

CRC

**Community Education in Michigan**

**October 2003**

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## COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

October 2003

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# Citizens Research Council of Michigan

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## Summary

Community education in Michigan has existed in various forms since the middle of the 1800s. In its current state, community education needs in Michigan are met through a combination of local, state, and federal programs serving both children and adults. Programs operate either to serve a need recognized by the provision of state or federal aid, such as programs designed to improve the literacy skills of Michigan residents, or to serve the demand for leisure or recreational activities as expressed by a given community. Locally-run programs function in a relatively autonomous manner and mechanisms for funding these programs vary based upon a locality's capacity and interest. Programs receiving state or federal monies operate in individual school districts or consortia of districts, and funds are generally allocated based upon participant enrollment and attendance.

In the past, statutes defining adult education programs have enabled districts to collect state aid payments in excess of operational costs. As a result, some districts were able to reap financial incentives through aggressive enrollment of adult pupils, including residents of nursing homes, and through partnership agreements with other districts. State legislators closed some of the loopholes contributing to instances of abuse in the 1980s by limiting fees charged by consortium partners and by prohibiting on-site enrollment of nursing home residents without express state approval. Still, the program was criticized for its lack of clear priorities, inaccurate measures of participation, weak internal financial controls and over-emphasis on enrollment as the primary factor for state aid payments.

The state has consistently dedicated funds to adult education, though the amount of support has decreased from almost \$300 million in 1994 to \$80 million in 1997. The steep decline in funding came in the wake of the state education finance transformation realized under Proposal A but

may have also been in response to the lack of accountability highlighted in program and department audits in the 1990s. As part of the Executive Budget for the 2004 Fiscal Year, the Governor has recommended reducing adult education funds from \$77.5 million to \$20 million.

Whereas a large portion of funding for adult education programs stems from state and federal coffers, programs for children are generally confined to the local level and the Michigan Department of Education does not collect after school program data. Data are collected for after school programs receiving federal funds through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program, which provides 3-year grants for after school programming in partnership with community organizations or businesses. To date, \$51 million has been awarded in the form of 3-year grants to programs in Michigan, with an additional \$11.16 million earmarked for 46 sites in Fiscal Year 2004. Requests for 21<sup>st</sup> Century grants in Michigan for FY 2004 totaled \$94 million.

Proposed cuts to the adult education program and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program will lead to a decrease in community education opportunities in Michigan. Adult education programs may be able to offset budget cuts by charging tuition and after school programs may appeal to community or business partner to secure funding in the absence of federal support. A five-year pause in state funding for adult education in 1959 brought about systemic changes, some of which contributed to instances of abuse in the 1980s and 1990s. While Fiscal Year 2004 reductions will limit the scope of community education programs offered in the state, future prospects for restoring adult education programs, and perhaps also for establishing dedicated state funds for after school programs, will be shaped by how adequately accountability and responsiveness can be combined to meet the needs of learners in Michigan.



# COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

## Introduction

When broadly defined, community education comprises all educational offerings taking place within a given community. A more practical framework for community education is that of all learning occurring outside the traditional K-12 education system, either through the provision of services to non-traditional students or through programs extending beyond the typical school day.

Michigan was home to an early foray into community education in 1863, when H.A. Hobart, schoolmaster in the Keweenaw Peninsula village of Cliff Mine, kept his school open in the evenings and offered instruction to miners, most of whom had little or no formal education. In the decades that followed, school districts and communities across the state organized evening education programs for adults. Between 1872 and 1910, many of the major cities in Michigan organized evening classes for adults and working youths. The growth of programs was buttressed by a 1906 Alien Education Law, which empowered the state Superintendent to work with local school boards to provide for the education of immigrants and non-immigrant illiterates over the age of 18.

Even as these programs grew, relatively little attention was given to extra learning opportunities for youth until the mid-1930s. At that time, Frank Manley, a physical education teacher in Flint, complained to a group of Rotarians that the school system as it operated was ill-equipped to support the social needs of the community. Manley proposed opening school buildings on evenings and weekends as well as during the summer as a means of reducing juvenile delinquency. In 1934, Charles Stewart Mott, a prominent industrialist in the Flint area, donated \$6,000 to the Flint Board of Education to support after school and Satur-

day activities for children. In addition to being one of the first districts to support after school activities for children, Flint also offered a wide array of adult education programming, serving 3,500 students by 1940. Flint's public school system actively transformed itself into a network of "community schools," aimed at providing for the good of the larger community.

