



FY22 Grant Plan Narrative

1. Every supervisory union and the school district was required to submit a recovery plan to the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE). Was your organization asked to participate in the planning?

Yes, The Tutorial Center (TTC) was present at our local LEA Recovery Team and Collaborative Stakeholders meetings. A TTC staff member participated in 8 weeks of meetings and gathered relevant information that will inform our AEL services. More than 20 school/community people were represented, including representatives from Vocational Rehabilitation; the Department of Children and Families; a Southwest VT Medical Center Social Worker; as well as caseworkers and clinicians from United Counseling Service (UCS), our local mental health agency.

If so, what was the outcome of your participation? i.e., how is this informing the delivery of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) services, especially for High School Completion Program (HSCP) students?

A Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU) recovery survey was sent to all SVSU families, and presentations were made to Bennington Workforce and Education. Teen employment surveys and pandemic recovery surveys were sent to solicit feedback and questions to guide the recovery planning. Because of our interaction with this team, we will have access to their findings, planning, and community resources. Our participation will inform how we can implement new strategies and continue to deliver our AEL/HSCP services for FY 22.

2. Please address each of the three outcome areas by describing your plan to provide effective services that will meet the recovery needs of your students. Answer these questions for each area.

Social emotion functioning, mental health and well-being

- What have been challenges in the past 18 months?**

The challenges over the last 18 months were in attendance, student numbers, and progress assessment. TTC was closed for in-person class during the first 3 months of COVID-19 in the last quarter of FY 20. Even when we reopened up to the public, FY 21 numbers were still impacted and hampered our student enrollments and attendance.

- What strategies to address these challenges were effective and how will you build on successes?**

The Tutorial Center has successfully implemented and used Personalized Learning Plans as an integral part of our services for AEL students. This includes the following:

- Setting goals with the students
 - Identifying steps for success
 - Building effective, caring relationships with students
 - Supporting students in expanding relationships with their community and other helpful resources to achieve identified goals
 - Transitioning students into classes and into post-secondary education/training
 - Referring students to services at UCS or other organizations that can help with their emotional functioning and mental health
- **What new strategies do you plan to implement in FY22?**

Our plan is to engage in professional development to gain new knowledge in evidence-based practices. We will dedicate time to critique and improve our use of Personalized Learning Plans to address the needs of our students' social/emotional function. We will collaborate and share resources with the Southwest Vermont and Bennington-Rutland supervisory unions in Bennington County.

We will provide students who are struggling with engagement in their classes due to emotional functioning and mental health challenges the support they need to achieve their stated goals by referring them to outside agencies.

The Tutorial Center will make every effort to connect students to community resources that will meet their needs. We will be supportive by providing a Transition Counselor to identify needs, communicate what resources may address their needs, and help them with the connections, including phone calls, completing documents, and transportation.

Student Engagement

- **What have been challenges in the past 18 months?**

Student engagement was impacted by the COVID pandemic. In the last quarter of FY20, The Tutorial Center was closed to the public until the middle of June, 2020. When we reopened, it was difficult to bring new students in for an orientation, and we had few inquiries. Our referring organizations, public schools, Department of Labor, and Vocational Rehabilitation of Vermont were equally constrained throughout the 18 months and were not meeting in person with any students/clients

- **What strategies to address these challenges were effective and how will you build on successes?**

In order to address the challenges of engaging new students, and keep the classes for enrolled students happening, we needed to learn and implement remote orientations,

administer initial TABE assessment, and provide instruction options. We successfully set up Google classroom, attached students to Google emails, and trained instructors on how to use this system.

The components of our orientation week are a success, with incoming students taking an active role in making a plan that works for them. During this period, staff worked with each new or returning student to understand expectations, academic needs and schedule classes. This continues to be a positive way to improve student engagement and enables them to understand the requirements.

During the orientation, we:

- Schedule and assign class attendance goals
 - Identify benchmarks for progress
 - Build on our relationships with students and match students with an instructor
 - Guide students to helpful resources that allow them to address their barriers to participation, such as childcare concerns, food and shelter assistance, and health needs.
- **What new strategies do you plan to implement in FY22?**

In FY22, we will expand options for students to come in person for orientation and assessments; a hybrid orientation option will be available for any student who needs this access. This initial interaction sets the stage for their success.

We are in the process of updating and designing a new website that will highlight all of the ways students can engage at The Tutorial Center. Student achievements will be a significant part of this design to encourage students who have been unsuccessful in the past.

Academic achievement and success

- **What have been challenges in the past 18 months?**

Most of our students prefer direct in-person instruction which made remote access more difficult, and our MSG gains suffered because of this. There were challenges with computers and internet access, and some of our students stopped attending the scheduled classes.

