lists in the LINCS network are open to anyone and currently reach more than 6,400 subscribers. The current Discussion Lists and their moderators are:

Adult Literacy Professional Developers (AALPD)	Jackie Taylor, Program Coordinator, Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee.
Assessment	Marie Cora, ABE Consultant
Equipped for the Future (4-EFF)	Meta Potts, Family Literacy Specialist
English as a Second Language (ESL)	Lynda Terrill, Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA)
Family Literacy	Debbie Nichols, Director of Outreach Services, National Center for Family Literacy, Louisville, KY
Focus on Basics	Barbara Garner, Editor, Focus on Basics and Director of Publications for National Center for the Study of Adult Learning (NCSALL)
Health & Literacy	Deborah Yoho, Director of the Greater Columbia

	Literacy Council, South Carolina
Learning Disabilities	Dr. Rochelle Kenyon, Consultant/Trainer, 21st Century Creating Consulting, Inc. and Florida Human Resources Development, Inc.
Poverty, Race & Literacy	Mary Ann Corley, American Institutes for Research, Washington, DC
Program Leadership & Improvement	Kim Chaney-Bay, Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee
Technology & Literacy	Mariann Fedele, Coordinator, Professional Development, Literacy Assistance Center, New York, NY
Women & Literacy	Daphne Greenberg, Center for the Study of Adult Literacy, Atlanta, GA
Workplace Literacy	Donna Brian, Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee

Comprehensive Review and Analysis

NIFL contracted with RMC Research Corporation (RMC) to conduct a Comprehensive Review and Analysis of LINCS. One component of this Review and Analysis includes taking a close look at the Discussion Lists. An interim report based on a summary of the interviews with four of the 13 Discussion List moderators, as well as other data, was completed in December 2003. The findings of this interim report provided preliminary data for the overall review of the Discussion Lists and helped refine the design and implementation of the long-term data collection plan for all 13 of the LINCS Discussion Lists.

Review Design - Telephone Interviews of Discussion Lists Moderators

The long-term plan for the review of the Discussion Lists includes, among other strategies, telephone interviews with all 13 of the Discussion Lists moderators. RMC developed a pool of questions and drafted an interview questionnaire based on feedback from the preliminary study, a review of the LINCS online Discussion List website pages, and discussion with NIFL administrative staff. The draft instrument was field-tested internally with staff and reviewed by NIFL administrative staff, addressing such issues as instrument clarity, content, and relevance. The questions were designed to determine moderators' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, NIFL monitoring and operational procedures, quality of postings, and value of

this communication network to the field of adult literacy. The interview questions were then submitted, along with other data collection documents, to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for approval, which was given November 30, 2004. A copy of the Protocol for the DL Moderator Telephone Interview is attached, in Appendix A.

RMC professional staff contacted the moderators by telephone and email to (a) inform them of the study, (b) describe the estimated burden that participation in the study would require, (c) request their cooperation, and (d) schedule a time and date for the interview. Structured telephone interviews were conducted during March 2005, ranging in length from 30 to 90 minutes. Interviewers took written notes to record responses at the time of the interview and later transcribed their notes using the interview questionnaire as a transcription template.

Profile of Moderators

According to NIFL, moderators are selected based on qualifications such as a working knowledge of the field, knowledge of policy developments and how they relate to practice, awareness of current needs and interests in the field and strategies for assessing them, creativity, knowledge of other relevant e-lists for cross-posting information, and ability and willingness to communicate effectively on the list and through individual exchanges via e-mail or telephone.

Two of the current moderators are the original moderators for their Discussion Lists. They created the topics for their Discussion Lists (Women's Literacy and Poverty, Race and Literacy) and requested permission to become part of the NIFL LINCS Discussion Lists group. NIFL staff or previous moderators recruited the other current moderators, four of whom are relatively new at moderating, having come to the position last Fall.

One Discussion List--Health and Literacy--originally used co-moderators, one health expert and one literacy expert. However, when the literacy co-moderator left the position, the health moderator was not successful in filling the (unpaid) position with a qualified individual. Because she has a background in both the health and literacy fields, she has taken on the role of sole moderator for the Discussion List for the past three years.

Generally the moderators are unpaid volunteers, although some of them are compensated either because they facilitate a Discussion List that is fully moderated and/or through other work for NIFL such as serving as a Special Collection Director. Four of the Discussion List moderators are also Directors for Special Collections in the special content area: Assessment, Health and Literacy, Program Literacy and Improvement, and Workforce Education. There are two fully moderated Discussion Lists—Workplace Literacy (as of March 2004) and Program Leadership and Improvement (fully moderated from the beginning).

Training

Only one moderator indicated she had received formal training for her role as a moderator; she reported that four different people contacted her and provided information both in writing and discussion. The ones who have been moderators from the beginning felt that they had created their own training as they started up the Discussion Lists. The relatively new moderators reported being trained (if at all) by their predecessors and from having been subscribers previously. Three of the moderators have previous experience at moderating discussion lists, which helped them to become comfortable in their role as a Discussion List moderator.

The moderators reported that, when Jaleh Behroozi was still with NIFL, there was ongoing training support through regular meetings, monthly by phone and yearly in person, and Jaleh was always available by phone or email at any time. However, since Jaleh left, there has been little formal support from NIFL. Mary Jo Maralit helps when she can be reached, but she is extremely busy. Connie Harich, an independent contractor for technical assistance with NIFL, was praised by all of the moderators for her on-going support with technical problems such as viruses and spam filters. If the moderators have questions not related to technology, they generally turn to other moderators or colleagues within their own offices. The "Mod Squad"—a consortium of all of the moderators, meeting regularly through email, phone, and occasionally in person--is the most valuable ongoing support, according to the interviewees.

The moderators would like to have the yearly meetings reinstated, because they feel a face-to-face discussion with other moderators and the NIFL staff would be extremely helpful in getting to the crux of certain issues, especially those surrounding "inappropriate messages", one area in which they feel strongly that they are receiving inadequate support from NIFL.

Moderator Roles and Responsibilities

Mostly, the moderators say, their understanding of their responsibilities has come from discussion with other moderators through the Mod Squad, even while they are aware of their roles and responsibilities as set forth in the NIFL's Handbook. According to this 2003 Draft Handbook (http://www.nifl.gov/lincs_dlms/contents.html), a moderator's role and responsibilities are:

- Develop and post electronic list (e-list, electronic forum, "listserv") rules, guidelines or "netiquette" for participation/response as soon as possible. Revise over time as needed;

- Identify relevant, accurate, current, and comprehensive information to post to the e-list;

- Stimulate discussion;

- Provide technical assistance to list subscribers, including assisting in subscribing to and un-subscribing from the list;

- Deal effectively with subscribers whose postings violate the list rules; for example, contact participants privately to explain why a message has not been posted, or to reiterate or explain list rules or "netiquette;"

- Refer e-list subscribers to other e-lists which may be of interest;

- Arrange for and advertise the participation of "guest speakers;" and

- Identify an alternate or substitute moderator for times when the moderator cannot carry out these responsibilities (e.g., away from the office, on vacation, etc.).

The moderators who have been with the Discussion Lists for some time agree that these Handbook requirements (one moderator prefers to think of them as "expectations" rather than "requirements") have changed since 2003; they are in constant flux. At every LINCS meeting,

there have been discussions regarding ways to improve the Discussion Lists, including full moderation of all Discussion Lists, more guest speakers, a quarterly report to record their activities on a regular basis, and the major difference, the new emphasis on controlling the content, i.e., censoring advocacy issues from the discussions.

While the moderators agree that the responsibilities listed in the Handbook are theirs, they do not necessarily view them in that order of importance. They identify their primary purpose as providing professional development in the form of:

(1) providing to their subscribers good, accurate and up-to-date information, including:
      (a) announcements of upcoming conferences and meetings,
      (b) instructional course opportunities, and
      (c) newly released research findings and reports, and
(2) creating an environment for people to network by initiating stimulating, lively discussions on relevant topics.

This latter role was seen as an important one. They point out that the adult educator often works in an isolated existence compared to public school educators, for example, who interact face-to-face on a daily basis at a central location. Through the Discussion Lists, these adult educators can connect with other professionals in their field and can get feedback and answers to questions from experts. One moderator likens the experience of the Discussion Lists as one in which policymakers, adult educators, adult education advocates, and researchers can get together on an as-needed basis rather than wait for a conference to network with other professionals in the field.

One moderator indicates that availability – always being in touch (even when traveling), always being immediately responsive to the needs of the subscribers - is a must. Others stress the expectations on them to create topics of interest, facilitate robust discussions, and provide guest moderators for expanded opportunities for discussion.

Techniques they have used to facilitate stimulating discussions include:

- Subscribing to e-newsletters for current information to post

- Polling subscribers to learn what topics they are most interested in, and responding accordingly

- Inviting guest participants

- Pretending to be naïve so people will elaborate more

- Posting controversial questions (although this is harder now, due to new guidelines for inappropriate messages)

They believe their efforts in moderating their Discussion Lists have been effective, based on feedback "off-line" through personal emails or individual contact such as at workshops and conferences. One moderator noted that simply the fact that the Discussion Lists have been quite active for such a long period of time proves that they are effective and are meeting the needs of the adult education community.

They all agree that the biggest challenge they face is the lobbying/advocacy issue. A number of them believe many of their subscribers are afraid to post because of the threat of censorship. Other challenges the moderators face include:

- Lack of participation
    - lurkers who won't speak up
    - off-list questions from subscribers who won't post online
    - subscribers who don't want to discuss; they just want information
- time (especially the unpaid volunteers)
    - to find resources
    - to find guest speakers
    - to stimulate conversations
- remaining energized and enthusiastic

General Monitoring and Operational Procedures

Operational procedures related to the LINCS discussion lists are defined in its moderators'
materials (http://www.nifl.gov/lincs_dlms/contents.html). NIFL provides its moderators with tips
and troubleshooting guidelines for operating and monitoring their discussion lists. The moderators
themselves, however, do not believe the policies and procedures are clearly stated, although they
understand NIFL is working on the problem (one of the moderators is participating in the re-
writing of the guidelines).

Specific Procedures for Monitoring Inappropriate Messages

The moderators are divided on the issue of whether NIFL _clearly defines_ what constitutes an
"advocacy" or "lobbying" message. The moderators generally agree that "lobbying" is clearly
defined, but, as one moderator put it, "NIFL is not clear about what [advocacy] means, and their
lack of clarity sends mixed messages. If they don't want advocacy specifically around
legislation, then they need to say so in the guidelines." Another moderator goes further to say
that NIFL is not clear within itself what the law allows and does not allow; every time a
subscriber or moderator questions a censorship issue, NIFL says they have to check with their
attorney before answering, and then they never respond. The closest clarification of NIFL's
policy, according to one moderator, was in a conference call with Sandra Baxter in which she
indicated it was similar to a filter, that NIFL decides whether or not it is lobbying, depending on
the issue and timing.

The moderators believe there is a fine line between advocacy and free speech.
One moderator commented, "Everything one says, to some degree, is advocating. It can be a
broad term (e.g., advocating for my students) or narrow (e.g., advocating for policy)." They
believe that the subscribers also want more clarification; without that, many hesitate to
participate actively in the discussions. One moderator suggested a strategy to explain the issue
more fully would be to simply provide specific examples to the subscribers as to what is and is
not allowable.

The moderators believe the Discussion List guidelines and actions on advocacy or lobbying
messages, including monitoring and enforcement, are working as far as their roles as moderators

are concerned. All of them actively watch for "inappropriate" messages (as they can distinguish them) and respond according to what they believe to be NIFL's guidelines. They are also aware that certain messages have been removed from the archives as being "inappropriate", as part of NIFL's policy for oversight of the Discussion Lists.

Since there are so relatively few inappropriate messages, however, the moderators do not see this issue as a big problem. Only three moderators reported truly "inappropriate" messages on their Discussion Lists, and they reported 1 to 3 messages each that were totally unacceptable and which were never re-sent. One moderator said she has 2 to 3 a month which she reviews and sends back to the sender to be re-worked prior to posting, sometimes for some re-wording and sometimes just for minor changes such as formatting the message into "plain text" as per NIFL's guidelines for the Discussion Lists. One fully moderated Discussion List moderator reported the vacation "out of the office" messages are her only messages with which she must deal before releasing messages to the Discussion List.

Fully Moderated Lists

The apparent plan for all of the Discussion Lists to become fully moderated is of considerable concern to the moderators, especially considering the issue of censorship.

There are two fully moderated Discussion Lists currently—Workplace Literacy (as of March 2004) and Program Leadership and Improvement (fully moderated from the beginning)—and another scheduled to go to full moderation in the near future, but the moderators believe all of the Discussion Lists will become fully moderated eventually. They are not sure subscribers are aware that all of the Discussion Lists may become fully moderated and do not think subscribers will be happy about the changeover. A moderator of a fully moderated List indicated that she feels the decline in the number of messages on her Discussion List is directly tied to the fact that subscribers are concerned that they are being censored now that the Discussion List is fully moderated.

Most of the moderators whose Discussion Lists are not fully moderated indicated that they would not be willing or able to continue to be a moderator if/when this happens. Some indicated they would refuse the position because of the issue of censorship and the role they would need to play. One moderator was particularly concerned that not only would she have to serve as a censor, but also that NIFL would not explicitly direct her as to which resources, links, etc. could be posted and which could not.

Other moderators expressed their intention not to participate as moderators if their Discussion List becomes fully moderated due to time constraints. They remark that it would be very time-consuming to screen all messages. Indeed, those moderators whose Discussion Lists are fully moderated agree that it takes a great deal of time to review the messages, screen out inappropriate or commercial ones, send back those that are merely not formatted correctly (i.e., not in plain text), and to look for resources to post. Being a Special Collections director is a help, the moderators who are also Special Collections directors agree, with finding resources; there is a dual opportunity, to post the resource on the Special Collections and also post a message about it on the Discussion List, inviting their subscribers to examine the resource more closely by visiting the Special Collections.

One moderator brought up a technical aspect of full moderation: since some messages will take longer to review and approve than others, or moderators will not be monitoring the messages 24/7, the time stamp will be out of order. Another pointed out that her Discussion List "practically runs itself", with the subscribers volleying back and forth easily with little input from her; if every message had to be reviewed, it would definitely slow down the spontaneity of the discussions. And, since her Discussion List is not one that would prompt "inappropriate messages", she feels that each Discussion List should be evaluated individually as to whether or not it should be fully moderated.

On the counter-side of the issue of NIFL's complete control of posted messages through full moderation, one moderator questioned whether, since the resources would be reviewed and approved prior to being posted, would the filtered messages be viewed as having a stamp of

approval from NIFL and the federal government? She wonders whether there might not be some legal problems with this scenario.

The moderators believe that under the current Discussion Lists (not fully moderated) subscribers are free to post anything they want, although they may receive a reprimand after the fact. A number of them feel that this is the way the Discussion Lists should remain. They do not see a reason to move the Discussion Lists towards full moderation, since there have been relatively few incidences in the past. They feel it will do more harm than good to the Discussion Lists which, as one moderator put it, by definition, are open and free discussions among professionals in the field. Another moderator questioned why NIFL would move towards such a decision without first examining the evaluation data [from the Comprehensive Review and Analysis] to see if there really is a problem.

Patterns/Trends in List Postings

Moderators observed that patterns in list postings often change according to the university calendar year or season: summer and November/December tend to be slow, spring and fall are active, or depending upon national issues which trigger topics of conversation. Guest moderators also tend to increase the amount of traffic . One moderator noted a quiet period after the filtering of "inappropriate" messages became an issue. In noting whether there have been changes in the patterns in recent years, those moderators who have been with the Discussion Lists for a number of years reported that while there were very few incidences prior to the mandate, there appears to be fewer postings in general now, suggesting, they feel, a reluctance on the part of the subscribers to participate for fear of censorship.

Degrees of Satisfaction with Content, Use, and Effectiveness of Discussion List

Most of the moderators were very satisfied with the *quality of the content.* To quote one moderator, it is "top notch—these [subscribers] are the movers and shakers of the field." Another moderator commented that people really put a lot of thought into what they are saying and how it connects to what someone else has said.

The moderators were not concerned that important content areas or issue to improve instructional practice might not be getting enough attention on their Discussion Lists. One moderator commented that improving instructional practice was not the chief focus of her Discussion List, so she did not expect such content. Another moderator indicated that, while deeper conversation might better serve the Discussion List population, it cannot happen under the new restrictions since "censorship misses rich conversation opportunities." Mostly, the moderators reported, subscribers are looking for (1) answers to questions and (2) reliable resources, and are not particularly interested in discussing philosophical questions.

A number of moderators expressed frustration with the *degree of use* of their Discussion Lists and thought it could be much better. Some commented that there are many lurkers, but they can't get them to post messages. Others thought that their subscribers are just too busy and have other obligations that prevent them from making full use of the Discussion Lists. Still others remarked that there appeared to be a drop-off of activity since the lobbying/advocacy issue was raised. Only one moderator indicated she was very satisfied with the degree of use.

Asked to identify the primary users of Discussion Lists, the moderators indicated a wide range of subscribers:

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Instructors
- Program managers
- Trainers/professional developers
- Policymakers
- Researchers
- Health practitioners
- Staff developers
- Family literacy supporters

While the moderators were generally satisfied with this *mix of stakeholder,* several of them would like to see the mix enhanced. Essentially, there are no learners, and one moderator would like to change that. The Learning Disabilities Discussion List moderator suggested she would like to expand the audience to include family members of learners with disabilities. Other moderators would like to increase the number of classroom teachers and state leaders, and the Workplace moderator wants to encourage more human resources and union leaders to participate in her Discussion List.

Although most of them do not know whether or not they are reaching their intended audience, two of the moderators are sure of the primary users because they have conducted surveys and/or focus groups. Some indicate they can also gauge the audience by examining the signature lines in the postings.

The *quality and focus* of the Discussion Lists, moderators generally felt, was up and down, depending on the events of the day. When there is something of vital importance being discussed, the quality is excellent and everyone stays on topic. At other times, particularly during the Iraq war, some subscribers had difficulty staying focused, and the moderators had to intervene to keep the discussions relevant to the topic at hand.