Flint's early involvement in the community school movement triggered national interest, both in increased educational opportunities for adults and in extra learning opportunities for children, in the hours before and after the traditional school day. Today, the C.S. Mott Foundation is one of the largest private supporters of educational initiatives aimed at mitigating the effects of poverty. The Mott Foundation facilitates community and adult educator training, funds large-scale evaluative studies, offers technical assistance to grant-seekers and facilitates collaboration between public and private funding sources. In addition, the Mott Foundation, through its Learning Beyond the Classroom initiative, offers substantial support to the federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers initiative, the largest federally-funded after-school program.

While full-service community schools as envisioned by Manley and Mott do not dominate the educational landscape in Michigan today, programs serving both children and adults exist in various forms across the state. The difficulties inherent in quantifying both participation in and success of community education programs raises serious questions about their purpose and potential for sustainability. In light of proposed cuts to state-funded adult education programs, it is timely to explore the status of adult and community education in Michigan.

## Participation in Community Education Programs

In order to examine Michigan's system of community education, it is necessary to categorize the programs currently in existence. For the purposes of this analysis, community education will be divided into two categories: adult programs and programs for children. This distinction is divided further into programs addressing a specific need, such as basic adult education or high school completion, and those serving the purpose of enrichment or leisure, such as

fitness classes, foreign languages and community sports leagues. The former, GED, high school completion and ESL will be referred to as Adult Education, and Community Education will refer to those programs not receiving federal or state funding for the provision of services to adult students. Differentiating program types is essential to understanding the framework for funding, assessment and delivery of these programs.

## Adult Programs and Participation

### Needs-Based

Adult education programs falling into the needs-based category are those intended to serve those over 18 who are lacking English proficiency or basic adult educational skills and have not attained high school completion or its equivalent. In addition, younger students (16-18) who have been expelled and have no alternative education option available in their home district qualify for certain adult education programs. Students in these categories occupy three distinct areas of course offering: Adult Basic Education (ABE, including high school completion), General Education Development (GED) or English as a Second Language (ESL).<sup>1</sup>

### Legislative History

Local school boards controlled the administration and funding of independently-run community and adult education programs throughout the state in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1944, the Division of Adult and Extended Education was established in the Department of Public Instruction. During the same year, the Michigan Legislature first appropriated funds in the amount of \$250,000 for an experimental program in adult education to be administered through state boards of education, county commissioners of schools and state colleges. The purpose of the experimental funding was to extend existing programs through local entities, to develop lay leadership for community service, and to examine the methods used and evaluate results obtained for the derivation of guides for future program development. Funding continued, fluctuating between \$200,000 and \$350,000 through 1959-1960, when the Legislature ceased funding the program because of state budget cuts. At the time of this cut, state funding accounted for approximately 8.6 percent of adult education expenditures, with the remaining portions coming from student fees (near 50 percent) and local taxes and grants (approximately 42 percent). Though state grants had not been the primary funding mechanism for adult education when appropriations were discontinued in 1959, student fees increased as a result of the reduction in expenditures such

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<sup>1</sup> Owing to minor changes in federal classification of adult education participants in 2001, students at the advanced levels of ABE (coursework proficiency above grade 9), are classified as GED program participants. For the purposes of this paper, "adult education" will include only ABE, GED and ESL programs. Leisure and enrichment activities will be explored in a later section of this paper.

that by 1963, the year before reinstatement of state funding, student fees accounted for almost 70 percent of the operating revenues for adult education.<sup>2</sup>

Public Act 285 of 1964 restored state-level funding and altered a vital aspect of the previous counting mechanism for adult education participants. Whereas under the earlier legislation allowing state funding, adult high school completion participants had been counted as ½ full-time equivalent pupils, the 1964 measure allowed any student regularly enrolled and working toward a high school diploma, regardless of age, to be included in a district's full-time pupil count, upon which state aid was based.