The remote learning made it more difficult for students to show progress in their assessments. Students were affected by the trauma of the pandemic. It was a challenge to meet the required 50% for progress assessments because students were often distracted while working remotely.

- ***What strategies to address these challenges were effective and how will you build on successes?***

Although we were challenged to get staff and students access to synchronous and asynchronous instruction, we were successful in putting a viable system in place. The remote classroom in Google Suite allowed us to continue to offer services to students while we were closed and later to students who were concerned about coming in person because of the potential exposure to COVID-19. We maintained schedules and implemented online platforms instruction.

We will continue to set up classes, materials, and blended learning instruction opportunities, and maintain our TABE Academy licenses to help students improve skills and make progress. Students are encouraged to attend some in-person classes periodically to be more effective in making improvements to Adult Secondary Education (ASE) skills. Hybrid classes, which allow students to choose multiple times to come into a class remotely or in-person, will remain an option.

- **While addressing the academic achievement and success outcome, include plans and strategies to meet performance targets and benchmarks as outlined in grant agreements (i.e., MSG, 50% progress assessment rate, etc.)**

We scheduled center-wide assessment days. Instructors and students know what days they are assessing, and set goals in preparation for those TABE assessments. This strategy is to create anticipation of successfully improving their skills. Our first benchmark is 25% of students' progress assessed by December 30, 2021, with a 50% target by June 30, 2021.

Increase outreach to our target population through marketing, community meetings, and personal contacts with employers, agencies, and local governing entities. First Benchmark goal is 60 students by the December 30, 2021; 115 total students by the end of this fiscal year.

In FY21, 82.14 percent of our students qualified for the federal report. We maintained our targets on students with a baseline assessment at 97.62 % because of our orientation process.

3. Describe plans to recruit targeted populations in FY22.

- **Include a description of coordinated marketing and strategies to recruit additional potential distance learning students.**
- **Targeted populations include: English Language Learners (ELLs), adults with low literacy levels, and individuals with barriers to employment.**

We are in the process of developing a marketing plan to recruit additional potential students without a high school diploma or in need of literacy skills to improve employment. Our remote access is appealing to students with barriers to attending classes in person. Our blended learning, Google Suite, and potential to enroll students in

Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) will provide a flexible pathway for some of these students.

We are part of AELN Action Circle in collaboration with the other AEL providers around the state. Through this process, we are strategizing around marketing and talking points that speak to our potential students as well as the community.

TTC plans to advertise through Facebook, local movie theaters, ads sponsoring local events, and meetings with local businesses/agencies. We promote the fact that we can do remote classes. There is interest in remote learning opportunities.

We plan to include discussions with employers and workforce development organizations about the potential workforce opportunities AEL services and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners can provide. For example, a local bank official told us about an applicant they wanted to hire until they learned this person did not have a high school diploma. We took this as an opportunity to suggest that AEL services would help bridge that gap.

Our website is undergoing a new design with upgrading of our messaging tailored to our targeted populations including ELLs, adults with low literacy levels, and individuals with barriers to employment.

Student success stories will be highlighted.

4. The WIOA grant application requested metrics under Consideration 10. b. Please revise your response and submit it.

We propose to increase the number of students taking a dual enrollment class from 0 to one student in FY22.

TTC Board has added two new members with connections to The Southwest Tech Center in Bennington; one is a counselor, and the other is a retired teacher.

We will plan tours and support students with scheduling meetings with the CTE counselor. Some of our students need support to improve their Work Readiness Skills around attendance requirements in the CTE classes. We propose to increase the number of Industry Recognized Credentials earned by our students from 0 to two students in FY22.

Develop a plan in partnership with Southwest Tech to integrate students with their services while working on their graduation plan. In the past two years, The Tutorial Center did not have any students engaged in CTE Adult or daytime programs. Our target is to increase from 0 to two students attending Southwest Tech in FY22.

5. Describe Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program plans and strategies (if applicable).

- Not applicable

6. Describe professional development plans for FY22 and include any requests for specific topics for statewide AOE-sponsored events.

FY22, Professional Development Plan

- Engage trauma-based instruction courses/training with a focus on hard to motivate students.
- Admin staff will enroll in the Technical Assistance on Teacher Competencies and Teacher Induction offered through LINCS courses.
- Personalized Learning Plan Development courses/training. We will collaborate with public and private schools to engage in best practices, planning, and development of the Personalized Learning Plans for high school students. We will implement and revise according to this new learning.
- Additional person to be trained in the Best Plus training for ELL students.
- IET training opportunities.

7. Describe up to two targeted areas of technical assistance that you would like to request from the AOE.

1. Technical assistance in the area of budgeting as required by AEL grants
2. Increased opportunities for DataWorks Specialists training