All of the moderators felt their Discussion Lists have been successful. As proof, one moderator cited the increased number of messages when an important announcement is sent out, indicating that subscribers monitor the Discussion List even if they do not always post. Others report informal feedback from subscribers either off-List via private email or at conferences that indicate their Discussion Lists are successful. Another moderator points out that many subscribers have stayed on the Discussion List for years and continue to read and respond regularly; if the Discussion List was not meeting their needs, they would have abandoned it years ago.

Moderators agree that the two most important areas where they have provided extensive support for their population of adult educator subscribers are (1) professional development through good,

reliable, and current resources, and (2) a forum for the adult education practitioners to develop a feeling of community with other professionals in the field.

Many of the moderators felt that the fact that their Discussion Lists are national forums (in actuality, international forums, since subscribers are from as far away as the UK and Australia) allowed them to connect subscribers easily with both professional development organizations and with other LINCS services. They take every opportunity to point out conferences, new materials, and other current information that will be helpful to their subscribers all over the world.

When asked to identify strengths of their Discussion Lists, one moderator responded that "each of the Discussion Lists has a different flavor, each is unique in providing its service to the field." Other strengths mentioned are:

- The broad range of subscribers, from program directors to new teachers
- A venue for intense discussion about specific issues relevant to subscribers
- Access to current information about publications and competent resources
- Subscribers who are direct service providers who share personal experiences and wisdom
- Guest speakers who help to tap into the classroom practices of subscribers

Among ideas mentioned that might improve their Discussion Lists were:

- More time
- More guest speakers
- Preparing and publishing professional meetings summary reports for those who cannot attend
- More creative ideas to encourage lurkers to participate
- A clear definition of the lobbying/advocacy issue

Problems or Limitations with the Discussion Lists

An early problem with the operation of the Discussion Lists was a technical one, dealing with spam filters, particularly with aol.com spam filters. All of the moderators praise Lee Mann and Connie Harich, technology independent contractors for NIFL, for correcting this problem and indicate that there have been relatively few technical problems since.

The major problem/limitation was identified as the question of advocacy vs. lobbying. According to one moderator, "There are pedagogical questions/beliefs that are appropriately political, so if you limit people's abilities to talk about politically current topics, you are excluding certain pedagogical beliefs." She goes on to say that therefore people tend not to post messages as much, which excludes a great deal of conversation relevant to current happenings in the adult education field.

One moderator complained that, since Jaleh left, NIFL is not as responsive to questions from the moderators. There was some "lively discussion" during a LINCS teleconference regarding the lobbying/advocacy issue, and since then, there have been no more teleconferences.

Value and Uniqueness to the Field of Adult Education/Literacy

As expected, moderators felt strongly against removal of their Discussion Lists. Only one moderator responded with "no" to a question as to whether the removal of *her* Discussion List would create an information gap for the field; the others felt very strongly that the removal would create a significant gap. The "no" answer came from the Family Literacy moderator who also serves as a moderator for another discussion list (the FLA) that has considerable overlap. The other moderators assert there is no other venue available to the adult education/literacy field for the type of information their Discussion Lists provide. As one moderator put it, "It's the only system that connects [adult education] people nationwide on a daily basis. The field is pretty marginal anyway and teachers are isolated, so Discussion Lists are increasingly becoming more important."

All of the moderators also agreed that their current topics of the Discussion Lists are consistent with NIFL's mission of developing a national dissemination and communication system in the

field of literacy that provides "a national focal point for research, technical assistance, research dissemination, policy analysis, and program evaluation in the area of literacy; and facilitate a pooling of ideas and expertise across fragmented programs and research efforts." (NLA, 1991, Section 102)

When asked whether there are other topics that could be added as Discussion Lists, several of the moderators recommended a Discussion List for "scientifically based research practices". Other topics suggested were "NCLB as it relates to ABE", "Workforce" as a companion discussion list to the "Workplace" Discussion List (which would encompass more than just issues arising within the *work place*, such as issues faced by professionals who help people who are looking for work), "Women in the Workplace" (to address issues specific to women such as workplace abuse, and unequal pay and training), and one directed to "Reading" as opposed to Literacy.

However, they did have some suggestions for their subscribers, if the Discussion Lists were no longer available. Strategies included approaching Discussion List moderators directly via email or phone and encouraging current moderators to post on other listservs or discussion lists. Other possible resources included:

- LINCS Special Collections
- Adult Ed Weekly
- AALPD
- Discussion boards
- One-Stop Centers
- www.calpro-online.org
- http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main_page
- lprpconnections@lists.scoe.net
- FLA@LISTSERV.ADMIN.USF.EDU
- http://listserver.nla.gov.au/wws
- NAL.Listserv@usda.gov
- **ALA@LISTSERV**.UC.EDU

There are also professional associations that could provide some of the resources that Discussion Lists now provide, one moderator suggested, but they are only available to members. While there are resources available from individual states, there is no other *national* forum.

Professionals in the field could also turn to distribution lists, but there is nothing equivalent to the interaction of a discussion list such as the LINCS Discussion Lists, the moderators agreed. The moderators remarked that the focus was directed differently on these other listservs or discussion lists than on the current LINCS Discussion Lists. Also, they pointed out that NIFL has specific topics whereas the others are more open-ended. The listservs vary in "censorship" control: PROLiteracy is fully moderated and against lobbying; NLA is less concerned. Also, some of the resources are sponsored by commercial sites, with the possibility of a conflict of interest.

The moderator for the Family Literacy Discussion List believes the FLA listserv is a duplication of the NIFL Discussion List, because she runs both. The moderators of the other Discussion Lists do not feel there is overlap between their LINCS Discussion Lists and other listservs or discussion lists, because the subscribers are generally a different mix, i.e., the other lists attract more community-based individuals while the LINCS Discussion Lists subscribers are more often expert professionals.

The moderators were asked whether there are better ways to provide quality resources quickly and to facilitate an effective adult education communication network than through the sort of discussion lists LINCS uses. One moderator commented that national conferences (with face-to-face opportunities for networking and sharing of resources) are probably best but they are time specific: if you miss the opportunity to attend the conference, you are out of luck. The Discussion Lists are ongoing, unique and valuable. Another moderator pointed out that Discussion Lists may not be the only way but they are the most cost effective; she asked, how can you reach 300 people without spending anything? All of the moderators believed these Discussion Lists' strength was the ability to provide high quality resources better than through any other venue. Pointing out the benefits of the Discussion Lists as "rapid-response" sources, one moderator passed on the insight from a survey she conducted that indicated subscribers liked

the idea they could get multiple answers from fellow-subscriber experts whenever they had a question, rather than from a static FAQ web page.

One moderator gave her opinion that a government-run web-based organization such as LINCS is the ideal situation because it already has the infrastructure, the funding, the clout, the resources, and the network in place. However, one problem, the moderators point out, is that, any time the government is involved, certain rules and regulations are required. If the government is going to censor the Discussion Lists, then the Discussion Lists should be moved elsewhere, suggested several moderators. If some other national organization (but not a commercial site) would come forward to run the Discussion Lists, there could be more open conversation, another moderator suggested.

When asked whether the Model should be changed, the issue of censorship was raised again; the moderators would like to see all restrictions lifted. Other recommendations included:

- LINCS should market the Discussion Lists better, more often, and more widely to encourage a broader audience.
- Since each Discussion List is unique, moderators should be given a list of options (for example, being fully moderated, using guest speakers, etc.) then asking them to try each of the strategies and determine which works best for their particular Discussion List.
- All of the Discussion Lists should be archived together in a database where people could search across the Discussion Lists.
- NIFL needs to fill the gap that ERIC left.

All of the moderators, in their final remarks, focused on the positive experiences as moderators. Several moderators wondered how the adult education field communicated before the advent of the NIFL Discussion Lists. One moderator summed up their overall opinion of the LINCS Discussion Lists: "It is the best thing that has ever happened to adult education."

Appendix A

NIFL
National Institute for Literacy

Comprehensive Review and Analysis of the National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS)

LINCS Discussion List Moderators
Telephone Interview Protocol

FOR INTERVIEWER USE ONLY

The interview protocol asks questions related to the following aspects of the Discussion Lists:

■ **Operating Policies and Procedures:**
  ❒ How effective is the training and support provided to moderators?
  ❒ How effective are the operational policies and practices governing the general operation of the LINCS Discussion Lists?
  ❒ How effective are the lists' policies and moderating practices for monitoring and handling advocacy or lobbying postings?
  ❒ How do NIFL'S administrative policies and procedures related to the operation of the LINCS Discussion Lists compare to those of other government-run, Web-based discussion lists?

■ **Content and Patterns of Use:**
  ❒ What has been the content of the LINCS Discussion Lists over time?
  ❒ Are the lists reaching their intended audiences?
  ❒ What patterns have there been in the type and frequency of message postings?
  ❒ What is the extent of advocacy or lobbying postings to the Discussion Lists?
  ❒ How does the content of the LINCS Discussion Lists compare to that of other government-run, Web-based discussion lists?

■ **Value and Uniqueness of Service:**
  ❒ In what specific ways do the LINCS Discussion Lists provide the greatest benefits to the field of adult education/literacy (e.g., impact on knowledge, practice, networking)?
  ❒ Do other government-run, public, or private discussion lists duplicate or approximate the services offered by through the LINCS Discussion Lists?
  ❒ Would the removal of the LINCS Discussion Lists leave a gap in professional development opportunities for members of the adult education community?

Name of Interviewee: _____

Interviewer Name: _____

Interview Date: _____

Length of Time: _____

I'd like to begin by asking about your experiences as a LINCS DL moderator.

1. **Why did you decide to become the moderator of your LINCS Discussion List?**

   a. How were you selected (e.g., did you apply, did your organization apply, did you volunteer, were you invited, etc.)?

   b. How long have you been the moderator of this list?

   c. Is this your first time as the moderator of a discussion list?

   - If _NOT_, is this list easier or harder to facilitate than other lists you have moderated? (_Explain._)

2. **Tell me about "how you moderate/facilitate your LINCS Discussion List."**

   a. Describe your role and responsibilities? _(Please be specific.)_

   b. What is your primary focus as the moderator of this list?

   c. To what extent have your moderating practices been effective? _(Explain how you measure the success of your practices)_

   - What are the most successful techniques you have used to facilitate discussion?
     → _Share one or two of your success stories._
   - What are the greatest challenges you face in moderating your list?

3. **What are LINCS moderators <u>required</u> to do?**

   a. Are the moderator's role and responsibilities clearly defined and recorded?

   b. Have the requirements changed during your tenure as a moderator?

4. a. **What type of training did you receive from NIFL to prepare you for your role?**

   PROMPTS:
   → _Type and duration_
   → _content_
   → _adequacy_
   → _strengths_

   b. **How effective was your training? Any gaps?**

5. **What type of ongoing support or guidance does NIFL provide its moderators?**

   PROMPTS:
   → _guidance (e.g., in what areas, what form, from whom, ongoing or as needed)_
   → _monitoring_
   → _assistance in handling specific issues (e.g., advocacy postings)_
   → _technical support_

   a. If you have questions about carrying out your role or the operation of your list, where do you go for answers?

   b. Is the ongoing support provided by NIFL sufficient to perform your role as a moderator?

   - If <u>NOT</u>, what type of additional support from NIFL do you need to be an effective moderator? _(Explain.)_

Now, I'd like to find out more about NIFL's operational policies and procedures governing the LINCS Discussion Lists.

6. *a. What is the primary purpose of the LINCS Discussion Lists?*

    PROMPTS:
    → *updates and announcements*
    → *research findings and reports*
    → *professional development to improve instructional practice*
    → *networking*
    → *Other?*

    b. To what extent is this purpose being met? *(Explain how you know.)*

7. *For what primary purpose or reason do subscribers use your list?* (See prompts above.)

8. *Are the policies and procedures related to participation in the discussion lists <u>clearly stated</u> by NIFL for you and the list subscribers?*
    • If <u>NOT</u>, what more is needed?

9. *Does NIFL provide any oversight and monitoring of its Discussion Lists?* (Please be specific.)

10. **How effective are NIFL's policies and procedures related to the operation of the discussion lists** *(Explain how you know or measure their success)***?**

    PROMPTS:
    → *value and appropriateness of content focus to the field*
    → *involvement of intended audiences*
    → *providing helpful services, such as*
       • *communication and networking opportunities (e.g., opportunities to exchange ideas and discuss best practice in the field)*
       • *professional development (e.g., providing calendars of workshops and conferences, sharing best practice)*
    → *use of moderators/facilitators*
    → *adequacy of posting guidelines and "netiquette'*
    → *monitoring and oversight*
    → *list functioning and design features*

11. **Are you aware of any problems or limitations with the operation of the LINCS Discussion Lists** *(please be specific)***?**

    PROMPTS:
    → *technical issues*
    → *moderating issues*
    → *content or posting issues, such as misuse of the lists*
    → *monitoring issues*
    → *subscriber issues*

12. Is your list fully moderated at this time or scheduled to become fully moderated in the next few months?

    ↳ **IF _YES_:**

        a. Please define what you do *(or will do)* to "fully moderate" your list?

        b. Has your list always been fully moderated?

            ↳ 1f <u>NOT</u>, when did it become fully moderated *(or is it scheduled to become fully moderated)*?

                • Have you observed a change in the number and type of postings to the list since it became a fully moderated list *(or do you expect a change)*? *(Please explain.)*

        c. Have subscribers raised concerns *(or do you expect concerns)* about the fully moderated nature of the list (e.g., censorship, impact on subscriptions or postings, etc.)?

        d. Do you have concerns about screening messages to your list (e.g., censorship, impact on subscriptions or postings, etc.)?

    ↳ **IF _NO_:**

        a. In what ways does your list differ from a "fully moderated" list?

        b. Would you prefer a "fully moderated" list? Why or why not?

I'd like to ask about your degree of satisfaction with the content, use, and effectiveness of your list.

13. a. How was the topic of your discussion list selected?

     b. How valuable is your topic to the field of adult education/literacy?

14. a. Are there current discussion list topics that you think are <u>NOT</u> consistent with NIFL's mission? <u>NOT</u> valuable to the field?

        • If so, would you remove them from the LINCS Web site?

     b. Are there important topics that are missing from the current LINCS Discussion Lists that you would add to the Web site?

15. Who do you think are the primary users of your Discussion List?

        a. Is your list reaching its intended audience? *(Explain how you know.)*

        b. How satisfied are you with the mix of stakeholders on your list?
            • Are important groups missing from the discussion?

16. How satisfied are you with the <u>degree of use</u> of your list by the adult education/literacy field? (*For example: number of subscribers, activity level on your list, etc.)*

17. How satisfied are you with the <u>quality of the content</u> posted to your list and its impact on improving instructional practice?

        • Are there important content areas or issues that would improve instructional practice that are not getting enough attention on your list?

18. **How satisfied are you with the <u>quality and focus of the conversations</u> taking place on your list?**

   • Can you identify any specific type of content that facilitates discussion? Impedes discussion?

19. **To what extent and in what ways has your list been successful (i.e., provided informal professional development opportunities, networking opportunities, and other services to improve user knowledge and instructional practice)?** *(Explain how you know?)*

20. **What are the strengths of your discussion list?** *(Please be specific.)*

   a. To what extent and in what ways have you been successful in connecting users with professional development organizations/groups in the field? With other LINCS services?
   b. How could your list be improved? *(Please be specific.)*
   c. Do you think that the removal of <u>your</u> list would create an information gap for the field?
      • Where else could users go for this information?

We're interested in understanding the patterns/trends in postings to your list.

21. **What patterns have you observed in the type and frequency of the postings to your discussion list during your tenure as the moderator?**

   PROMPTS:
      → *Content of postings (e.g., increase/decrease in announcements, discussions about classroom practices, professional development, research findings, etc.)*
      → *Number of posters*
      → *Frequency of discussions between two or more users*

22. **To what extent are inappropriate messages, including advocacy and lobbying postings, an issue for your list or other LINCS Discussion Lists?**

   • If they are an issue, what has been the subject/focus of most of these postings?
   a. Have you observed any changes in the number and pattern of advocacy, lobbying, or other types of inappropriate messages posted to your list or others in the past few years?
   b. Are there particular LINCS Discussion Lists that you consider problematic in terms of advocacy or other inappropriate postings?
      • For these lists, how many of the postings to the list do you think are advocacy or inappropriate messages? *(None – A few – Some – Most)*
      • For these lists, how many of the list's subscribers do you think are responsible for the inappropriate postings? (*None – A few – Some – Most*)

23. **Does NIFL <u>clearly define</u> what constitutes an "advocacy" or "lobbying" message for its moderators and subscribers?**

   • If <u>NOT</u>, how do you define "advocacy" or "lobbying"?

24. **What are NIFL's policies and procedures related specifically to monitoring and handling advocacy or lobbying messages?**

   a. Have these policies changed over time? In what ways?
   b. How effective are the LINCS Discussion List guidelines and actions on advocacy or lobbying messages, including monitoring and enforcement?

- If they are <u>NOT</u> effective, what changes are needed?
c. What specific strategies do you think would work best to curtail the posting of advocacy or lobbying messages to the LINCS Discussion Lists?

   PROMPTS:
   → *clear definition of what "advocacy" means*
   → *posting guidelines or 'netiquette' statement*
   → *use of moderators*
   → *enforcement, e.g., warning statements and removal of messages from the Archives*

In conclusion, we'd like find out about the value and uniqueness of the LINCS Discussion Lists to the field of adult education/literacy.

25. **Do you know of other government-run or private Web-based discussion lists related to adult education/literacy?**

   a. Please give their names *(and URLs, if known)*.
   b. How does the content of the LINCS lists compare to that of the other discussion lists.
   c. Are you aware of any policies or practices of the other lists that might be useful to LINCS in dealing with advocacy, inappropriate postings, or other discussion list issues?