This shift in adult education funding resulted in occasions of abuse, as some districts were able to dramatically increase their school aid funding through increased adult enrollment. Adult programs typically incurred lower-costs than K-12 programs, stemming from less expensive teaching staff and materials. In addition, adult education measures required fewer hours of student participation for full-time equated (FTE) membership, counting 480 hours as 1.0 FTE as compared to the 900 hours required for K-12 students at the time. As a result, districts with high adult enrollment had a lucrative source of revenue with few limitations attached. The relative ease with which schools could inflate their pupil counts by enrolling people in adult education courses resulted in a flurry of questionable activities, including soliciting participants from nursing homes. During the 1975-1976 school year, one district aggressively recruited adult learners so that they accounted for 45 percent of that district's state aid membership rolls. In addition, some districts that were out-of-formula, meaning that the district's property tax yield was above the minimum state yield, entered into partnerships with in-formula districts so that per-pupil funding that would not normally have flowed to an out-of-formula district would end up there as a result of the partnership.

Due to these and other obvious instances of inflated pupil counts derived from adult enrollment, the state Legislature closed some loopholes in the 1980s, including disallowing enrollment of nursing home residents without express permission of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and

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<sup>2</sup> Columbus, Frederick, The History and Development of Public School Adult and Community Education in Michigan 1862-1977, Michigan Department of Education, Lansing, MI 1978, p. 65.

**Table 1**

<b>Source Age</b>	<b>Federal Funds 16 and older</b>	<b>State Section 107 Under 20</b>	<b>State Section 107 20 and older</b>	<b>State Section 108 16 and older</b>
<b>ABE</b>	Eligible	Ineligible	Eligible if no GED or Diploma	Eligible
<b>ESL</b>	Eligible	GED/Diploma holders eligible	Eligible	Eligible
<b>GED</b>	GED or Diploma holders ineligible	Ineligible	Eligible if no GED or Diploma	Eligible if no GED or Diploma
<b>HSC</b>	Diploma holders ineligible	GED holders eligible	Diploma holders ineligible	Diploma holders ineligible

Source: Michigan Department of Career Development.

setting stricter guidelines for partnership agreements between districts. Presently, the amount of funding allotted for adult education participants is considerably less than that of the traditional foundation allowance given for K-12 pupils.<sup>3</sup> The current legislation also excludes participants from a school's membership count for state aid purposes, with the exception of students 16-17 years who have been expelled, provided that they are participating in programs not concurrently serving individuals 18 and over.

### Adult Education Programs

The programs available to adult learners in Michigan vary depending on age and education status, shown either by possession of a high school diploma or a GED certificate. The four types of programs allowed under Sections 107 and 108 of the state School Aid Act and the federal Workforce Investment Act are Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), General Education Development (GED) and High School Completion (HSC). As shown in **Table 1**, there is considerable overlap between state and federal programs, and an adult learner may be eligible for funding under both state and federal provisions.

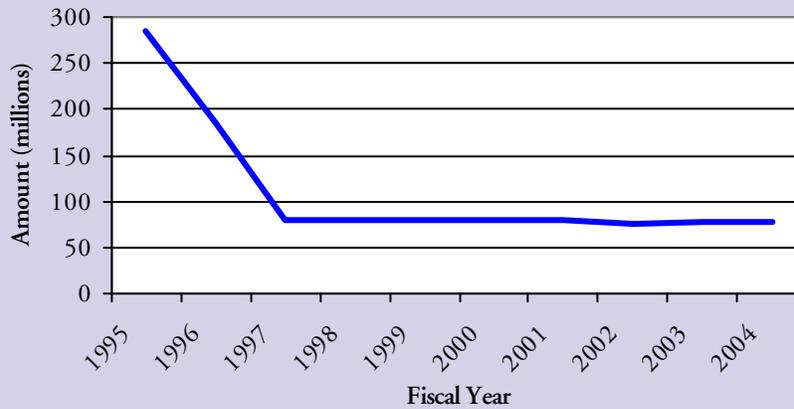
**State Funding for Adult Education.** Adult education programs in Michigan operate under the guidelines of two sec-

tions of the State School Aid Act of 1979, MCL 388.1707 and 1708, referred to as Sections 107 and 108. Section 107 is the larger of the two sections with an appropriation of \$77.5 million. Programs supported by Section 107 include the four traditional areas of adult education outlined above, as well as workplace literacy programs designed to assist employed persons who have been referred to adult education programs by their employers in order to gain remedial mathematics or communications skills. Section 107 funding has fluctuated a great deal in the past decade, largely due to Proposal A of 1994 and the resultant shift in the determination of state aid to schools. State funding for adult education programs dropped dramatically since 1994, from \$185 million to its current level of \$77.5 million (see **Chart 1**).