   PROMPTS:
   → *clear guidelines for participation*
   → *clear definition of what "advocacy" means*
   → *posting guidelines or 'netiquette' statement*
   → *enforcement, e.g., warning statements and removal of postings*

26. **Of the other discussion lists that you know, do you see much overlap or duplication with the LINCS Discussion Lists?** *(Please be specific.)*

27. **Would the removal of some or all of the LINCS Discussion Lists leave a gap in professional development and networking opportunities (or other services) for the adult education/literacy community?**

   - Where else could the field go for this information or experience?

28. **How effective are discussion lists *in general* as a means for providing informal PD (professional development) to improve instructional practice in the field?**

   - Are there better ways to do this?

29. **Is the LINCS Discussion List Model working (that is, providing <u>high quality</u> resources/services to improve user's knowledge, instructional practice, and networking experiences)?** *(Explain how you know.)*

   a. Are there aspects of the model that do <u>NOT</u> benefit the field?
   b. Should the Model change? If so, what specific parts and in what ways?

30. **Is a government-run Web site the best entity for providing discussion lists or is there a better vehicle for providing this service to the field?** *(Explain.)*

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experiences with the LINCS Discussion Lists?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!

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Appendix F

Regional Technology Centers Study
- Tables

Appendix F. LINCS Regional Technology Centers Study

Table 1. Have you heard of the NIFL LINCS website?

	Respondents (n=470)
Yes	73%
No	27%

Table 2. Have you used LINCS?

	Respondents (n=469)
Yes	55%
No	45%

Table 3. Where did you learn about LINCS?

Source	n	Respondents (n=424)
Conference/workshop training	110	26%
NIFL/LINCS brochures/written material	78	18%
Visited website before	67	16%
Link on another website	63	15%
Friend/colleague	53	13%
Online discussion group/listserv	33	8%
Google or other search engine	23	5%
Other	4	1%

Table 4. How often have you participated in any of the following LINCS-related activities?

LINCS Activities	Participants (n=229)
A conference with a LINCS presentation	34%
A training specifically to learn how to access LINCS	24%
Received technical assistance from LINCS staff	20%
Participated in committees advising LINCS or LINCS-funded organizations	15%
Contributed information/materials to be posted on LINCS	14%
Made a presentation or gave trainings about LINCS	12%
Other	12%
Volunteered or employed by LINCS/LINCS-funded organization	10%
An online course about how to use LINCS	7%

Table 5. How often have the following aspects of LINCS contributed to your professional skills and knowledge?

Contribution to Professional Skills/Knowledge	n=	Yes	No
Materials/resources	305	91%	9%
LINCS presentations at conferences	277	35%	65%
LINCS discussion lists	281	33%	67%
LINCS-sponsored workshops	275	28%	72%
Other LINCS-related activities	133	28%	72%
Online courses on LINCS	277	18%	82%
Technical assistance from LINCS staff	273	15%	85%

Appendix G

Special Collections Study
- Tables

Appendix G. Special Collections Study

Table 1: What profession or occupation is closest to your own?

Profession/Occupation	LINCS Users (n=301)
Program director, manager, or coordinator	55%
Teacher/tutor	15%
State administrator or manager	8%
Researcher	5%
Trainer or technical assistance provider	5%
Other (paraprofessional, volunteer)	4%
High school, college, or graduate school student	2%
College or university educator	1%
Librarian	1%
Social service provider	1%

Table 2: How long have you been formally or professionally involved in the adult education/literacy field?

Involvement in Adult Education	Respondents (n=302)
3 -5 years	19%
6-10 years	19%
15-20 years	18%
> 20 years	18%
11-15 years	17%
1-2 years	5%
< 1 year	2%
Not professionally involved	2%

Table 3: Are you affiliation with an ABE program?

ABE Affiliation	Respondents (n=291)
Yes	63%
No	37%

Table 4: If you are not affiliated with ABE programs, what type of program best describes your program?

Affiliation	Respondents (n=136)
4-year college/university	15%
Federal/state agency	15%
State literacy resource center	14%
National literacy organization	13%
Other	5%
Consulting firm	4%
National professional organization	1%

Table 5: Which of the geographic areas below best describes your program's location?

Program Location	Respondents (n=220)
Urban area	53%
Suburban area	35%
Rural area	13%

Table 6: What is the approximate size of your program?

Program Location	Respondents (n=161)
Small	68%
Large	19%
Medium	13%

Table 7. Which resources do you visit most on the LINCS website?

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Respondents
Literacy Resources	414	83%
LINCS Special Collections	420	81%
About Literacy	412	79%
LINCSearch	415	71%
News and Events	397	71%
LINCS Regional websites	406	66%
HOT Sites	401	61%
Adult Reading Components Study	78	60%
NIFL and LINCS	398	60%
Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles	76	57%
America's Literacy Directory	81	56%
Other	59	34%
LINCS Online Discussion Lists	324	29%
My LINCS	392	26%

Table 8. How often do you use or visit the following parts of the LINCS website?

Parts of LINCS Website	n	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
LINCS Online Discussion Lists	324	13%	5%	12%	70%
Literacy Resources	337	5%	18%	60%	17%
About Literacy	336	4%	15%	62%	19%
LINCSearch	336	4%	13%	51%	32%
LINCS Special Collections	334	4%	17%	57%	22%
Other	47	4%	9%	25%	62%
News and Events	317	3%	12%	56%	29%
HOT Sites	326	2%	9%	49%	40%
LINCS Regional websites	330	2%	11%	53%	34%
My LINCS	319	2%	6%	13%	79%
NIFL and LINCS	318	2%	7%	44%	47%

Table 9: If you visited other parts of the LINCS website, please rate the helpfulness of each part of LINCS: Special Collections.

Rating	Respondents (n=89)
Very helpful	47%
Helpful	45%
Have not visited	7%
Not helpful	1%

Appendix H

Summary of Researcher and Practitioner Expert Reviews of the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Website

Summary of Researcher and Practitioner Expert Reviews of the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Website

RMC Research Corporation
Portsmouth, NH

September 15, 2005

Introduction

As part of the Comprehensive Review and Analysis of LINCS, RMC conducted expert reviews of one product of the LINCS project, the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP) website: http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/, located on the NIFL website. NIFL contracted with the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) to develop, launch, and maintain a website based on a major study of adult reading that it had conducted: the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS).

The ARCS was a study of adult reading skills conducted by Dr. John Strucker and Dr. Rosalind Davidson of NCSALL. Its purpose was to develop profiles describing different types of readers enrolled in Adult Basic Education programs that would be useful in guiding teachers' choices of instructional strategies with groups of students. Dr. Davidson, working with staff at NCSALL, translated some aspects of the ARCS into the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles website. The purpose of the ASRP is to make available a tool that instructors can use to help them learn about the profiles, apply the profiles in their classrooms, and assess students during program intake.[1]

The website is divided into two "tracks:" the Match a Profile (MAP) tool and the Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course. Users of the website are invited to choose one of the tracks and move through the website following a series of links that take them step-by-step through the website links in the track. They can also move to and from the tracks and to other supporting pages, e.g., additional resources, information on the ARCS, glossary, FAQs, and a site map of the website as well.

Summary Review of the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles Website

RMC's summary review of the ASRP website is based on expert reviews of the website by two groups of professional in adult reading: 1) active researchers familiar with the literature on adult reading research, particularly reading assessment; and 2) practitioners working in the field of adult reading assessment, either with programs or students. RMC staff worked with NIFL staff to identify a list of potential adult reading experts for each group. In some cases, possible reviewers also supplied contributed names of other potential reviewers. All were contacted by e-mail and telephone to request their participation (see Appendix for a copy of a typical request).

Consultants submitted resumes or curricula vitae for review of their qualifications as either a researcher in the field of adult reading or reading assessment research or a practitioner working with adult literacy programs or students, familiar with reading assessments. The final two groups of reviewers included the following people:

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[1] From an interview by RMC with Dr. Rosalind Davidson, December, 2004.

Researchers:
- Dr. Daphne Greenberg, Associate Director, Center for Study of Adult Literacy, Georgia State University
- Dr. Deborah Knight, Coordinator, Rollins Center for Language & Learning, Atlanta Speech School, Atlanta, GA
- Dr. Daryl Mellard, Director of Division of Adult Studies, The Center for Research on Learning at Kansas University

Practitioners:
- Dr. Patricia Anderson, Trainer II/Technical Assistance Consultant , Capitol Region Education Council, Hartford, CT
- Jean Sawicki, Private Reading Therapist, Connecticut Statewide Reading and Language Arts Task Force
- Carl Guerriere, Executive Director/Literacy Advocate, Greater Hartford Literacy Council
- Marcia Harrington, Education Specialist/Chief, Adult Literacy Resource Center, District of Columbia Public Library
- Dr. Leslie Shelton, Co-Manager, Early Care and Lifelong Literacy Department, San Jose Public Library.

Each consultant in the two groups was e-mailed a review protocol with slightly different sets of questions included in the protocols of each group (see Appendix for copies of the protocols). The protocols asked reviewers to rate the website and its components and to respond to open-ended questions. Questions addressed topics such as usability, quality, and value of the ASRP website. The instructions asked all reviewers to spend some time exploring the website before answering. Each reviewer was paid a stipend for completing a review.

The following report is RMC's summary of the reviewers' ratings and responses to the questions. These summaries include individual and combined comments, paraphrased by RMC staff for this report to present, where possible, both the unique observations of individual reviewers and observations shared by several reviewers, without revealing the individual sources of comments. The first section is a summary of the reviews of the website by three adult reading researchers. The second section summarizes the comments about the website by five adult reading practitioners.

Part I. Summary of Researchers' Reviews

This report first summarizes the overall review of the website; it then summarizes the review of the MAP tool and Mini-Course, respectively.

Overall Review of the Website (Both Tracks)

Overall, the three reviewers rated the two tracks of the website fairly favorably in both their appearance/usability and content, and on a scale of 1-4, gave the website an average rating of 3.3.

In terms of appearance and usability, the reviewers thought the website was fairly easy to navigate and that the information was clearly labeled. They thought that, in general, the pages were well designed with clean appearance, and that the list of terms on the left column was a good idea. However, they also thought that there was too much dense material on each page and that the pages might appear too academic for many practitioners. The home page especially may appear too scientific and thus intimating to some practitioners. For the Search option, one reviewer thought it was not effective at all because it turned up rather obscure error messages. The reviewers commented that the key word should be included in the entry that is cited, or, there should be a simple way to get out of the search engine and back to the page that one is exploring, or, the returned results should be more selective. The reviewers gave an average rating of 3.3 for the appearance and usability of the website. They offered several specific suggestions:

1. Use bulleted questions to tell practitioners what the website was about.

2. Include the top links found on all the pages on the home page as well.

3. Include a site map.

4. Include pictures of people (those listed in the About Us page or a picture of John Struker and Rosalind Davidson).

In terms of the content of the website, all three reviewers believed that the intended audiences were adult education instructors/tutors. Two reviewers also believed that the intended audiences were program administrators. One reviewer believed that the website would be good for diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers, staff developers and researchers. The reviewers were worried that without an in-service training, practitioners may find the website intimidating, and that many adult educators may need a greater level of support than what is provided on the website. While they all thought that the content and terminology of the website seemed appropriate for its intended audiences, they also felt that the information was densely presented and that some terms, such as dyslexia, ARCS and grade equivalent, should be discussed in more depth. They believed that a self-assessment or tests of the key terms should be included on the website. Two of the three reviewers commented that the purposes of the website were not clear; one reviewer had to assume the purpose of the website and commented that the website should state its purpose right at the beginning. All three reviewers liked the organization of the website and the dual presentation of information, but one suggested that the Mini-Course be listed first. The reviewers gave the content of the website an average rating of 3.3 on a scale of 1-4.

The Match a Profile Tool

Generally speaking, the reviewers rated the MAP tool favorably, and on a scale of 1-4, gave it a rating of 3.3. In addition, they offered very specific and meaningful comments about each question.

The reviewers thought that, while the website provided clear instructions for using the MAP tool, the purposes of the tool were not as clear. Two reviewers believed that there should be a clear purpose statement on the home page and as the first part of the MAP tool, and that the section marked "Why are Reading Profiles Important" should be first, not last, on the MAP tool page. Two reviewers believed that, even though the website provided enough information that practitioners could use to interpret the profiles, whether they will interpret the material accurately is much less certain (and one reviewer did not think there was enough information). The reviewers thought that the website seemed to have provided enough information for applying the MAP tool. Below are specific concerns and recommendations the reviewers mentioned regarding interpreting and applying the MAP tool.

Concerns over:

1. whether or not the users will be prepared for the suggested courses of action recommended, e.g., administer a word attack subtest to learn which phonics skills need work. Most literacy providers probably are not skilled enough in assessment to select, administer, score and interpret the individually administered measures suggested.

2. the psychometric qualities of the free assessments that are included, e.g., content representation, adequacy of content sampling, concurrent and predictive validity, internal consistency, and reliability.

3. the gulf between assessment and instruction. Regarding spelling, the word analysis test provided on the web has few multi-syllabic words.

Recommendations:

1. Provide a direct link or the actual copies of the following: the San Diego Quick Assessment List, a spelling list, and a silent reading comprehension list. The less practitioners have to do, the better.

2. At a minimum, caution users that the measures require sophistication to recognize their appropriate use, when a learner's scores might be invalid, or other consideration is needed.

3. Caution the user that learning to administer these tests (including the free assessments) requires supervised practice.

4. In the test administration, encourage the use of a tape recorder so that the responses such as word attack, word lists, or oral reading passages can be scored using the tape.

5. State that there are five areas. There needs some assessment for each area; and make sure there is an easily accessible instrument for each of the five areas. Be a little clearer on which word recognition test to use if one of the suggested ones has not been administered. Improve the links to the tests mentioned in the Mini-Course. Add or create a spelling test, and make sure to include some multi-syllabic words.

6. Create at least three basic profiles and label them in simple language, i.e., those who have trouble with decoding/spelling, those who have trouble with meaning and those who have trouble with both print and meaning. And differentiate instruction accordingly. Bridge the gap between assessment and instruction.

When asked how they would rate the quality of the ARCS study (i.e., internal and external validity), the reviewers felt that they could not answer the questions because the website did not provide sufficient technical information to address the question. Regarding the technical merit (i.e., validity and reliability) of the reading assessments used to generate the profiles, one reviewer commented that the DAR had excellent content validity, while two reviewers could not answer the question due to lack of information. About the quality (e.g., predictive validity and reliability) of the MAP tool, one reviewer said the question could not be answered for lack of sufficient statistics. One reviewer commented that the researchers did a good job distilling useful profiles grounded in data, but without information on the actual analysis, it is difficult to discuss the reliability of the profiles. The third reviewer commented that the tool had the appearance of quality. However, this reviewer also voiced some concerns:

1. Do we have sufficient supporting research to argue that the profiles match to particular instructional emphases and predictive validity? The profile has an assumption of an aptitude x instructional intervention interaction.

2. Do we have a sense of how instructional time should be distributed on the various reading components? Adding a temporal perspective would be informative to instructors so that they realize that for many of the 11 profiles, no one component is emphasized at the expense of all of the others.

Regarding cultural sensitivity/fairness of the MAP tool, one reviewer could not answer the question, and one thought that since only Spanish-speaking NNES learners were assessed, a cautionary statement should be included at a minimum. The third reviewer commented that the print level should be fine but that it was difficult to decide on the vocabulary and text without seeing the DAR.

When asked who was likely to benefit most from using the MAP tool, one reviewer believed that both adult education instructors/tutors and diagnosticians/testers would benefit the most. Another reviewer believed that diagnosticians or assessment specialists would benefit most, and commented that it would work best if the diagnostician used the site and shared information with the teacher and suggested how to tailor instruction for students. The third reviewer believed that adult education instructors/tutors would benefit most, but with caution. The reviewer was concerned about the knowledge base of the instructors as they considered assessments, interpretations, and matching to skills. The success of reading instruction was not just in terms of one's declarative knowledge about reading. One's instructional skills and curricular knowledge are of great importance.

Regarding situations in which the MAP tool could be used, the reviewers listed the following:

1. It could help as an organizer for a broad professional development program focusing on instruction, curriculum, assessment, and differentiated instructional approaches. The

profiler would help instructors recognize the complexities that the learners present and the need to provide a highly structured intervention.

2. When a learner does not appear to be making progress in a standard adult literacy classroom and the teacher wants guidance on how to focus on weaknesses that a specific student may have.

3. When a learner's low self-esteem impedes his/her progress and may therefore benefit from hearing that he/she has strengths in one or more of the components.

4. As an instructional example in an inservice for teachers to show how two or more students may receive the same TABE score, but in reality have different strengths and weaknesses, and therefore would benefit from different emphases in instruction.

5. Determine the profiles to inform instruction, providing that teachers know what to do once they have the profiles.

When asked whether the MAP tool was effective in distinguishing different types of learners, two of the three reviewers were reserved: One believed that the tool could differentiate very low readers from very high readers, but it was unclear how it could differentiate low literate from non-native from disabled adult readers. To this reviewer, the tool was useful for highlighting strengths and weaknesses of students, but not useful in distinguishing students. The other reviewer believed that the empirically derived profiles should be helpful to instructors if they had access to high quality assessment instrument that could provide the needed information. The third reviewer thought it could be very effective, but teachers and diagnostician may need more support to use it.

Regarding the use of the tool for screening non-native English speakers, one reviewer thought it would be useful if their English was proficient enough to be tested in English. The other reviewer thought it was outside the intended purpose, especially since participants in the non-native English speakers were not included in the analysis. The third reviewer did not comment on this question for limited knowledge of non-native English speakers.

Regarding using the MAP tool to diagnose adult learners with learning/reading disabilities, one reviewer said the tool did not provide any diagnostic information while one believed that it could be extremely useful if more support would be provided to teachers and diagnosticians in learning to use it. The third reviewer also commented that the tool did represent one "profile" of SLD, the learner with a varied profile of skills. However, this reviewer maintained, such information was insufficient for diagnosing SLD, and that one could not rule out alternative explanations of why the learner has the particular difficulties. The profile indicates current status, but neither the cause nor a picture of prognosis. About whether the tool is useful as the basis for choosing instruction or intervention strategies, two reviewers thought it would be very helpful, provided the teachers feel prepared and able to differentiate instruction through grouping. One reviewer did not have a sense of its utility – the user would have to know or know how to access particular instructional approaches and curriculum in order to direct instruction.

Things that the reviewers liked about the MAP tool included its ease of use, readable text, and the idea or the premise it offered, and the fact that it showed that reading was not a unitary

task, and that it yielded a comparison of the "real" students' scores to the mean scores of the matched profile group. The profiles make sense. When asked what the reviewers disliked about the website, one reviewer commented that it was not certain that there was enough empirical information to say anything other that we could see the strengths/weaknesses of a learner according to his or her profile. We did not know that focusing on any one of the areas, as recommended by the profile, would significantly speed up progress, therefore, it is premature to be making recommendations. One reviewer commented that comprehension was not well tested, and the third reviewer thought that assessment and the match of learners' profiles to reading components seemed simplified. There are inconsistencies in the website, e.g., it refers to both 10 and 11 profiles in various places, and there are misspelled words, etc.

Specific suggestions that reviewers had to improve the website include the following:

1. Have a separate section for researchers-one that provides the statistical information for the analyses that were conducted.

2. Until there is empirical evidence, there will be reservations about making recommendations based on a certain profile. Instead, there should be two parts: the profiles and a separate unrelated section that provides instructional suggestions for each component without connecting these suggestions to profiles.

3. Include a pretest of learner's knowledge organized around the topics addressed e.g., reading components, component assessment, and curricular approaches.

4. Insert some cautionary statements:

   - Provide specific guidelines about what skills are required for test administration.

   - Identify the importance of strong instructional skills e.g., modeling, specific feedback, progress measures, careful selection of materials.

   - Indicate that we do not know the relationship of particular components to overall reading comprehension for adults who have not been successful or for whom English is a second language.

   - WAIS-III is a controlled test and requires a psychologist or similarly trained person to administer and score. (The Information subtest was mentioned and Psych Corp was listed as a resource, but this test is not likely to be available for literacy providers.)

5. Add a spelling test for those who do not use the ABLE and be clear about what informal word recognition test to use if one of the standardized tests is not available.

6. Would like to know how the WAIS Information test came out.

7. Explain why in the course of explaining all components the website uses only 5 in the profile, especially considering that some of the categories are subsumed. The choice of the 5 is discussed in the profile section, but not in the Mini-Course section.

In rating how the overall effectiveness of the MAP tool in adult education field, the reviewers gave a rating of 3.33 on a scale of 1-4. One reviewer thought the tool could be very useful, but there would need to be some support to facilitate the use of the tool. One reviewer

thought that it was useful because it would help teachers focus on the various components. However, the reviewer was not sure that the typical adult literacy teacher would use this website, and that more research needs to be done to verify that this kind of approach really makes a significant difference in the progress that adult learners make. Another reviewer believed that the potential was great pending further development and linkage to an array of other professional development activities focusing on assessment (which should drive instruction), curricular choices, instructional skills, and administrative or infra-structure supports.

The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

The reviewers viewed the Mini-Course less favorably than they did the MAP tool. On a scale of 1-4, they gave the Mini-Course an average rating of 2.6. In addition, they provided meaningful comments and suggestions.

One reviewer thought that the purposes of the Mini-Course were clear; two reviewers thought they were not – one commented that the organization of the material and description of the content was clear but the intended audiences and outcomes were less so, and the other believed that the course was useful as a supplemental but not really as a course. In terms of the currentness and accuracy of the information presented, the reviewers commented that overall, material was good, solid and appropriate, and one reviewer believed that the real strength is in information about print. The reviewers pointed out some specific limitations and inaccuracies in the information or statements:

1. It is not clear how the assessments were chosen for the Test Bank, i.e., based on what criteria.

2. The text information is quite limited. The user would not come away with a clear understanding of a wealth of well-researched reading comprehension strategies that good readers use.

3. As Chall has noted, the usefulness of readability statistics is quite limited. Maybe provide some information on the use of readability, acknowledging that although useful it is limited. Also letting people know Word will calculate readability for text they scan in could be helpful for some teachers.

4. The statement that "explicit instruction in comprehension strategies should begin when a learner has acquired sufficient word recognition mastery, usually no sooner than low intermediate level, GE 3" is not accurate. Persons with very low reading skills have comprehension. Those skills can be improved through explicit instruction.

5. On the Silent Reading Comprehension page, it states "Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies should begin when a learner has acquired sufficient word recognition mastery, usually no sooner than low intermediate level, GE 3." This may be a controversial statement. I believe that many argue that comprehension should be taught right from the beginning-whether one is looking at pictures in a story, or listening to a story read aloud.

6. On the Word Analysis page, it states "…Being able to read the word *stop* is not proof that the learner knows the short sound of *o*, but being able to read the pseudo word *stoz* is." This is not necessarily true. If one can use the analogy strategy when decoding a nonword, one may not know all the individual sounds. In the example given, the reader may see "stoz" and think-"oh this looks like "stop" and I know that "z" is /z/, and then read the item correctly. Therefore, with the example given, all you can say with certainty is that the reader knows the sound for the "z", not the short sound of "o"

7. On the Spelling page, it states "Good readers are able to spell at levels close to their word reading ability" This statement should probably be qualified by stating: "most good readers…" Some good readers are poor spellers.

8. The WRMT is not the *Woodcock-Johnson Reading Mastery Test*.

9. Run spell check: tesing, for "testing" under the definition of reliability.

10. The description of assessments needs more attention, perhaps a careful analysis to check that the content is accurate, or the distinctions useful. For example, the terms ability, concepts, competency, and skills are used to describe areas of learner assessment. It may be better not to use the word *ability* in that context and the language could be clearer if the intent is to distinguish among these terms.

11. While CASAS focuses on competencies, a learner's normative comparison is also provided.

12. The "Test bank": the instruments listed provide more metrics than those scores listed and since the norms are quite varied on the instruments, the normative information should be provided. For example, how do you interpret a 40-year old person's scores on the TOWRE since norms are not available?

13. The Academic Knowledge sections were not on the WJ-III – they were replaced by a general knowledge subtest (but the reviewer could not remember the exact name).

When asked about the comprehensiveness of the content of the Mini-Course, one reviewer thought it was very comprehensive, while one believed that it was not comprehensive. The third reviewer believed that the content was broad, but not deep enough to change practice. Furthermore, reference was made to phonics instruction using "Lindamood or Wilson." Those names are rather casual terms for extensive intervention and there were not other descriptions of such approaches. These approaches require fuller description so the reader could know what is intended and that extensive training is required for such structured approaches.

One reviewer thought the Mini-Course neither help nor hurt his/her understanding of the reading profiles since it was all familiar material. One reviewer liked the course as a resource, but not as a tutorial because it was not interactive enough to serve as a tutorial. In addition, it would be valuable to provide some actual activities where the reader must complete exercises. The third reviewer believed that if a person enters the website with the intent of examining the reading profiles, the approach would work best, but if the intent was to provide a link to the profiles through the Mini-Course, the link was not obvious enough. All the reviewers were reserved about the effectiveness to present the information as an online tutorial. They would like to see the pages less dense and friendlier to the typical nonacademic person. They did not have a

good sense of how the tutorial would improve practice, or see an advantage of the material being online as opposed to being delivered in a booklet.

Things reviewers said they liked about the Mini-Course included:

1. It presents good, important and pertinent information.
2. The text is well organized and sequenced.
3. The number of topics covered or the breadth of topics addressed - the learner will get an overview or an awareness of content.
4. It provides a broad overview that teaching reading or learning to read involves a number of components. The topics are relatively brief to study.
5. The navigating works well.

Things reviewers said they disliked about the Mini-Course included:

1. It has too much information on each page.
2. It is not clear whether it will engage the reader.
3. Even though the learner will get the answers s/he is seeking, the style makes the learner passive.
4. The depth seems lacking as a self-teaching tool.
5. It needs to be more interactive.
6. There is not much information about comprehension.

Ways the reviewers suggested to improve the Mini-Course included:

1. Make the appearance of the information less dense.
2. Include a quiz that users can take before taking the course. The questions from the quiz are from the course and at the end of the quiz, the computer diagnoses the sections that the test takers may want to read, so they do not have to go to each page to discover whether it is new information for them to learn.
3. Improve the writing style from a careful editing to make the language more focused. Rewrite those sentences that include it is, it makes, it assesses, it can, it has, there is, this is.
4. Elaborate on the reference made to phonics instructional programs "Lindamood or Wilson."
5. Make the website more interactive.
6. Teachers have trouble segmenting sounds. They would need more practice in the phonemics section.
7. Caution teachers that it is only useful to teach the most obvious and high frequency affixes. The list found in the CORE reading materials is good (reviewer attached the list).

Final Thoughts

Would the researcher reviewers recommend the website to their students or colleagues? One reviewer said he/she would recommend it to both his/her students and colleagues because the profiles are a real strength. As someone involved in professional development, he/she would use it as an interactive site, develop case studies and use the site as the basic tool for professional development. One reviewer said s/he would recommend it to students, but not to colleagues since there would be nothing for them to learn on the page. Another reviewer said he/she would recommend it to individuals with at least some knowledge of the content, but for persons the information was brand new, additional resources would be needed. The text was a lot to absorb without engaging activities. One reviewer was also concerned about the lack of empirical evidence connecting the profiles to instructional suggestions.

Ratings and Comments by Each Question

Overall Review of the ASRP Website

Appearance and Usability

2. How attractive or appealing is appearance of the website?

    Average rating: 3.3

    Comments:
    - I like the page layout. In general the pages are well-designed, clean appearance. The list of terms on the left column is a good idea. How about adding John Strucker and Rosalind Davidson's pictures along with the adult learners to the picture cycle on the home page?
    - I found it easy to use and to move among the screens. I am a rather linear person, so it appealed to me. When I was thinking I wanted information on something, there was usually a button or link to take me there. I would put a link to The Assessment (Test) Bank [I can't remember the exact name of the link) on the Profile track as well as the mini-course. Actually, once I found the site map, I found I could locate just about anything I wanted. Maybe a reference to it early on would help. It was good to have everything laid out on one page.
    - I think that there is too much dense material on each page. The pages may look too academic for many practitioners.
    - I especially think that the homepage needs work. Some practitioners may be intimidated by the home page. It may appear too scientific for their taste. I think that the home page should be friendlier, warmer and entice the practitioner to find out more about the site. The home page appears to assume that the practitioner knows what this site is all about. I would suggest having bullets with questions that entice the practitioners to want to engage. For example for the Match a Profile:
      - Do you want instructional suggestions for your adult learner?
      - Is it sometimes difficult to decide which skill to focus on with your adult learner If yes click here (and show icon for match a profile)

      For the Minicourse:
      1. Do you want to know more about what research says about reading?
      2. Do you want to download resources? If yes click here (and show icon for the minicourse)

3. How easy is it to navigate the website (e.g., move up and down, from page to page, or from link to link)?

    Average rating: 3.7

Comments:
- I was using a dial-up modem and found loading somewhat slow which might limit someone's interest in staying with the task.

- I did not have difficulty navigating. I wonder if the top links found on all the pages with the exception of the home page should also be included on the home page. I also wonder if the site map should be one of the first top links instead if the last. Finally, I wonder if practitioners would enjoy seeing pictures of the people listed in the about us page.

4. How clearly is the information labeled?

Average rating: 4

Comments:
- Labeling is good if you mean the labeling of the topical organization.
- I had no difficulty understanding what I was viewing.
- Everything is labeled fine.

5. How effective is the Search engine?

Average rating: 2.3

Comments:
- Sure is thorough! The search retrieved a great deal of information. Might have helped had the search returned more selective information.
- I only tried to find the Sylvia Greene word analysis test. I got rather obscure error messages.
- The key word should be included in entry that is cited. For example, I searched for phonological awareness, but it was difficult for me to tell from the results, which reference would be helpful.
- There should be a simple way to get out of the search engine and back to the page one was exploring. I could not figure out the simple way (except, one can always hit the back key).

Presentation of Content

6. Based on the overall content of the website, who do you think the intended audiences are?

   1=Program administrators: 2 reviewers
   2=Adult education instructors/tutors: 3 reviewers
   3=Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers: 1 reviewer
   5=Other (specify): staff developers and researchers: 1 reviewer

   Comments:
   - Instructors are referenced frequently. An adm would find the info helpful in gathering background info.
   - In addition to the first 3, I could see staff developers and researchers examining your profiles and the accompanying information. In fact, I was thinking that the site would be a good basis for a staff development workshop, course, or online training. There is

so much information here that I could see it overwhelming the teacher. However, with guidance, I could see many ABE teachers benefiting. I just finished delivering a 2 day staff development with a group of teachers participating in a NICHD/NIFL/OVAE study. I think they would be hungry for a well developed online course or workshop using the website. I doubt that they would take the time to go through everything on their own. I do recognize that you do indeed have a mini-course on the site. However, it is probably not interactive enough for folks who are struggling with the content to benefit. More activities with "answers" provided on a subsequent screen or link would be helpful. If I were using the site as a staff developer, I would ultimately have my teacher-participants creating profiles of their own students.

- However, I am worried that practitioners may find the site intimidating without an inservice.

7. Is the terminology on the website appropriate for its intended audiences (i.e., terms are clearly defined but not too technical)?

Average rating: 3

Comments:
- Someone spent considerable time working on the content for the instructors. The jargon is minimal. Terms are defined.
- The use of the term "grade equivalent" scores should be discussed in greater detail. Using the term legitimizes the score and surely that is not the goal. The term is a very crude index of a person's reading skill and cannot be reliably used for matching a person to instructional materials or interpreting performance level. Use a different metric e.g., percentiles.
- We have started using lexile scores, which can be obtained freely for any textual material.
- For the most part. The information is densely presented. I think it is quite well done, but I am trying to imagine coming without the background knowledge. See my response to number 5 for an idea for managing the quantity of information. Also, use of the term dyslexia without more explanation could prove to be problematic. Just saying that dyslexia is a disability that makes reading and spelling words difficult, but that understanding language is a strength would help.
- ARCS is often included in a sentence. Unless someone remembered the first sentence on the homepage, or went to the ARCS link, a practitioner may not know what ARCS is all about.

8. Is the purpose of the website clear for its intended audiences?

Average rating: 2.3

Comments:

- The language suggests that the reader will "learn more about…" That description seems rather limited. Couldn't a stronger claim be made about the value of the website and why someone should invest the required time?
- I think the purpose is to provide adult educators a research-based site that describes best practice assessment, including the profiles they are likely to encounter and the best ways to determine the profiles of their own students. It also provides a quick way to match their own data to a profile that is based on the cluster analysis of the study. If that is the purpose, it is clear to me. Why not state the purpose right at the beginning?
- It is clear to those who know what the website is all about before going to it. I am not sure that a typical practitioner who "stumbles" across this would find it clear.

9. Is the content of the website appropriate for its intended audiences?

   Average rating: 3.3

   Comments:
   - The more I consider the intended audiences, the more I realize that this material is not appropriate for all instructors. Is it equally appropriate for the beginning instructor as well as the instructor who has taught for 10 years or the instructor who just finished an advanced degree in reading literacy intervention?
   - How about a self-knowledge assessment of key terms, "What do you know?" Give the user a chance to get a sense of the appropriateness of the content.
   - I think the content is appropriate and within the grasp of the audience. However, the background of adult educators is so varied; some many not have the sufficient background knowledge to delve into the site. I think many will need a greater level of support. I really like the site, and the content is just what I'd teach about diagnosis to a group of adult educators. Because I really like it, I am trying to think how to maximize its use in the field. I have worked a great deal with staff development in the area of reading and special education in K-12. I have worked recently but not extensively with adult basic education. Please know that is a limitation in my analysis. But, if you can get teachers to commit to working with the site with some support from a staff developer, I think it could have more far-reaching impact.
   - But I feel could be presented in a friendlier manner.

10. Is the website well organized?

    Average rating: 3.7

    Comments:
    - I could move among the sections easily and had a good sense of where I was in the broad organization. Would someone unfamiliar with the terms and content have the same impression? Probably.
    - Exceptions noted in other questions

11. How effective is it to present the content/information on two different tracks (i.e., the profiles and the Mini-course)?

Average rating: 4

Comments:
- I like this organizational feature and imagine that the reader will too.
- I liked the dual presentations, especially since the links to the mini-course information were present on the profile track. The profiles track is quick enough to use that those teachers and diagnosticians who are only willing or able to spend a brief time on the site can do so and still get useful information. Those who want to understand the profiles (always a good idea!) can go to the mini-course.
- I wonder if Mini course should be listed first instead of second.

The Reading Profiling Tool

12. Is the purpose of the Profiling Tool clearly explained?

Average rating: 3

Comments:
- I think I'd state the purpose overtly right at the beginning of the Profiling Tool section.
- On the home page and as the first part of the profiling tool page, there should be a clear purpose of statement. As it stands right now, it is fine for someone who already knows about the tool and wants to use it, however, it doesn't attract or convince a practitioner new to this concept about why he/she would want to use it. I think that the section marked "Why are Reading Profiles Important" should be first on the profiling tool page, not last.

13. Are the instructions for using the Profiling Tool clear?

Average rating: 3.7

Comments:
- The instructions are clear. I like saying that there are five areas and you need some sort of assessment in each area. I'd improve the links to the tests mentioned in the mini-course. I'd also make sure there is an easily accessible instrument for each of the 5 areas. The site needs to add a spelling test and be a bit clearer on which word recognition test to use if one of the suggested ones has not been administered. I would not know whether I should use the San Diego or perhaps the Sylvia Greene test.