Section 108 of the State School Aid Act outlines the Partnership for Adult Learning (PAL). Whereas Section 107 defines the more traditional adult education programs, Public Act 297 of 2000 authorized the PAL program in order to develop local adult education partnerships, improve accountability, and provide programs responsive to specific regional needs. Through local workforce development boards, Michigan Works! agencies offer alternatives for adult education and workforce readiness skills training. Workforce development boards require that courses and skill offerings operate in tandem with local service providers, including schools, community-based organizations, private and non-profit organizations, and others. Section 108 was appropriated \$20 million for FY 2001, 2002 and 2003. Under the budget proposal for 2004, funding for Section 108 programs will cease.

<sup>3</sup> Currently, adult education programs are reimbursed \$2750 per FTE participant, as measured by 450 hours of instruction. If a program received a competitive grant for adult education in 1996-1997, the rate is \$2850 per FTE.

**Chart 1**  
**State Adult Education Appropriations**



Source: House Fiscal Agency. Projected Appropriations through FY 2004. Does not include Section 108 Partnership for Adult Learning appropriations (\$20 million in FY 2000, 2001 and 2002).

The most significant differences between Section 107 and Section 108 (PAL) are their funding mechanisms, accountability measures, and requirements for teachers. Section 108 providers are not required to use state certified teachers or counselors in their programs. In addition, the funding awarded to Section 107 programs is distributed based on 90 percent of a program’s enrollment, and then the final 10 percent is distributed based on completion, judged as advancing to the next higher level in whichever program the student is enrolled. By contrast, 50 percent of Section 108 funds are distributed based upon participation levels and the remainder is awarded based on attainment of pre-determined performance standards. Section 107 participants are limited to enrolling in the same program twice before funding for the same student is disallowed.

**Federal Funding for Adult Education Programs.** Adult education programs existing prior to the state’s experimental measure survived solely on local taxes, district funds and user fees. Federal funding for adult education programs appeared in 1964 through the Economic Opportunity Act, renamed the Adult Education Act in 1966. This act enabled grants to states based upon the proportion of persons 18 and older who had completed five or fewer grades of school. The Office of Economic Opportunity administered the federal adult education program until 1966, when it relocated to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Though the act had undergone numerous minor adjustments since 1964, a substantial package of amendments to the Adult Education Act passed in 1991, including a provision requiring states to offer at least one, competitive two-year “gateway grant” to a public housing authority for literacy programs and related activities. In addition, indicators of program quality were developed, although states’ responsibility included progress reports for only 20 percent of districts. In 1998, the amended Adult Education Act was replaced by a component of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Some of the major changes included:

- Removal of a limit for high school completion participation: Any portion of a state’s funds could be used for high school completion programs (previously limited to 20 percent)
- Allotments for corrections education programs: No more than 8.25 percent of a state’s grant could be allotted to corrections education (previously 10 percent)
- For-Profit Instruction: Previously, for-profit entities could receive federal funds for the provision of adult education programs. Under the 1998 act, for-profit providers were no longer eligible for funding, either individually or as part of a public/private consortium.

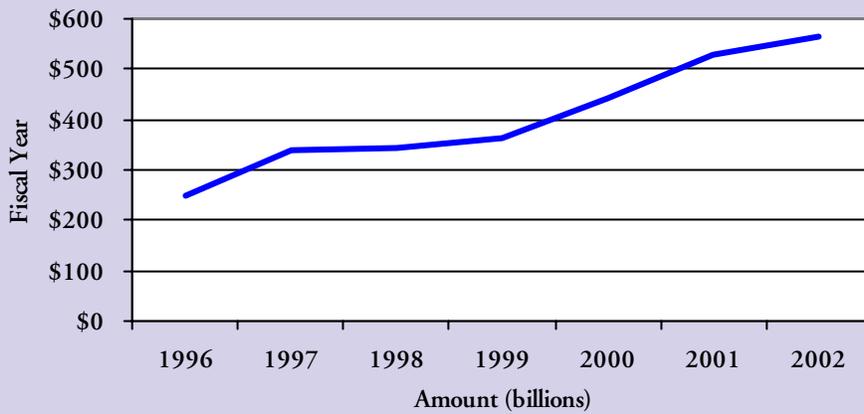
# COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

- **Quality Assurance:** Under the Adult Education Act, a state was required to report on progress of only 20 percent of its programs. The new law instead required more extensive specific state-level data collection and reporting.