14. Does the website provide users with enough information to interpret the results of the Profiling Tool?

Two reviewers chose 1=Yes
One reviewer chose 2=No

Comments:
- The analyses are clearly presented. Whether they will interpret the material accurately is much less certain.
- I think that a decent teacher could use the information effectively, even if she doesn't completely understand the profiles. I assume a diagnostician would have a deeper understanding of the data. At a fairly low level of understanding, I would think the teachers could come to this conclusion: Student 1 has decoding/spelling profiles, student 2 has trouble with meaning (vocabulary + comprehension), and student 3 has trouble with both print and meaning. I would label the 3 basic profiles in the top 3 groups with some simple language as I've just done (at least for native speakers).

  Selecting supplemental tests is not so easy to figure out. There appear to be tests recommended in the mini-course that are not mentioned in the profile section (e.g., Sylvia Greene's Informal Word Analysis Inventory).

  Now that they have 3 profiles (and possible 3 groups for instruction), it makes sense to differentiate instruction accordingly. The idea of grouping for targeted instruction seems to be a foreign idea in adult education (and an overwhelming one). I've found that some programs individualize completely (with a set of problems I don't need to tell you about) or that they provide whole group instruction within the levels determined from a placement test. In the current phase of our project, we are working with some of the best adult ed teachers across the country. Some of them are terrific thinkers, but they are overwhelmed by the idea of providing small group instruction. So, all of this excellent diagnostic work will only be valuable in as much as it informs instruction. You know that, of course. The gulf between the assessment and the instruction may be wider than we think is necessary, but I believe it is a very real impediment to implementation of the diagnostic information gleaned from the profiles. Perhaps some suggestions in the instructional section on strategies for working with groups would be a start.

15. Does the website provide users with enough information to apply the Profiling Tool?

    Two reviewers chose 1=Yes
    One reviewer did not make a choice.

    Comments:
    - My concern about the profile is whether the users will be prepared for the suggested courses of action recommended e.g., administer a word attack subtest to learn which phonics skills need work. I sure don't trust that most literacy providers are skilled enough in assessment to select, administer, score and interpret the individually administered measures suggested.
    - Seems to me that at a minimum the caution should be stated that the measures require sophistication to recognize their appropriate use, when a learner's scores might be invalid, or other consideration is needed.
    - Caution the user that learning to administer these tests (including the free assessments) requires supervised practice.

- I am glad that the free assessments are included so they have options but do we know their psychometric qualities e.g., content representation, adequacy of content sampling, concurrent and predictive validity, internal consistency, and reliability?
- In the test administration, encourage the use of a tape recorder so that the responses such as word attack, word lists, or oral reading passages can be scored using the tape.
- I have comments on 2 of the areas. For oral reading rate, I'm assuming the reading rates are based on the data from study and that the rates were determined the same way that teachers/diagnosticians are asked to get the rates, that is, having the students read through the passages and identify difficult words before the oral reading rate is taken. This approach is not standard for getting oral reading rates, so comparing the rates under this condition would need to match a sample that performed under the same conditions.
  Regarding spelling, why not create a spelling test? For our teachers, we created a spelling test that was based on the Diagnostic Spelling Inventory in *Words Their Way*. The spelling test is not a part of the study, but rather a need identified by some teachers. So, it is really a byproduct and a service, but we are not researching it. We made sure to include some multisyllabic words. As you noted, tests with multisyllabic words are hard to find. This is a concern I have with the word analysis test you provide.
- I think that it would be helpful for the website to either provide a direct link or the actual copies of the following: the San Diego Quick Assessment List, a spelling list, and even a silent reading comprehension test. The less practitioners have to do, the better!

16. How would you rate the quality (e.g., internal and external validity, etc.) of the Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS) on which the profiling tool was based?

   Average rating: None of the three reviewers rated this one.

   Comments:
- I haven't spent enough time with the study to know.
- Cluster analysis has its risks, of course. Since I don't know if the sample was divided in half for replication (or another sample was used), it is difficult to comment on the internal validity. I do think that the profiles that the study yields make perfect sense based on the literature in the field of adult reading disability.
- This question cannot be answered, because sufficient statistics are not shared on the website.

16. How would you rate the technical merit (i.e., validity and reliability) of the reading assessments used to generate the eleven reading profiles?

   Average rating: Two reviewers did not rate this one. One reviewer gave a rating of 4.

Comments:
- The measures are likely adequate, but the website lacks sufficient technical information on the measures to address this question.

- I have not looked at the *DAR* in 6 or 7 years. I always liked it and am confident in its content validity. I can't comment on its technical merits. The remaining tests have adequate technical merit, although I can't comment on what you used for rapid letter naming.
- This question cannot be answered, because sufficient statistics are not shared on the website.

17. How would you rate the quality (e.g., predictive validity, reliability, etc.) of the ASRP profiling tool?

    Average rating: Two reviewers did not rate this one. One reviewer gave a rating of 3.5.

    Comments:

- The profiling tool has the appearance of quality. The difficulty for me is whether we believe that we have sufficient research to argue that the profiles match to particular instructional emphases, predictive validity. The profile has an assumption of an aptitude x instructional intervention interaction. Perhaps the supporting research exists for such an approach and I am unaware.
  Similarly, do we have a sense of how instructional time should be distributed on the various reading components? Adding a temporal perspective would be informative to instructors so that they realize that for many of the 11 profiles, no one component is emphasized at the expense of all of the others, meaning you just don't focus on a single component.
- I think the researchers did a good job of distilling useful profiles that are grounded in the data. They are the profiles I would advocate. Without more information on the actual analysis, it is difficult to discuss the reliability of the profiles.
- This question cannot be answered, because sufficient statistics are not shared on the website.

18. How would you rate the cultural fairness/sensitivity of the profiling tool?

    Average rating: None of the three reviewers rated this one. One rated "Don't know."

    Comments:
- Looks like Spanish-speakers were the only non-native English speakers assessed. Given the lack of representation of other language speakers, especially Eastern European, Asian, and Middle Eastern countries, one might raise a question. At a minimum one could provide a cautionary statement.
- The print level components should be fine. Without seeing *DAR*, I can't comment on the vocabulary and text, which was used to determine the profiles.
- I would score this as N/A. I am not sure what would be considered fair/sensitive or not fair/sensitive in terms of this tool.

19. Based on your experience working in the adult literacy/reading field, who is likely to benefit most from using the Profiling Tool?

Two reviewers chose 2=Adult education instructors/tutors
Two reviewers chose 3= Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers

Comments:
- As suggested above, I am concerned about the knowledge base of the instructors as they consider assessments, interpretations, and matching to skills. I am sure that you have considered this issue but the success of reading instruction isn't just in terms of one's declarative knowledge about reading but my hypothesis is that one's instructional skills and curricular knowledge are of great importance.
- I think that it would work best if an adult learning program's tester used this site and shared information with the teacher and suggestions on how to tailor instruction for the student.

20. Based on your experience working in the adult literacy/reading field, what are the situations in which the Profiling Tool is likely to be most useful (please give examples)?

- The profiling tool could help as an organizer for a broad professional development program focusing on instruction, curriculum, assessment, and differentiated instructional approaches. The profiler would help instructors recognize the complexities that the learners' present and the need to provide a highly structured intervention.
- Determining the profile of students to inform instruction, providing teachers know what to do once they have the profiles.
- When a learner does not appear to be making progress in a standard adult literacy classroom and the teacher wants guidance on how to focus on weaknesses that a specific student may have.
- When a learner's low self esteem impedes his/her progress and may therefore benefit from hearing that he/she has strengths in one or more of the components.
- As an instructional example in an inservice for teachers to show how 2 or more students may receive the same TABE score, but in reality have different strengths and weaknesses, and therefore would benefit from different emphases in instruction.

21. How useful is this Profiling Tool likely to be for screening non-native English speaking adult readers?

Average rating: One reviewer gave this a 4. Two reviewers did not give a rating.

Comments:
- I don't have a basis for responding to this question. Such a use seems outside the intended purpose, especially since participants in the non-native English speakers were not included in the analysis.
- My knowledge of non-native English speaking adult readers is limited. I'll pass on commenting on this question.
- Assuming, that their English is at a high enough level to be tested in English!

22. How useful is this Profiling Tool likely to be for diagnosing/screening adult readers with learning/reading disabilities or special needs?

Average rating: 3

Comments:
- The tool certainly represents one "profile" of SLD, the learner with a varied profile of skills. Such information though is insufficient for diagnosing SLD. The information is helpful about identifying learners with the most significant reading difficulties. A difficulty is that one is not likely able to rule out alternative explanations of why the learner has the particular difficulties. The profile indicates current status, neither the cause nor a picture of prognosis.
- I think it could be extremely useful. I do think the teachers and diagnosticians may need more support in learning to use it. It would be quite helpful in screening for dyslexia, as there is sufficient print information to interpret for screening.
- As far as I can see, the Tool does not provide any diagnostic information.

23. How effective is the Profiling Tool likely to be in distinguishing different types of readers (e.g., low literate adult readers, non-native English speaking readers, and adult readers with learning/reading disabilities)?

Average rating: 3

Comments:
- The empirically derived profiles should be helpful to instructors. One can hope that the users have access to high quality assessment instruments that can provide the needed information.
- It could be very effective, but the teachers and diagnosticians may need more support in learning to use it. Also, there is little analysis of difficulties with text comprehension in the absence of print difficulties.
- The tool can differentiate very low level readers from very high level readers. However, I don't see how it can differentiate low literate from non-native from disabled adult readers. The tool is useful for highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of students. I don't see it as useful for distinguishing students.

24. How useful is the Profiling Tool likely to be as a basis for choosing instruction or intervention strategies for different types of readers?

Average rating: Two reviewers did not give a rating; one reviewer gave a rating of 4.

Comments:
- That's the great question! I don't have a sense of its utility. The user would have to know or know how to access particular instructional *approaches and curriculum* in order to direct instruction.

- It could be very helpful, providing the teachers feel prepared and able to differentiate instruction through grouping. The tool itself does not really delve into instructional strategies, which I simply consider beyond the scope of the site.
- Unfortunately, some of the suggestions involve money, which most programs don't have (for example, further assessments).

25. What do you particularly like about the Profiling Tool? What are its strengths?

- I particularly like the idea or the premise offered in the tool. Such information could be very helpful. The text is very readable.
- The Profiling Tool is easy to use. Even without understanding the whys of the profiles, a teacher could still understand that she has a group of students with print difficulties, a group with meaning difficulties, and a group with both. I really like that the profile yields a comparison of the "real" student's scores to the mean scores of the matched profile group. With a little effort, she could begin to think in terms of the profiles as she provides instruction. Also, the profiles make sense to me. They are the ones that I would teach.
- I think that it drives home the point that reading is not a unitary task, that there are different components that need to be considered when thinking about reading instruction and assessment. The tool is very easy to use!

26. What do you particularly dislike about the Profiling Tool? What are its weaknesses?

Comments:
- What's there to dislike! The tool provides a useful organization of assessment information.
- Assessment seems over-simplified as does the match of learners' profiles to reading components. We don't have a sense of the best way to teach those reading components do we?
- I wish that the users had easy (very easy) access to an instrument in each of the 5 categories. Comprehension is not well tested, but there are not truly good instruments out there.
- I am not sure that there is enough empirical evidence to say anything except that according to this person's profile, he/she has strengths/weaknesses in each of these areas. We don't know that focusing on any one of the areas, as recommended by the profile will significantly speed up progress made through reading instruction. Therefore, it seems premature to be making recommendations.

27. How would you improve the Profiling Tool?

- Include a pretest of learner's knowledge organized around the topics addressed e.g., reading components, component assessment, and curricular approaches.
- Insert some cautionary statements:
- Provide specific guidelines about what skills are required for test administration.
- Identify the importance of strong instructional skills e.g., modeling, specific feedback, progress measures, careful selection of materials.

- Indicate that we don't know the relationship of particular components to overall reading comprehension for adults who have not been successful or for whom English is a second language.
- WAIS-III is a controlled test and requires a psychologist or similarly trained person to administer and score. (The Information subtest was mentioned and Psych Corp was listed as a resource, but this test is not likely to be available for literacy providers.)
- I'd add a spelling test for those who don't use the ABLE and be clear about what informal word recognition test to use if one of the standardizes tests is not available. One question: I'd like to know more about how the WAIS Information test came out. Understanding that some adults just don't have the word meaning and background knowledge to be competent readers is an important, albeit discouraging, reality.
- Have a separate section for researchers-one that provides the statistical information for the analyses that were conducted.
- Until there is empirical evidence, I have reservations about making recommendations that given a certain profile, here are the aspects that need to be addressed. Instead, I would stick to the profiles, and then have a separate unrelated section that provides instructional suggestions for each component without connecting these suggestions to profiles.

28. Overall, how useful do you believe that the Profiling Tool is likely to be for the adult education field?

Average rating: 3.3

Comments:
- The potential is great pending further development and linkage to an array of other professional development activities focusing on assessment (which should drive instruction), curricular choices, instructional skills, and administrative or infra-structure supports.
- I think the tool itself could be very useful. I think there would need to be some support to facilitate use of the tool.
- My score is really more like a 2.5. I think that it is useful because it helps teachers focus on the various components. However, I am not sure that the typical adult literacy teacher will utilize this website. I also think that more research needs to be done to verify that this kind of approach really makes a significant difference in the progress that adult learners make.

The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

29. Is (Are) the purpose(s) of the Mini-Course clear?

    Average rating: 2.3

    Comments:
    - Did I miss the orienting statement that addresses the learner outcomes and benefits of this material? The organization of the material and description of the content is clear but the intended audience and outcomes are less clear.
    - I found the course useful as a supplemental resource, but not really as a course.

30. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how current (e.g., whether or not supported by the latest scientific research) are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

    Average rating: 3

    Comments:
    - Overall, the material is good and appropriate.
    - "Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies should begin when a learner has acquired sufficient word recognition mastery, usually no sooner than low intermediate level, GE 3." This statement isn't accurate. Persons with very low reading skills have comprehension. Those skills can be improved through explicit instruction.
    - The information, for the most part, is solid. The real strength is in information about print. The text information is quite limited. For example, the user would not come away with a clear understanding of a wealth of well-researched reading comprehension strategies that good readers use.
    - Two specific items:
        1. I don't think the Academic Knowledge sections are on the WJ-III. I think they were replaced with the What is it and When would you use it subtests (I can't remember the actual name of the subtest—maybe General Knowledge). I don't have a copy of the test with me and the WJ website doesn't specify subtests.
        2. Readability is quite limited, as Chall herself has noted. I'd place some caveat on the use of readability, acknowledging that although useful it is limited. Also, letting people know that Word will calculate a readability for text they scan in could be helpful for some teachers
    - I wonder how the assessments were chosen for the Test Bank. Why these tests and not others? What criteria were used to make the decision about which ones to include?

31. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how accurate are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

    Average rating: 2.3

Comments:
- The WRMT is not the *Woodcock-Johnson Reading Mastery Test*.
- Run spell check: tesing, for "testing" under the definition of reliability.
- The description of assessments needs more attention or perhaps a careful analysis to check that the content is accurate or the distinctions useful. For example, the terms ability, concepts, competency, and skills are used to describe areas of learner assessment. I wouldn't use the word *ability* in that context and believe that the language could be clearer if the intent is to distinguish among these terms.
- While CASAS focuses on competencies, a learner's normative comparison is also provided.
- Another point about the "Test bank" is that the instruments listed provide more metrics than those scores listed and since the norms are quite varied on the instruments, the normative information should be provided. For example, how do you interpret a 40-year old person's scores on the TOWRE since norms aren't available?
- On the Word Analysis page, it states: "…Being able to read the word *stop* is not proof that the learner knows the short sound of *o*, but being able to read the pseudoword *stoz* is." This is not necessarily true. If one can use the analogy strategy when decoding a nonword, one may not know all the individual sounds. In the example given, the reader may see "stoz" and think-"oh this looks like "stop" and I know that "z" is /z/, and then read the item correctly. Therefore, with the example given, all you can say with certainty is that the reader knows the sound for the "z", not the short sound of "o"
- On the Spelling page, it states: "Good readers are able to spell at levels close to their word reading ability" This statement should probably be qualified by stating: "most good readers…" Some good readers are poor spellers.
- On the Silent Reading Comprehension page, it states: "Explicit instruction in comprehension strategies should begin when a learner has acquired sufficient word recognition mastery, usually no sooner than low intermediate level, GE 3." This may be a controversial statement. I believe that many argue that comprehension should be taught right from the beginning-whether one is looking at pictures in a story, or listening to a story read aloud.

32. Given that this is a "mini-course," how complete or comprehensive is the content of the course?

Average rating: 2.7

Comments:
- Seems like by definition, a mini-course is going to be difficult to plan and implement. Lots of decision points about what to include and how much depth to address. The content is broad, but not deep enough to change practice.
- On a positive note the material could be informative for instructors and might encourage them to learn more.
- Reference was made to phonics instruction using "Lindamood or Wilson." Those names are rather casual terms for extensive interventions and I didn't see other descriptions of such approaches. These approaches require fuller description so the reader would know what is intended and that extensive training is required for such structured approaches.

- Good on print skills; weak on meaning (especially reading comprehension).

33. How effective is the Mini-Course in helping you use or in enhancing your understanding of the ASRP reading profiles?

    Average rating: 2.8 (based on two reviewers' rating)

    Comments:
- If a person enters the website with the intent of examining the reading profiles, the approach works best.
- If the intent is to provide a link to the profiles through the mini-course, the reader will get a better sense, but that link just doesn't seem obvious until you get to the "browse all profiles." That impression may be ok.
- Also though, isn't the mini-course intended as a "stand-alone" document for instructors?
- I like the course as a resource, but not as a tutorial. I'd run folks through some analysis of samples. See question 34.
- N/A. I knew the information in the mini-course and am familiar with the ARCS study, so the Mini-Course did not help nor hurt my understanding.

34. How effective is the presentation of the material as an online tutorial?

    Average rating: 2.3

    Comments:
- That might be the toughest question! I don't have a good sense of how the tutorial would improve practice. I don't see an advantage of this material as being on-line as opposed to delivered in a booklet. The technology provides more potential as an instructional methodology than what is provided in this mini-course.
- As a supplement to other instructional activities for instructors, the tutorial could work. The materials are introductory and I imagine that a program administrator could have instructors review the material as an introduction to reading instruction.
- I think the material is an excellent resource, but it is not interactive enough to serve as a tutorial. For example, it was helpful in the section on background information when the reader could try out a sample passage where background information played an important role. More of that sort of interaction would be necessary for it to be a tutorial. Also, some actual activities where the reader must complete exercises would be valuable.
- I wonder if there is a way to make each page appear to be less dense and therefore friendlier to the typical nonacademic person?

35. What do you like about the Mini-Course? What are its strengths?

- I like the number of topics covered. Provides a broad overview that teaching reading or learning to read involves a number of components. The topics are relatively brief to study and navigating worked well. I don't have a good sense though what the mini-course would mean to a new or experienced instructor with very limited background.
- The course has a great deal of important information clearly explained.

- It presents a lot of good, important, and pertinent information.

36. What do you dislike about the Mini-course? What are its weaknesses?

- Does it engage the reader? Maybe. Will a learner get the answers s/he is seeking? "Yes," but the style makes the learner pretty passive. Maybe one of the mini-course's best features is the breadth of topics addressed. The learner will get an overview of content or an awareness.
- It needs to be more interactive. There is not much about comprehension.
- It has too much information on each page.

37. How could the Mini-Course be improved?

- Seems like the text is well organized and sequenced so that will be a definite asset. For a self-teaching tool though, the depth seems lacking and I'm not sure how well a learner will stay engaged. If this text is intended as an overview, the text works.
- The writing style could use improvement from a careful editing that made the language more focused. Rewrite those sentences that include: it is, it makes, it assesses, it can, it has, there is, this is. Such constructions are not so helpful for someone who is wanting to learn new content.
- A reference is made to phonics instructional programs: "Lindamood or Wilson" without further elaboration. I doubt that many instructors would know the reference.
- If there were a way to make the appearance of the information seem less dense, that would be an improvement. I also wonder, if some people may like to take a quiz before taking the course. This is what I am imagining: 1. The questions from the quiz are taken from the content of the course. 2. At the end of the quiz, the computer diagnoses the sections that the test taker may want to read. This way, the person does not need to go to each web page, to discover whether this is new information for him/her to learn.

Final Thoughts

38. Would you recommend this website to your students or colleagues? Why or why not?

- I can recommend the website, especially to individuals who have at least some knowledge of the content. For the person for whom the information is brand new, additional resources would be needed.
- The text is a lot to absorb without engaging activities.
- Yes. The profiles are a real strength. The way a teacher can put in the scores and come up with a profile is fabulous.
- As someone who is involved in professional development (PD), I'd love to use it as an interactive site. I'd develop case studies and use the site as the basic tool for the PD.
- To students yes. I think that it is a good way to teach about reading components. To my colleagues-no. There is nothing for them to learn by looking at this website.

39. Do you have any further comments about the overall quality of the ASRP website?

- No. Seems like I have said enough!
- The quality is good; the programming of the site is grand.

A few nit picky details:

1. I think you refer to both 10 and 11 profiles in various places.
2. I think it is important to explain that in the course you are explaining all components, but only using 5 in the profile. You might want to talk about why those 5, especially that some of the categories are subsumed. For example, a word attack score will give profile information about phonemic awareness. However, if one has a very low word attack score, more analysis of phonemic awareness would be necessary diagnostic information. You address the choice of the 5 under the profile section, but not in the mini-course section.
3. In the screen on silent reading comprehension, first paragraph, *achievement* is spelled *achievment*.
4. Teachers have trouble segmenting sounds. They would need more practice in the phonemics section.
5. I'd caution teachers that it is only useful to teach the most obvious and high frequency affixes. I like the list found in the CORE reading materials, which is what we use in our study. I've attached the list, fyi.

- I think that this is an excellent idea. I am concerned about the lack of empirical evidence connecting the profiles to instructional suggestions.

Part II. Summary of Practitioners' Reviews

This report first summarizes the overall review of the website; it then summarizes the review of the MAP tool and Mini-Course, respectively. Lastly, it presents the rating and comments reviewers gave for each question.

Overall Review of the Website (Both Tracks)

Overall, the reviewers rated the two tracks of the website very favorably in both their appearance/usability and content, and on a scale of 1-4, gave the website an average rating of 3.6.

In terms of appearance and usability, the reviewers thought the website was fairly easy to navigate and that information was clearly labeled. However, they also thought that the website appeared too busy or crowded and text dense. They commented that the Search option worked well, but that the format of the search results was hard to read. In addition, the reviewers provided specific recommendations regarding each question, which are presented in the last section of this report. The reviewers gave an average rating of 3.5 for the appearance and usability of the website.

In terms of the content of the website, three of the five reviewers believed that the intended audiences were adult education instructors and two believed that the intended audiences were diagnosticians/assessment specialists. They all thought that the content and terminology of the website were appropriate for its intended audiences. However, the reviewers commented that the purposes of the website were not too clear, and that the organization of the website needed work/revision, e.g., including a site map, or making the links to sub pages more visible or prominent. While the reviewers all agreed that it was interesting and useful to present information in two parallel tracks, they also suggested that users of the site, especially novice teachers or volunteers, read the Mini-Course first before they went on to use the MAP tool. All five reviewers indicated that they would recommend the website to their students or colleagues, but some said that they would do so with reservations or qualifiers. The reviewers gave the content of the website an average rating of 3.7 on a scale of 1-4.

The Match A Profile Tool

Generally speaking, the reviewers rated the reading MAP tool favorably, and on a scale of 1-4, gave it a rating of 3.3. In addition, they offered very specific and meaningful comments about each question.

The reviewers thought that the purposes of the MAP tool and the instructions for using the tool were clear. They believed that, even though the website provided enough information that practitioners could use to come up with different profiles and to interpret the profiles, the website provided only enough information for experienced instructors or practitioners to apply the results of the tool in actual instructional settings. They believed that practitioners with limited experience or background in reading and assessment would need more support or resources to

apply the results, therefore, more information should be provided to address the particular instructional needs of various types of learners.

When asked who was likely to benefit most from using the MAP tool, four of the five reviewers believed that adult education instructors would benefit most, while two believed that diagnosticians or assessment specialists would. Two reviewers also believed that graduate students in adult education would likely benefit from using this tool (note: the choices were not exclusive). One reviewer thought that more needed to be done on the website to help adult education teachers learn how to use the information in different classroom settings, such as multi-level classes, homogeneous groupings.

Regarding situations in which the MAP tool could be used, most reviewers believed that it would be most useful for screening and placing (struggling) adult learners and designing instruction in different settings, be it in one-on-one tutoring or multi-level classes. Some reviewers also believed that it would be useful for deciding whether further assessment was needed. However, the reviewers felt that, with non-native English speaking adult learners, the MAP tool would be useful only if these learners were proficient in English to take the subtests. And all reviewers had concerns about using the MAP tool to diagnose adult learners with learning/reading disabilities.

When asked whether the MAP tool was effective in distinguishing different types of learners, reviewers believed that while it was effective in creating profiles, it needed to include more information about strategies and resources that adult educators could use to design instruction or intervention for the profiles. And they further believed that with non-native English speaking adult learners, other skills needed to be assessed. Some reviewers believed that the MAP tool would be fairly useful in helping educators choose instruction or intervention strategies, while others had reservations.

Things that the reviewers liked about the MAP tool included its ease of use, free tests to measure components, language (e.g., it uses common language instead of jargon) and presentation format (e.g., narrative/prose, graphs and tables). They also liked it in that it could help instructors better understand their students (e.g., students with the same scores do not necessarily need to be taught the same skills in the same way; how different components come together to "profile" real students in their classrooms.), and provide an excellent resource for helping identify strengths and weaknesses in individual students.

Things that the reviewers disliked about the website, or rather, what they would like to see on the website included the following: more links to resources and strategies, more lists of teacher references, student materials and software, and make it less dense. Other comments in this area included that it was hard to make the profiles specific enough to be useful to help with instruction and clear enough to see whether a student fit an instructor, and that some instructors may have difficulty gathering the testing scores to enter and come up with profiles if they were not accustomed to testing.

Ways that the reviewers suggested to improve the website are directly linked to things they disliked about the website. These ways included (but not limited to) adding more lists of

teacher references, student materials and software, better link to vocabulary/glossary, giving educators "permission" or acknowledgement to bring in materials and strategies that work, adding a listening component, developing or referencing some specific instructional activities for the particular profiles, and providing more information on phonemic awareness and how to develop it, and making the website less dense.

In rating how the overall effectiveness of the MAP tool in adult education field, the reviewers gave a rating of 3.2 on a scale of 1-4. They believed that the website would be useful if educators took time to investigate what it had to offer, or if they had some experience teaching and assessing adult learners and had background knowledge in reading and assessment. Some also suggested that it be made a required component in adult education professional development. To make it more useful, some believed that programs should be encouraged to collect more information on students and a study guide be provided.

The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

The reviewers viewed the Mini-Course very favorably as well, and provided meaningful and constructive suggestions and comments. On a scale of 1-4, they gave the Mini-Course an average rating of 3.7.

The reviewers commented that the purposes of the Mini-Course were fairly clear, but some had to assume its purposes. To give users a better idea about the course itself, reviewers suggested that some bullets be included to show the learning objectives and that it should indicate how long it would take to go through the course. To that end, they thought that the course might also suggest that instructors with less experience in reading and assessment take the Mini-Course first.

The reviewers thought the information in the course was current and accurate, but would like to see more instructional resources for teachers. Some reviewers would like to see reading development discussed in a broader context of language development, and in the larger context of cognition, thinking, learning and intelligence. All reviewers thought that, as far as the five components were concerned, that the information presented in the Mini-Course was comprehensive. However, they said they would like to see more links or references, information on the role of listening comprehension and organization skills in comprehension, and a more thorough description of why some adult learners may have phonemic awareness difficulties and how these difficulties affect the five components.

The reviewers thought the Mini-Course was helpful in enhancing their understanding or using of the MAP tool and that it should be a recommended requirement for those wanting to use the MAP tool, at least for those who had limited experience or background in reading and assessment. The reviewers also thought that it was effective to present the information as an online tutorial; it provided a good review of some major reading skill components, short, concise, comprehensive, with few distractions. The glossary and resources were very helpful. The reviewers also would like to see the website to be more interactive, with more examples, color and more instructional ideas.

Things they liked about the Mini-Course included the amount of information presented (comprehensive enough but not overwhelming or too long), the kind of information (good background information and links, clear explanations/definitions, useful synthesis of recent research, Word Analysis Test Bank), structure and organization (well organized and sequenced, with concise directions), and ease of use (inclusion of references in text via pop-ups, print friendly version, side bars and downloads), etc.

Things they disliked about the Mini-Course included its dense format and some of its unclear links. It needed to be more interactive. Each section should have more resources for that section. It was weak in explaining the root cause of phonemic and phonological problems (i.e., it doesn't explain that it is an auditory processing difficulty that doesn't just go away with drill and practice repeating sounds. It could potentially be a source of frustration for both educators and learners from this perspective). Another weakness was that it did not include more information on LD and its impact on particular reading skills. Dyslexia was mentioned on Profile 5, but the term was not defined in the Glossary.

Ways the reviewers suggested to improve the Mini-Course dealt with the format and presentation of the information (site map on Home page, more interactive, sooner Glossary, use phonemes that have the same grapheme symbol, use simpler and shorter sentences), information about the course itself (what it can or cannot do, what a user will get out of it after using it, how long it will take to complete it, use the answers to some of the questions on this review on the FAQ page), the content of the course (e.g., add information about using multiple intelligence to teach reading to adults with phonemic processing difficulty, include more instructional resources, additional test options, mini-quizzes to test users' understanding of the information).

Ratings and Comments by Each Question

Overall Review of the ASRP Website

Appearance and Usability

17. How attractive or appealing is appearance of the website?

    Average rating: 3.1

    Comments: Three of the five reviewers commented that the web page seems too busy, crowded or text dense. Other comments include –
    - Avoid using all capital letters.
    - Use an easy to read font, such as a font with feet (serif) instead of one without feet (san serif).
    - Make this website accessible to people with disabilities, given that many folks with reading difficulties have disabilities.
    - Although there are a few photos of adult learners on the home page, the format is basically a pretty standard, boring presentation of black print on a white page (background.)
    - Remove the shadowing around titles.
    - There is a crisp quality to the pages – the welcome page is structured nicely – simply and thus is inviting. Color and lots of white space.

18. How easy is it to navigate the website (e.g., move up and down, from page to page, or from link to link)?

    Average rating: 3.8

    Comments: Overall, the reviewers commented that the links worked well. Suggestions include:
    - Include a site map and other links on the Home page instead of just on the rest of the pages, and show what all is included on the site. The site has much more to offer than just the Mini-Course and the Match the Profiles.
    - Or have a search option on the first page.

19. How clearly is the information labeled?

    Average rating: 3.8

    Comments:
    - There should be some indication that to get a definition of the reading components, readers need to go to Glossary.
    - Good explanation of abbreviations and some terms throughout via the use of pop-up windows (e.g., ABE) but not the reading components which is what this site is all about.

- Information is clearly labeled. I have some concern about some of the labels themselves i.e. "Assessment Drives Instruction", which I think some adult educators will react to. (Many believe assessment should inform instruction, but not drive it. So I would change the term here, because it can imply teaching to the test."
- I never found myself wondering about the contents on any page – it is well-labeled and consistently so.
- I would have appreciated the "printer friendly icon" being more prominently placed and/or highlighted. When I first went to the site and printed, I missed seeing it.

20. How effective is the Search engine?

Average rating: 3.4

Comments: Reviewers found the option easy to use and located the information quickly, but some found the format of the results very hard to read – too large and bunched up, and had to scroll from left to right to see it all. It would be easier to read if it were in a serif font.

Content

21. Based on the overall content of the website, who do you think the intended audiences are?
    1: 2 reviewers
    2: 5 reviewers
    3: 3 reviewers
    4: 1 reviewer

    Comments:
    - Fairly technical and lots of steps to go through and digest. Language level is appropriate, but content is complex. Lots of time to process it all and figure out how to use it in the classroom.
    - The website is too dense and complex for adult education students, but diagnosticians will use the site to compare it with what they know or are currently doing.
    - Instructors want to know more about their students' learning profiles – and they are given instructional suggestions to help them to address problems – a great resource!
    - While some administrators may find this website useful, some other administrators whose focus is much more administrative than programmatic; they might not have much need to know about or understand the content of this website.

22. Is the terminology on the website appropriate for its intended audiences (i.e., terms are clearly defined but not too technical)?

    Average rating: 3.7

    Comments: All five reviewers commented that the terminology was appropriate for targeted audiences. Other comments include-

- Glossary should be more visible and/or prominent and easy to access frequently. Good use of references to acronymns that were explained elsewhere (e.g., NRP report).
- Some terms need to be explained, such as "modalities" and "orthography."
- Surprisingly, the term "dyslexic" was used to describe one of the 3 sample profiles. It was my impression that this term is not considered accurate and is a catch -a term for all kinds of reading differences.

23. Is the purpose of the website clear for its intended audiences?

   Average rating: 3.2

   Comments: Overall, the reviewers did not think the purpose of the site was too clear.
   - Content is clear, but it is hard to comprehend the magnitude of what is available on the website.
   - Clear if it's not intended for the adult education student.
   - The opening home page is weak in defining the purpose of the website. Why is the use of "profiling" helpful? What do you want instructors to be able to do or gain by using this site? There are not clearly defined goals on the first page.
   - The "welcome" page could first explain the purpose of the website and then the information regarding the adult learners used in the study.
   - It isn't clearly stated anywhere who the intended audience is. If so, I missed it. Since the site stated "Research-based assessment practices for the adult education classroom, I assumed this meant diagnosticians and teachers.

24. Is the content of the website appropriate for its intended audiences?

   Average rating: 4

   Comments: All reviewers commented that the content was appropriate for its intended audiences, e.g., practitioners or adult education instructors with experience. Other comments-
   - Could use some additions such as more Instructional resources – especially available software.
   - Very appropriate if not intended for the adult education student.
   - It's appropriate in terms of its purpose for adult educators to know more about what makes up the language processing components of reading. I think it lacks a larger context of adult learners as human beings who bring rich skills, intelligences and experiences to reading and writing.
   - There are a lot of concepts presented, and a new teacher or volunteer instructor could easily find this website overwhelming on first use.

25. Is the website well-organized?

   Average rating: 3.5

   Comments:

- The links that one finds on each sub page (e.g., Match, ARCS, Resources, Glossary, FAQ, Site Map, About us, feedback) need to be more visible on the Home page. The Home page is too specific and not general enough to necessarily encourage a user to go to the next page.
- On the one hand, it flows pretty well sequentially; However, I had a hard time trying to back and find the 3 learner profile examples when I wanted to and gave up hunting around to figure out where they were located under what topic.
- Very logical – moves fluidly
- I would like to have been directed to the "site map" when I first started exploring the website. I thought the site map is/was very helpful in getting a good overview and understanding of the website's structure.

26. How effective is it to present the content/information on two different tracks (i.e., the profiles and the Mini-Course)?

   Average rating: 3.9

   Comments:
   - Interesting approach to the website- but it looks like two equal options. Perhaps the purpose or use of each could be explained more on the home page – I would also include a site map or index for those who are looking for something more specific. Furthermore, after looking at the two sections, I would strongly recommend that someone go through the Mini-Course before trying to work with the Profile Matches (unless one has that kind of background already). But for an AE teacher, they might feel more comfortable with the Matches after going through the Mini-Course content. Perhaps just list that one before the profile matches on the Home page?
   - As stated on the website, it is best to review the Mini-Course first. However, on the home page I would list the Mini-Course first.
   - It works OK. I'd almost suggest that people go through the Mini-Course first so they understand the profile section.
   - It could be overwhelming to adult educators to have all the information together. This allows them to select what they need or would like to know as they go along.
   - I thought this is/was a good idea, given that some users may want or need only the Mini-Course information, at least at first. The profiles and resources sections are informed by the content in the Mini-Course. The website is thus useful in building the knowledge base of novice teachers and volunteers.