The federal government has dedicated funds to state adult education programs in a relatively consistent manner, and

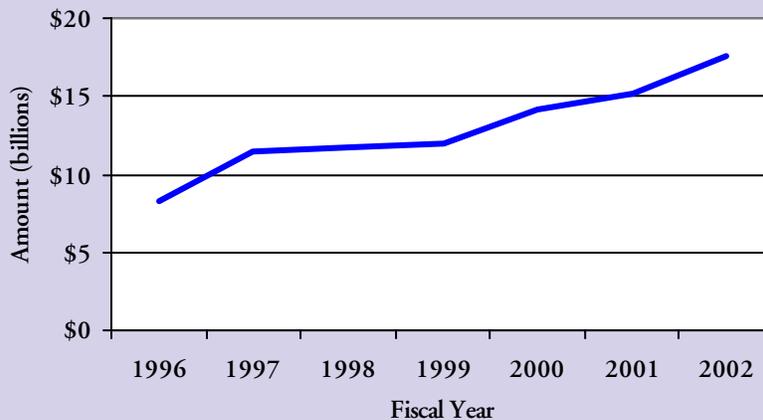
through the WIA, funding has increased steadily (see **Chart 2**). Michigan's portion of this funding has increased on par with that in other states (see **Chart 3**). High expenditures on the part of the federal government, the state government, and local entities has resulted in Michigan having a relatively high per-student cost for adult education programs. According to the U.S. Department of Education, in 1999-2000, Michigan had the highest per-student adult educa-

**Chart 2**  
**Federal WIA Expenditures on Adult Education in U.S.**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education

**Chart 3**  
**Federal WIA Expenditures on Adult Education in Michigan**



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education

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**Table 2**  
**Adult Education Program Costs by State, 1999-2000**

	Federal Expenditures	State and Local Expenditures	Total Expenditures	99-00 Enrollment	Cost per Student
Alabama	\$7,493,131	\$5,764,911	\$13,258,042	22,430	\$538
Alaska	\$645,994	\$1,737,411	\$2,383,405	5,396	\$422
Arizona	\$4,732,070	\$4,580,827	\$9,312,897	55,274	\$156
Arkansas	\$4,504,331	\$17,814,747	\$22,319,078	39,102	\$553
California	\$41,322,006	\$314,612,065	\$355,934,071	456,125	\$777
Colorado	\$3,158,528	\$2,174,085	\$5,332,613	13,743	\$377
Connecticut	\$4,148,696	\$30,396,812	\$34,545,508	27,698	\$1,208
Delaware	\$1,075,133	\$937,612	\$2,012,745	3,278	\$570
Dist. of Columbia	\$1,224,300	\$1,883,796	\$3,108,096	2,828	\$855
Florida	\$10,029,616	\$88,162,117	\$98,191,733	399,772	\$244
Georgia	\$10,539,094	\$4,361,357	\$14,900,451	107,980	\$127
Hawaii	\$1,390,349	\$2,483,662	\$3,874,011	16,176	\$235
Idaho	\$1,320,547	\$503,892	\$1,824,439	10,542	\$165
Illinois	\$15,235,271	\$7,450,000	\$22,685,271	120,752	\$182
Indiana	\$7,604,043	\$27,004,500	\$34,609,543	41,760	\$816
Iowa	\$3,191,221	\$7,386,516	\$10,577,737	31,757	\$328
Kansas	\$2,767,903	\$1,099,897	\$3,867,800	11,410	\$327
Kentucky	\$7,283,425	\$8,677,445	\$15,960,870	37,061	\$421
Louisiana	\$7,155,153	\$7,032,109	\$14,187,262	38,873	\$349
Maine	\$1,596,607	\$9,746,186	\$11,342,793	9,807	\$1,135
Maryland	\$6,088,641	\$6,915,073	\$13,003,714	27,556	\$460
Massachusetts	\$7,078,121	\$29,180,899	\$36,259,020	24,565	\$1,430
<b>Michigan</b>	<b>\$11,973,584</b>	<b>\$145,530,100</b>	<b>\$157,503,684</b>	<b>86,218</b>	<b>\$1,822</b>
Minnesota	\$4,346,519	\$30,257,000	\$34,603,519	51,769	\$663
Mississippi	\$4,974,554	\$1,658,185	\$6,632,739	40,370	\$160
Missouri	\$7,559,848	\$5,673,755	\$13,233,603	38,773	\$326
Montana	\$1,067,641	\$800,662	\$1,868,303	4,995	\$361
Nebraska	\$1,767,353	\$652,323	\$2,419,676	9,095	\$255
Nevada	\$1,764,219	\$962,524	\$2,726,743	22,346	\$115
New Hampshire	\$1,365,765	\$2,001,525	\$3,367,290	5,519	\$604
New Jersey	\$10,498,943	\$26,908,201	\$37,407,144	44,712	\$820
New Mexico	\$2,262,061	\$4,298,492	\$6,560,553	29,197	\$221
New York	\$25,790,122	\$82,500,000	\$108,290,122	194,028	\$556
North Carolina	\$11,211,914	\$33,648,124	\$44,860,038	154,786	\$287
North Dakota	\$1,000,568	\$497,690	\$1,498,258	1,964	\$702
Ohio	\$14,521,613	\$11,340,318	\$25,861,931	81,010	\$311
Oklahoma	\$4,583,310	\$1,812,045	\$6,395,355	20,534	\$300
Oregon	\$3,296,805	\$30,769,894	\$34,066,699	27,981	\$1,212
Pennsylvania	\$16,966,470	\$14,245,060	\$31,211,530	46,836	\$641
Rhode Island	\$1,825,142	\$2,887,412	\$4,712,554	7,950	\$569
South Carolina	\$6,159,621	\$13,044,545	\$19,204,166	132,497	\$142
South Dakota	\$1,074,426	\$400,807	\$1,475,233	5,491	\$256
Tennessee	\$9,104,734	\$3,082,493	\$12,187,227	49,386	\$237
Texas	\$25,732,335	\$8,637,450	\$34,369,785	106,516	\$307
Utah	\$1,502,245	\$6,519,066	\$8,021,311	28,987	\$268
Vermont	\$840,529	\$3,760,162	\$4,600,691	4,436	\$989
Virginia	\$8,754,392	\$5,794,769	\$14,549,161	31,211	\$452
Washington	\$4,764,515	\$23,926,931	\$28,691,446	57,999	\$489
West Virginia	\$3,592,669	\$2,448,573	\$6,041,242	22,403	\$239
Wisconsin	\$5,830,653	\$7,364,801	\$13,195,454	27,297	\$473
Wyoming	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,632	N/A
<b>U.S.</b>	<b>\$352,793,190</b>	<b>\$1,054,473,714</b>	<b>\$1,407,266,904</b>	<b>2,891,895</b>	<b>\$474</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Education

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

tion cost of \$1822, compared to a low of \$115 in Nevada. Detailed information about 1999-2000 trends across the United States is given in **Table 2**.

Thirty states fell at or below the average national per-student funding level of \$474, and 6 states spent at least twice the national average on adult education (see **Table 3**).

There does not appear to be a direct correlation between the size of a state's program and its per-student expenditures. For instance, Maryland and Connecticut serve around 27,000 adult education students each, yet Connecticut's per-student expenditure is four times that of Maryland (\$1208 and \$460, respectively). Michigan has one of the highest

per-pupil expenditure rates (\$1,822) which may be due in part to the state's long tradition of supporting community education. In addition, the Michigan-based Mott Foundation has been instrumental in supporting community education by funding professional development activities for community education instructors working with both children and adult and by sponsoring numerous studies. Higher per-student funding may also be associated with factors such as teacher salaries, quality of materials and facilities, passage rates and enrollment rates. It is important to note, however, that the absence of an administrative cap on individual programs funded through Section 107 may decrease the amount of grant money that actually funds student instruction, thus increasing per-student expenditures.