27. Would you recommend this website to your students or colleagues? Why or why not?

   All five reviewers would recommend this website to students or colleagues, but some with some concerns.
   Positive comments:–
   - Lots of great comprehensive, very easy to use information that teachers can learn to use without having a strong reading background.

- I will highly recommend this website. It is very much needed for a field filled with instructors and tutors who know little about the reading process. An online educational source allows those with gaps to fill them in as needed and it also addresses issues of accessibility. The website also helps foster a common language to be used among practitioners.
- It does a good job of delineating the different components of the reading process and is a very good tool for providing more in-depth knowledge to adult educators about this.
- It is invaluable in the amount of information and teacher-assistance that's given, free WMT, good resources, and other downloads are great. Assessment and profiles drive instruction, and instruction suggestions are given so that students receive appropriate help.

Concerns:
- It concerns me that there is no discussion about the connection between reading and writing – other than to talk about spelling.
- I am not 100% behind the concept of "profiling" anybody. I filled out a profile form   for a learner I know and the profile description didn't really match the scores I put in. (i.e. 4 or WR, 3 for spelling, 7 for WM, 8 for Silent Reading Imp. I think the concept of different profiles of adult learners makes sense. But I find the suggestions on how to address things like Phonemic Awareness and Phonologic awareness to be very simplistic and unrealistic. Individuals with poor phonemic awareness skills don't gain it easily or quickly by just being told to "sound out" words. The whole reason why their phonemic awareness is low is because they cannot sound out words.
- I would definitely recommend the website to colleagues and graduate students. However, I would indicate what, for example, I thought might be most helpful to them in their given situation. For example, staff at the Adult Literacy Resource Center (ALRC) at the D.C. Public Library, my worksite, printed out and shared the "Using Assessments" and 'Test Bank" components at two recent workshops for GED teachers.

28. Do you have any further comments about the overall quality of the ASRP website?

- Because it is more comprehensive and easier to understand the Match the Profiles Section if you do the Mini-Course first, I would recommend that the home page encourage users to do that first. Of course those that are there for the Matching Profiles will jump in there anyway. How long is the Mini-Course from start to finish? It might be helpful for individuals to know how long it might take them to go through it. Minutes? Hours? Days? Weeks?
- Everything from the sidebars, with explanations of acronyms and abbreviations to the various graphs to the actual profile descriptions is extremely well done.
- Several of the ALRC staff members here find the website very informative; the referencing of research is helpful as are the resources listed and linked to.

The Match A Profile Tool

29. Is the purpose of the MAP tool clearly explained?

Average rating: 3.8

Comments:
- Why would you want to match your learner to an ARC profile? What's the benefit? How is this helpful if I'm working with a multi-level class and not a one-on-one situation? – These are questions that could be answered on the first page and might make the purpose of using the MAP tool more useful. I am trained as a researcher as well, but if the intent of this website tool is to attract field personnel, they need to know "what's in it for them?" in order to get them to look at it to find out how it can be useful. Once they look, I suspect that they will be hooked. We have found that in CT as we educate the field about what the ARC website is.
- I think it's pretty clear. I find myself reacting to the description "we have selected five of the components to picture different patterns…." You may be choosing the word picture intentionally, but I think I'd prefer "demonstrate" or "describe" over "picture."
- In "Introduction to Match a Profile" and why profiles are important, the idea that ARCS learners and ABE students could share similar learning profiles is made clear; instructional suggestions for each profile are given to build reading skills.
- Three obvious reasons were stated in "Why Are the Reading Profiles Important."

30. Are the instructions for using the MAP tool clear?

Average rating: 3.9

Comments:
- For the most part. One section that I did not find to be clear was at the very end where the following comment was indicated: "Do you think your learner has been placed in the right "virtual" literacy class?" I had to really stop and think about what this meant. Perhaps there is a better way to state it? Such as, Do you think that the profile identified through this tool for your learner is a good match? Does he/she exhibit similar literacy skills to the person identified in the profile? (etc.)
- Really can't go wrong – well done – structured in a step-by-step fashion.
- In some, if not many cases, users will probably need to do additional assessments in order to use the "Match a Profile" component.

31. Does the website provide the user with enough information to interpret the results of the MAP tool?

Four reviewers chose "yes." One chose "no."

Comments:
- The website could include more strategies – what do I do next? – with specific resource references/instructional materials/software, etc.
- The dilemma here is that few programs will have all this information on their students. The website reinforces that programs should acquire this information

and fortunately provides the information to directly download additional assessments or tells where to find them.

- The descriptions of the profiles are very basic and similar. The only thing that changes is the actual chart or visual showing the score. There isn't much to really interpret. The suggestions for instruction provide a bit more background information about the profile type, but how does one "interpret" the results? The Mini-Course provides information that needs to be then extrapolated in order to interpret what the scores might mean.
- An instructor with a reading background would probably have a better idea of how the results should be used than someone with no experience.
- Yes, but a novice teacher/practitioner might need some support or counsel from a more experienced reading practitioner.

32. Does the website provide the user with enough information to apply the MAP tool?

   Two reviewers chose "yes," three chose "no."

   Comments:
   - Apply? If you mean enter scores and come up with a profile – YES. If you mean use the profile to come up with sufficient strategies – NO.
   - I think more information could be provided to address the particular instructional needs of the various profiles. In fact, that section should be emphasized more. It kind of gets lost among all the other information.
   - Yes, if you mean get a profile completed. No, if you mean take the profile and apply it to instruction in a meaningful way. The instructional strategies are very limited, rely on only standard reading instruction strategies, and don't consider multiple intelligences, integrating   learner strengths or specific interventions.
   - "What you will need to make a match" is a recipe for obtaining scores to enter that will result in a profile.
   - Yes, but many practitioners will likely need to do more assessment to use the MAP tool. And, I think the more familiar a user becomes with the profiles, the easier it will be to apply the MAP tool. It's helpful that the site gives a list of resources for accessing assessments for each of the five reading components.

33. Based on your experience working with adult learners, who is likely to benefit most from using the MAP tool?

   1: one reviewer
   2: four reviewers
   3: two reviewers
   4: two reviewers

   Comments:
   - More needs to be done on this site to help AE teachers learn how to use this information in a multi-level class that is the typical reality in these times of slashed resources. Or . . . provide suggestions about how to change the system so

that programs can work with more homogeneous groupings (e.g., a closed class vs. an open-entry/open-exit situation; using certain tests/tools to group students according to reading skills).
- This tool may help them isolate areas of weakness that they (educators) can target more specifically in terms of instructional strategies.
- Students ultimately benefit from appropriate placements and instruction.
- Graduates students in Adult Education and reading would likely benefit, especially if their coursework involved reading diagnoses and/or a practicum in teaching reading.

34. Based on your experience working with adult learners, what are the situations in which the MAP tool is likely to be most useful (please give examples)?

- Working in a one-on-one tutoring situation
- For a student with hom a teacher is struggling in a classroom situation (e.g., a low reader in a multi-level classroom)
- Ideally a program that has some type of reading screening and is seriously addressing reading INSTRUCTION both at a beginning reader level and at an intermediate level. With native and non-native speakers of English and in all types of classrooms. (ABE, ESL, GED, ASE, etc.)
- The tool will be helpful for those who do not understand the various components of the reading process and in providing suggestions for instruction to address deficits.
- It can be used to make sense of the battery of tests that are often given at intake so that the information can help present a "picture" for the adult learner to see how complex language development is, and understand why a teacher or tutor would choose to target certain skill areas.
- Placement into appropriate classes for ABE, GED, and/or ESOL
- Designing instruction (effective)
- Providing extra help
- Determining whether to pursue further testing specially when test accommodations may be needed
- Helping student decide on careers or jobs that "fit."
- It would be useful with adult learners who, after being in an instructional program for a reasonable period of time, do not seem to be progressing, with students who evidence significant discrepancies among their reading skills or possible learning disabilities, and with students whose performance is regularly inconsistent. For example, we have a student here at the ALRC who attends a one-to-one tutoring program and participates in a Sound Lab (phonemic awareness and phonics training). His performance is very inconsistent, and his tutor is frustrated. So, I suggested that we do some assessment and use the MAP tool though I think I know what profile he fits.

35. How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for screening non-native English speaking adult readers?

Average rating: 2.8

Comments: Reviewers commented that it might be useful if the students have proficiency in English.

- Useful if students have sufficient English to take the "subtests."
- Not sure what to answer here in that I am not sure what you mean by "screening." Identifying NNES could be easily done by asking them if they are a native speaker of English. If you mean "assessing' their particular needs, the site provides information on the components that many NNES are deficient in, namely vocabulary development. However, NNES need other skills to be proficient in English that the MAP tool does not measure, such as pronunciation.
- It could help flag ESL learners and clarify "level" of instruction.
- Fine for more literate adults, but for non-native English speaking students with low literacy skills – even in the native language, not sure there's enough information to decide on what to do for them.
- I probably wouldn't use the MAP tool with non-native speakers of English unless they could be comfortably instructed in English.

36. How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for diagnosing/screening adult readers with learning/reading disabilities or special needs?
    Average rating: 3

    Comments:
    - My background is in LD assessment. It is not appropriate to go there or even hint of going there (e.g., mentioning LD or dyslexia). Learning Disabilities is a specific disability that cannot be diagnosed via a website or simply reading skills. There is already much too much speculation about who has and does not have an LD in AE. AE teachers and most reading specialists are not qualified to diagnose LD and therefore should not be encouraged to think they CAN come up with a label. They can, however, come up with function strengths and weaknesses in reading, regardless of the reason, but not the etiology.
    - By requiring the user to provide information on the various reading components, the example given regarding the inadequacies of only using silent reading scores and by highlighting how low phonemic awareness and spelling skills often define the learner with reading disabilities.
    - The profiles may show what adult learners have phonemic and phonological difficulties, but I am concerned that adult educators will then take on the role of "diagnosing" learning disabilities. I am very troubled by the ways that adults with phonemic difficulties are being labeled disabled.
    - No diagnosis, but patterns of strengths and areas of need will be obvious.
    - I think the MAP tool has real potential in this area. However, you'd likely need to include more information about learning disabilities on the site and be more explicit about which profiles, aside from #5 which mentions "dyslexia", might indicate a possible learning disability. And, including an LD screening tool and instructions for use might be considered.

37. How effective is the MAP tool likely to be in distinguishing different types of readers (e.g., low literate adult readers, non-native English speaking readers, and adult readers with learning/reading disabilities)?

Average rating: 3

Comments:
- This seems to be the weakest aspect of this site. I followed the suggestions to get more information on strategies for instruction by following a link to a section of the Mini-Course that was recommended at the end of these profiles. But once there, I found more references to assessment and not enough re: strategies and resources.
- For native speakers, levels can be identified and possible learning/reading disabilities can be indicated. For NNES, levels can be identified, but other skills need to be assessed. The issue of identifying those with learning or reading disabilities within this population would be very difficult.
- It certainly works to distinguish types.
- "A Comparison of Three Reading Profiles" is a good model for how to interpret subtest scores and would help to identify various reader types.
- The site did describe the various types of readers. Profile 1's descriptor, "TOPS", seems a bit out-of-place given the phrases used to describe the other profiles.

38. How useful is the MAP tool likely to be as a basis for choosing instruction or intervention strategies for different types of readers?

Average rating: 3.2

Comments:
- Fairly useful based on the labels put on the various profiles. However, I think more emphasis needs to be placed on why this distinction between different types of readers is important for a teacher to make. Or is it more important (as much of the research now suggests) to ID the reading skill strengths and weaknesses and go from there?
- I think that is the main benefit of this tool.
- I think it has some value, but, again, I think it may be helpful only if the instructor does further assessment in order to better understand underlying problems with some of the reading components. I'm not sure it is very effective in offering successful or useful interventions.
- As long as instructors have enough training in methods and actually understand the effect on learning that students with certain profiles will experience. The MAP tool seems most helpful in identifying what individual reading components (skills) need strengthening and/or most attention. See response to #25 below.

39. What do you particularly like about the MAP tool? What are its strengths?

- It is easy to use - gives samples of free tests to measure the components and helps a teacher to understand that just because students have the same reading scores, doesn't mean that they need to be taught the same skills in the same way. Common language not jargon, but gives a good introduction to learning the language necessary to discuss and teach reading skills.
- It helps demonstrate how the different components come together to "profile" real students instructors have in their classes. It provides information in prose and graphically.
- I think it is valuable in terms of helping instructors of classrooms see what they are dealing with in their classroom and it can help adult learners have a more tangible picture of what the reading skills look like.
- WMT covers the entire range of skills (beg. to TOPS) seen in adult Ed Centers. Easy to administer tests and enter scores – menu for each profile is a treasure chest of information – love tables and line graphs
- It seems an excellent resource for helping to identify strengths, needs and weaknesses of individual adult learners. And, presenting information in various formats, narrative, graphs and tables is helpful.

40. What do you particularly dislike about the MAP tool? What are its weaknesses?

- Not enough links from the MAP tool and assessments to resources and strategies. Need more lists of teacher references, student materials and software.
- It, like the whole website, is a bit dense.
- As in all profiles, it's hard to make them specific enough to be useful (to help with instruction) and clear enough to see that a student actually fits me.
- I don't see weaknesses per se, but some instructors might have difficulties gathering the testing scores to enter if they're not accustomed to testing.
- It's not a dislike, but it takes time and exploration to be able to understand and then use this section of the ASRP website. It's worth taking the time, but users should probably know that there's a learning curve here, and patience is needed.

41. How would you improve the MAP tool?

- Need more lists of teacher references, student materials and software.Better link to vocabulary/glossary too.
- Make it less dense.
- I'd look at how repetitive all your strategy suggestions appear to be. I'd give educators "permission" or acknowledgment to bring in the materials and strategies that work. I think that there is not adequate information about what blocks phonemic awareness and how to develop this.
- Add listening component and I would just suggest that instructors are alerted to those   who indicated K-3 reading problems – since they may be dyslexic and require more expertise than is available.
- I would consider developing and/or referencing some specific instructional activities for the particular profiles. A resource that does this for comprehension is

<u>Reading for Meaning: Selected Teaching Strategies</u> (1996) by Valerie Meyer and Donald Keefe and published by Glencoe/McGraw Hill. They presented and described four profiles and then listed some teaching strategies/activities to use with learners.

42. Overall, how useful do you believe that the MAP tool is likely to be for the adult education field?

Average rating: 3.2

Comments:
- If they take the time to investigate what it has to offer. Having a study guide that someone could print off and use to navigate the site (e.g., fill in with info as they go along) could be helpful as well as provide the user with a record of information.
- Again, because few programs have such comprehensive information, many programs probably won't use this section. It will help to encourage programs to collect this information.
- It will probably be more useful for ABE and ESL instructors. I don't think it will be very useful for many of the community-based adult literacy programs who tend to serve students in the lowest reading level categories.
- It would be useful especially if it's made a component of professional development for all who are responsible for adult learners.
- I think it has the potential to be very useful, especially for practitioners who have some experience teaching and assessing adult learners and background knowledge in reading and assessment. I wouldn't set a new or inexperienced teacher/tutor to using this tool without guidance and monitoring. The MAP tool website could also be useful in a course or workshop on assessment and diagnosis of adult learners.

The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

43. Is (Are) the purpose(s) of the Mini-Course clear?

Average rating: 3.2

Comments:
- I would like to see some bullets regarding what you will know at the end of the course – like Learning Objectives. I could then better determine if this is appropriate for me. I would also like to see some reference as to how long it might take to go through this course.
- The introduction page doesn't state a purpose. One can assume its purpose.
- Might suggest that instructors with less reading experience take this track first.
- It seems to me that the purposes were listed in two places: 1) close to the Take the Mini-Course icon; and 2) on the page with the header "Reading Components." Both were clear to me.

44. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how current (e.g., whether or not supported by the latest scientific research) are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Average rating: 3.8

Comments:
- Information is current, but needs more instructional resources for teachers.
- Information is fairly current in terms of reading per se, but limited in terms of placing reading development in a broader context of language development, and the larger context of cognition, thinking, learning and intelligence(s). For example, reading acquisition is one aspect of the language (linguistic) intelligence.
- I look to NCSALL, NIFL and NCAL for current information and resources.
- I thought the information was adequately current, and I liked the links to the research findings.

45. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how accurate are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Average rating: 3.9

Comments:
- I think the breakdown is fairly thorough and accurate in terms of "print skills" and meaning skills. Again, I think it is missing the larger context of reading being only one aspect of the language intelligence (in terms) of the use of language to think, convey ideas, speak to others, play with words, etc. These descriptions are very much within a "reading research" framework.
- Many feel that "going all the way back" to address sound-symbol correspondences is useless in adults. I agree with the Mini-Course information on identifying and filling in gaps in early skills.
- Based on my studies and experience, the information and resources seem solid and accurate.

46. Given that this is a "Mini-Course," how complete or comprehensive is the content of the course?

Average rating: 3.7

Comments:
- I think for a Mini-Course it is extremely thorough/comprehensive. It seems to have just the right type and amount of information to help someone understand the basics. A few more links or references for someone who wants to know more might be helpful. I have been trained in this field and I found a definition of

phonics that was perfect. I wish I had found this earlier when a colleague asked me for the definition!
- I think overall, the Mini-Course is pretty comprehensive. However, what I think is missing is a more thorough description of why some adult learners may have phonemic awareness difficulties, how those difficulties are going to affect the 5 components you describe, and some explanation about the fact that these difficulties don't get "fixed" by repeating sounds. The whole problem is that they don't "perceive" sounds! They need other visual and kinesthetic avenues in order to integrate "sounds".
- Very comprehensive in terms of the 5 components selected
- The five targeted components were well-presented. The role of listening comprehension and organization skills in comprehension might have been stronger.