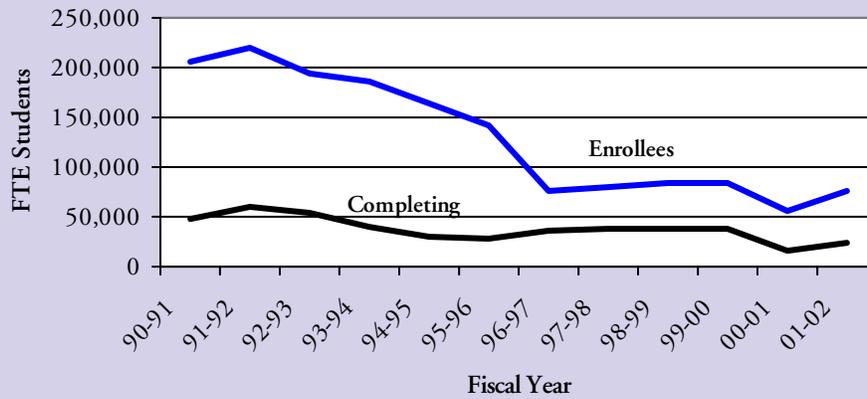
**Table 3**  
**Per-Pupil Expenditures, State-Administered Adult Education Program, 1999-2000**  
**49 States and District of Columbia\***

50% Nat. Avg. (\$0-237)	51-100% (\$238-474)	101-150% (\$475-711)	151-200% (\$712-948)	201% and higher (\$949 +)
Arizona, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee	Alaska, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin	Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington	California, Dist. of Columbia, Indiana, New Jersey	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, <b>Michigan</b> , Oregon, Vermont

\*Table does not include WY

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education

**Chart 4  
Adult Education Programs in Michigan**



Source: State Budget Office

**Participation in Adult Education Programs.** According to U.S. Department of Education figures, around 2 percent of adults 18 and over participate in Adult Basic Education or GED programs and about 1 percent enroll in ESL classes.<sup>4</sup> The Michigan Department of Education estimates that in 2002, approximately 76,000 people took part in adult education programs in 250 school districts. The number of participants may be understated for two reasons. First, an unknown proportion of adult students take GED or ESL courses through private institutions or school districts not receiving state or federal funding for adult education programs, both of which are not required to submit data regarding the number of participants they serve. Second, the count of FTE adult education students is measured by only those students attending at least 450 hours of adult education classes per school year. Consequently, more than one student, and sometimes as many as five, are necessary to fill the 450 hour requirement for one FTE. In order to offset some of the difficulties posed by the various hourly participation levels, adult education student counts are taken four times per year, as opposed to the fall and spring counts for traditional K-12 programs.

Since 1990, the number of enrollees in adult education programs in Michigan has dropped significantly. The decline

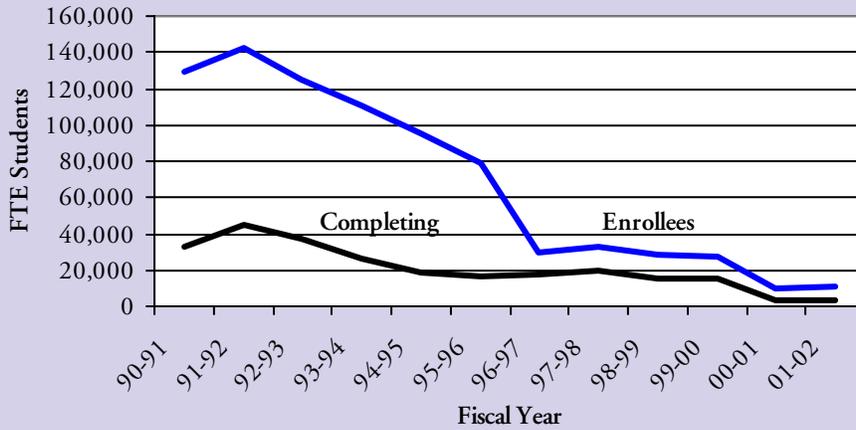
<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics: *Participation in Adult Education in the United States: 1998-1999*.

in enrollment may be attributed to many factors, but one major factor impacting the ability of districts to offer adult education courses is a dramatic change in funding for adult education following the passage of Proposal A in 1994. In the three years following Proposal A, state adult education funding dropped more than \$100 million. An additional factor may be a restriction placed on the growth of Section 107 programs following Proposal A. With one minor exception for districts ceasing to host adult education programs who could transfer those funds to a new program (new or previously in existence), only those programs in existence in 1994-1995 and 1995-1996 were allowed to continue. Moreover, funding for existing programs was cut to 36.76 percent of the level prior to Proposal A. The resulting trend in enrollment following substantial cuts to adult education programs can be seen in **Chart 4**.