47. How effective is the Mini-Course in helping you use or in enhancing your understanding of the ASRP reading profiles?

   Average rating: 3.8

   Comments:
   - I think that this should be a recommended requirement for those wanting to use the MAP tool. Obviously those with some Reading background might not find it that helpful in terms of additional information, but the average AE teacher would be much better informed after the course to do the Profiling.
   - Again, for the person who does not know about assessment, they should start with the Mini-Course.
   - For me the course was informative, but the profile explanations, along with my own experience would have been sufficient.
   - I appreciated the strong correlation between the five major components presented in the Mini-Course and the reading profile descriptions. It makes a lot of sense, especially for less experienced practitioners.

48. How effective is the presentation of the material as an online tutorial?

   Average rating: 3.8

   Comments:
   - Short, concise, comprehensive, and keeps the reader's attention. Not too many links, pop-ups or distractions.
   - I would try to make it more interactive.
   - I think more examples, more color, more instructional ideas would strengthen this.
   - Terrific!
   - It's a good review of some of the major reading skill components. The Glossary and resources are very useful. This would be a good overview of reading for new practitioners, including volunteers.

49. What do you like about the Mini-Course? What are its strengths?

- Enough information and details but not overwhelming
- I like the inclusion of references within the text via pop-up boxes.
- Word Analysis Test Bank. But when I did a site search to locate that later, this page didn't show up when I used "tests" or "testing" – I had to use "bank" and then it was the first item! (not very logical if you are trying to go back and find something specific)
- It is comprehensive, but not too long. It is concise and covers the essentials. It has good background information and good links.
- I think it's a great and useful synthesis of the recent research on reading for adult educators not familiar with this.
- Very clear explanations/definitions – nicely structured sections with concise directions –downloads are great! Sidebars and links provide a nice flow through the course.
- The information is well-organized and sequenced. I think it would be easily understood by people with relatively little background in reading (e.g. volunteer teachers/tutors). Having print-friendly versions makes it possible for the information to be printed and used in workshops and shared in resource centers.

50. What do you dislike about the Mini-Course? What are its weaknesses?

- In the print skills/alphabetics/word recognition/sight words section – it is not clear what the link at the end means "click here for the web address for the adult collection of the Partnership for Reading." Pop-up one is sent to doesn't tell me any more than a link. What more will I find there? Why should I bother to go there?
- Each section should have more resources for that section listed there.
- It is a bit dense in its format. Again, I would try to make it more interactive.
- I think it is very weak in explaining the root cause of phonemic and phonological problems (i.e. it doesn't explain that this is an auditory processing difficulty that doesn't just go away with drill and practice repeating sounds. From this perspective, because I worked extensively with "low level" learners, I think it has the potential to increase frustration of both educators and adult learners.
- I like it!
- One obvious weakness was not including more information on LD and its impact on particular reading skills. You mention dyslexia on profile #5; it's not defined in the Glossary. And, many adult learners have undiagnosed disabilities or serious learning challenges.

51. How could it be improved?

- Instructional Resources
- Be more clear about what I will get out of this when I am done with it.

- What can it do and what can it not do?
- How long will it take me to complete it?
- Provide a better site map and right on the Home page.
- Provide sooner access to the Glossary (on the Home page).
- Use the answers to some of these questions on the FAQ page.
- I could not read or understand the phonemic representation for "sh" or /sh/. I would only use phonemes that have the same grapheme symbol.
- There are some sentences that need to be reworked as they are too complex or unclear such as "PA of non-reading disabled adults improves as reading ability improves, continuing to develop until decoding skills are established." And "Affixes…illustration of complexity of English orthography."
- I would make the Mini-Course more interactive. I would have "mini-quizzes" to test users understanding of the information.
- I think it could be improved by talking about the ways that learners have developed to "cope" are often actually ways that naturally utilize their other more developed intelligences. I found that it was as important to understand and teach about multiple intelligence theory in order to tap into learners' strengths, i.e. act out, discuss, use music, use the body, etc., to overcome the phonemic processing difficulties. Reading specialists who read easily sometimes don't understand that adults with phonemic difficulties aren't going to learn best by stressing what they can't do. To me, it is like insisting that a person who is tone deaf will learn to play a violin by ear. And if they just practice enough, they'll get it. Making instruction meaningful and multi-intelligent are also important components of reading instruction.
- Additional test options – e.g. Spadafore Diagnostic Reading Test – academic therapy. Questionnaire – other questions – use a computer? Own a computer? How do you get information about the world – the news? TV, papers, radio, others, etc. Best/worst job ever had – why?
- Include some references to resources for instructional and learning activities to develop and strengthen print and meaning skills.

Appendix

1. **Practitioner Review Solicitation**
2. **Practitioner Review Protocol**
3. **Researcher Review Solicitation**
4. **Researcher Review Protocol**

Dear _____:

　　　　Your name was given to me by _____ at the National Institute For Literacy (NIFL) as someone who might be interested in helping us with a website review. NIFL has contracted with RMC Research Corporation for a Comprehensive Review and Analysis of the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS). As part of our contract, we are conducting a review of a reading assessment website developed for NIFL by the National Center for the Study of Adult Literacy and Learning (NCSALL) called "Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles" (http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/) which was developed by Dr. Rosalind Davidson from NCSALL's own Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS).

　　　　As project director for this review, I am looking for a group of independent adult education practitioners to spend a few hours on their own time looking at the website and responding to a series of questions about the quality of the website's content and research base, its apparent usefulness to the field, and its ease of use. The practitioners need to be reading clinicians or other adult reading experts who have knowledge and experience in a) applying adult reading research in their work and practice, and b) adult reading/literacy assessments. If they have experience with websites that would be applicable to a website review, that would also be helpful. Most important to us is to find reviewers who can provide an independent, objective review of the website, which means people who do not have any past or current history working on the development, implementation, or promotion of ARCS and the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles website.

　　　　We anticipate that the review will take about 2-3 hours to complete. We will send the selected reviewers a set of questions and they will have a month to complete them. Participants will receive an honorarium of $200. If you are interested, please contact me at 603-422-8888 or by e-mail at the above address.

　　　　I am also looking for names of other potential reviewers. If you can think of other colleagues that might be interested, I would appreciate any names and contact information you can provide.

　　　　Please consider helping us with this project. Your expertise and feedback on the website will be very valuable in helping NIFL and NCSALL learn how to improve the website and make it a more valuable resource to the field. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Wauchope, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate
RMC Research Corporation
1000 Market Street, Bldg. 2
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 603-422-8888
FAX: 603-436-9166

Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP) Website
Practitioners Review

Name: _____   Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____

Telephone Number: _____   E-mail Address: _____

DIRECTIONS:

Before answering the questions on the following pages, please spend some time exploring the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP) website: http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/.

Please answer all the questions, beginning with a review of the entire website, followed by a set of questions about each of the two distinct tracks of the website.

Although we ask for your rating on each item, your written comments and examples, based on your own experience with adult learners in the field, will be more valuable to us. Please use additional pages if necessary.

Please send us your completed review by **FRIDAY, APRIL 8**. You may e-mail your review to Jiaxiu Yang at: jyang@rmcres.com

Or you may mail it to:

> Jiaxiu Yang
> RMC Research Corporation
> 1000 Market Street
> Portsmouth, NH 03801

Please make sure that you have included your name, address, and contact information at the top of this page so we can mail you the $200 honorarium as our thanks for participating in our review.

If you have any questions about the questions or the review itself, please contact Dr. Barbara Wauchope at RMC Research Corporation at bwauchope@rmcres.com or call 603-422-8888.

Thank you so much for contributing your knowledge and expertise to this review.

I. Overall Review Of The ASRP Website (Both The MAP tool And Mini-Course)

Appearance and Usability

52. How attractive or appealing is appearance of the website?

Not appealing			Very appealing
1	2	3	4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

53. How easy is it to navigate the website (e.g., move up and down, from page to page, or from link to link)?

Not easy			Very easy
1	2	3	4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

54. How clearly is the information labeled?

Not clearly labeled			Very clearly labeled
1	2	3	4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

55. How effective is the Search engine?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Content

56. Based on the overall content of the website, who do you think the intended audiences are?

1=Program administrators
2=Adult education instructors/tutors
3=Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers
4=Adult education students
5=Other (specify) _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

57. Is the terminology on the website appropriate for its intended audiences (i.e., terms are clearly defined but not too technical)?

Not appropriate   Very appropriate
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

58. Is the purpose of the website clear for its intended audiences?

Not clear   Very clear
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

59. Is the content of the website appropriate for its intended audiences?

Not appropriate   Very appropriate
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

60. Is the website well-organized?

Not well-organized   Very well-organized
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

61. How effective is it to present the content/information on two different tracks (i.e., the profiles and the Mini-Course)?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

62. Would you recommend this website to your students or colleagues? Why or why not?

63. Do you have any further comments about the overall quality of the ASRP website?

II. The Match A Profile Tool

64. Is the purpose of the MAP tool clearly explained?

Not clearly explained   Very clearly explained
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

65. Are the instructions for using the MAP tool clear?

Not clear   Very clear
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

66. Does the website provide the user with enough information to interpret the results of the MAP tool?

1=Yes
2=No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

67. Does the website provide the user with enough information to apply the MAP tool?

    1=Yes
    2=No

    Comments: _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

68. Based on your experience working with adult learners, who is likely to benefit most from using the MAP tool?

    1=Program administrators
    2=Adult education instructors/tutors
    3=Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers
    4=Adult education students
    5=Other (specify) _____

    Comments: _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

69. Based on your experience working with adult learners, what are the situations in which the MAP tool is likely to be most useful (please give examples)?

70. How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for screening non-native English speaking adult readers?

Not useful   Very useful

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

71. How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for diagnosing/screening adult readers with learning/reading disabilities or special needs?

Not useful   Very useful

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

72. How effective is the MAP tool likely to be in distinguishing different types of readers (e.g., low literate adult readers, non-native English speaking readers, and adult readers with learning/reading disabilities)?

Not effective   Very effective

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

73. How useful is the MAP tool likely to be as a basis for choosing instruction or intervention strategies for different types of readers?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

74. What do you particularly like about the MAP tool? What are its strengths?

75. What do you particularly dislike about the MAP tool? What are its weaknesses?

76. How would you improve the MAP tool?

77. Overall, how useful do you believe that the MAP tool is likely to be for the adult education field?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

III. The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

78. Is (Are) the purpose(s) of the Mini-Course clear?

Not clear   Very clear
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

79. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how current (e.g., whether or not supported by the latest scientific research) are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Not current   Very current
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

80. From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how accurate are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Not accurate   Very accurate
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

81. Given that this is a "mini-course," how complete or comprehensive is the content of the course?

Not comprehensive   Very comprehensive
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

82. How effective is the Mini-Course in helping you use or in enhancing your understanding of the ASRP reading profiles?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

83. How effective is the presentation of the material as an online tutorial?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

84. What do you like about the Mini-Course? What are its strengths?

85. What do you dislike about the Mini-Course? What are its weaknesses?

86. How could it be improved?

Dear _____:

Your name was given to me by _____ at the National Institute For Literacy (NIFL) as someone who might be interested in helping us with a website review. NIFL has contracted with RMC Research Corporation for a Comprehensive Review and Analysis of the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS). As part of our contract, we are conducting a review of a reading assessment website developed for NIFL by the National Center for the Study of Adult Literacy and Learning (NCSALL) called "Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles" (http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/) which was developed by Dr. Rosalind Davidson from NCSALL's own Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS).

As project director for this review, I am looking for a group of independent adult education reading researchers to spend a few hours on their own time looking at the website and responding to a series of questions about the quality of the website's content and research base, its apparent usefulness to the field, and its ease of use. The researchers need to be adult reading experts who have knowledge and experience of the adult reading research field. If they have experience with websites that would be applicable to a website review, that would also be helpful. Most important to us is to find reviewers who can provide an independent, objective review of the website, which means people who do not have any past or current history working on the development, implementation, or promotion of ARCS and the Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles website.

We anticipate that the review will take about 2-3 hours to complete. We will send the selected reviewers a set of questions and they will have a month to complete them. Participants will receive an honorarium of $200. If you are interested, please contact me at 603-422-8888 or by e-mail at the above address.

I am also looking for names of other potential reviewers. If you can think of other colleagues that might be interested, I would appreciate any names and contact information you can provide.

Please consider helping us with this project. Your expertise and feedback on the website will be very valuable in helping NIFL and NCSALL learn how to improve the website and make it a more valuable resource to the field. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Wauchope, Ph.D.
Senior Research Associate
RMC Research Corporation
1000 Market Street, Bldg. 2
Portsmouth, NH 03801
Phone: 603-422-8888
FAX: 603-436-9166

**Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP) Website
Researchers Review**

Name: _____   Date: _____

Mailing Address: _____

_____

Telephone Number: _____   E-mail Address: _____

DIRECTIONS:

Before answering the questions on the following pages, please spend some time exploring the
Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles (ASRP) website:
http://www.nifl.gov/readingprofiles/.

Please answer all the questions. The first section concerns your overall impressions of the
appearance, usability, and presentation of content on the website. The remaining sections ask
about the two "tracks" of the website. For those sections we are particularly interested in your
observations about the quality and scientific/evidence base of the information that is presented.

Although we ask for your rating on each item, your written comments and examples, based on
your own knowledge of the research and field of adult literacy, particularly reading, will be more
valuable to us. Please use additional pages if necessary.

Please send us your completed review by May 27. You may e-mail your review to Jiaxiu Yang
at: jyang@rmcres.com.

Or you may mail it to:
> Jiaxiu Yang
> RMC Research Corporation
> 1000 Market Street
> Portsmouth, NH 03801

Please make sure that you have included your name, address, and contact information at the top
of this page so we can mail you the $200 honorarium as our thanks for participating in our
review.

If you have any questions about the questions or the review itself, please contact Dr. Barbara
Wauchope at RMC Research Corporation at bwauchope@rmcres.com or call 603-422-8888.

Thank you so much for contributing your knowledge and expertise to this review.

ASRP Review Summary
RMC Research Corporation

I. Overall Impressions of the ASRP Website (Both the MAP tool and Mini-Course)

Appearance and Usability

87. How attractive or appealing is appearance of the website?

Not appealing   Very appealing

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

88. How easy is it to navigate the website (e.g., move up and down, from page to page, or from link to link)?

Not easy   Very easy

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

89. How clearly is the information labeled?

Not clearly labeled   Very clearly labeled

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

90. How effective is the Search engine?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

Presentation of Content

91. Based on the overall content of the website, who do you think the intended audiences are?

1=Program administrators
2=Adult education instructors/tutors
3=Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers
4=Adult education students
5=Other (specify) _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

92. Is the terminology on the website appropriate for its intended audiences (i.e., terms are clearly defined but not too technical)?

Not appropriate   Very appropriate
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

93. Is the purpose of the website clear for its intended audiences?

Not clear   Very clear
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

94. Is the content of the website appropriate for its intended audiences?

Not appropriate   Very appropriate
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

95. Is the website well-organized?

Not well-organized   Very well-organized
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

96. How effective is it to present the content/information on two different tracks (i.e., the profiles and the Mini-Course)?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

II. The Match A Profile Tool

97. Is the purpose of the MAP tool clearly explained?

Not clearly explained   Very clearly explained
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

98. Are the instructions for using the MAP tool clear?

Not clear   Very clear
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

99. Does the website provide users with enough information to interpret the results of the MAP tool?

1=Yes
2=No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

100.   Does the website provide users with enough information to apply the MAP tool?

1=Yes
2=No

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

101.   How would you rate the quality (e.g., internal and external validity, etc.) of the
Adult Reading Components Study (ARCS) on which the MAP tool was based?

Poor   Excellent
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

102.   How would you rate the technical merit (i.e., validity and reliability) of the
reading assessments used to generate the eleven reading profiles?

Poor   Excellent
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

103.   How would you rate the quality (e.g., predictive validity, reliability, etc.) of the ASRP MAP tool?

Poor   Excellent
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

104.   How would you rate the cultural fairness/sensitivity of the MAP tool?

Poor   Excellent
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

105.   Based on your experience working in the adult literacy/reading field, who is likely to benefit most from using the MAP tool?

1=Program administrators
2=Adult education instructors/tutors
3=Diagnosticians/assessment specialists/testers
4=Adult education students
5=Other (specify) _____

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

106.   Based on your experience working in the adult literacy/reading field, what are the situations in which the MAP tool is likely to be most useful (please give examples)?

107.   How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for screening non-native English speaking adult readers?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

108.   How useful is this MAP tool likely to be for diagnosing/screening adult readers with learning/reading disabilities or special needs?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

109.   How effective is the MAP tool likely to be in distinguishing different types of readers (e.g., low literate adult readers, non-native English speaking readers, and adult readers with learning/reading disabilities)?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

110.   How useful is the MAP tool likely to be as a basis for choosing instruction or intervention strategies for different types of readers?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

111.   What do you particularly like about the MAP tool? What are its strengths?

112.   What do you particularly dislike about the MAP tool? What are its weaknesses?

113.   How would you improve the MAP tool?

114.   Overall, how useful do you believe that the MAP tool is likely to be for the adult education field?

Not useful   Very useful
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

III. The Adult Reading Assessment Mini-Course

115.   Is (Are) the purpose(s) of the Mini-Course clear?

Not clear   Very clear

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

116.   From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how current (e.g., whether or not supported by the latest scientific research) are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Not current   Very current

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

117.   From what you know about adult reading and assessment, how accurate are the information and resources provided in the Mini-Course?

Not accurate   Very accurate

1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

118.   Given that this is a "mini-course," how complete or comprehensive is the content of the course?

Not comprehensive   Very comprehensive
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

119.   How effective is the Mini-Course in helping you use or in enhancing your understanding of the ASRP reading profiles?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

120.   How effective is the presentation of the material as an online tutorial?

Not effective   Very effective
1   2   3   4

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

121.   What do you like about the Mini-Course? What are its strengths?

122.   What do you dislike about the Mini-Course? What are its weaknesses?

123.   How could the Mini-Course be improved?

IV. Final Thoughts

124.   Would you recommend this website to your students or colleagues? Why or why not?

125.   Do you have any further comments about the overall quality of the ASRP website?