At the same time, Section 108 established a new outlet for adult education courses through local workforce development boards, but the impact of these programs on overall adult education enrollment figures is difficult to ascertain. One final consideration with the drop in numbers is that reports from the State Auditor General in 1995, 1997 and 1998 cited inflated counts for either state or federal adult education program participation. It is plausible that more stringent control techniques may have contributed to the lower reporting of participants, but that actual participation levels may not have dropped as significantly as might be suggested by the charts below. Substantial enrollment

# COMMUNITY EDUCATION IN MICHIGAN

**Chart 5  
GED and High School Completion**



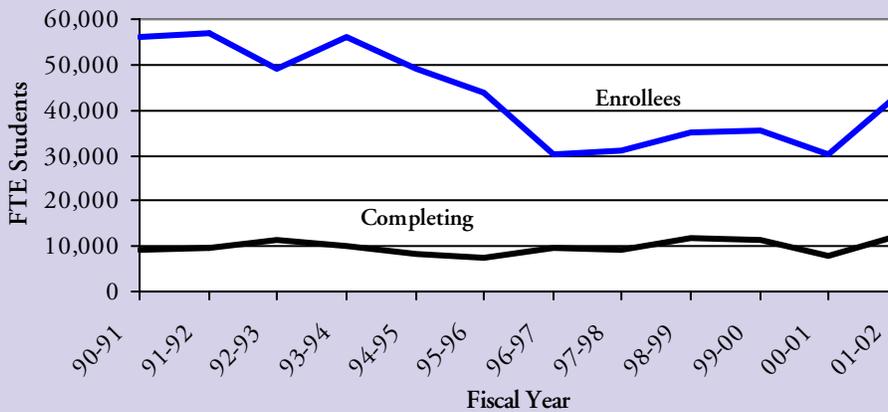
Source: State Budget Office

declines took place following the passage of Proposal A, which cut a large portion of Section 107 funding. At the same time, the institution of the PAL program (Section 108) in 2000 may account for some of the increases in participation from 2001-2002.

In addition to changes in funding for adult education programs, the Department of Education underwent significant

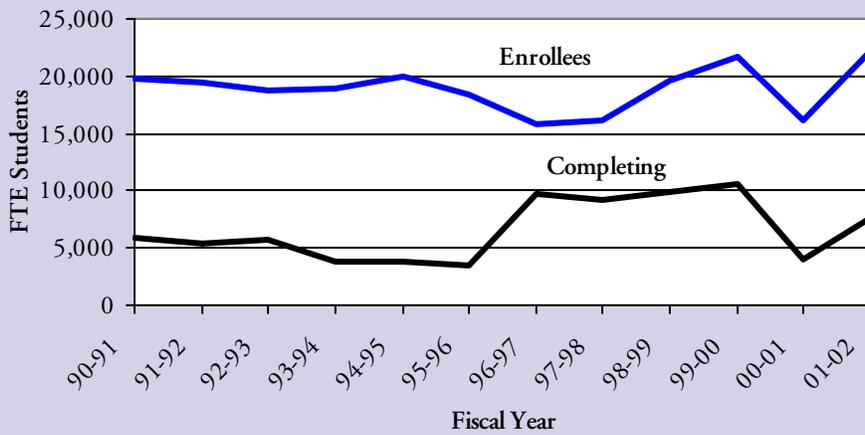
administrative transformations during the 1990s and early 2000s. Former governor Engler transferred the Adult Education unit to the Department of Career Development in 1999 through Executive Reorganization Order 1999-12. According to the Engler administration, the shift was intended to more closely align adult education programming with workforce development activities. The 2001 PAL program, or Section 108, was a further indication of the

**Chart 6  
Adult Basic Education in Michigan**



Source: State Budget Office

Chart 7  
English as a Second Language (ESL) in Michigan



Source: State Budget Office

administration’s interest in aligning adult education with employment-related activities, as this measure enabled local workforce development boards to enter into partnerships with adult education providers, both public and private. One criticism of Section 108 programs is that they served the needs of job-seeking young adults and did little to service learning-disabled adults and those in need of basic literacy skills. In addition to the administrative challenges associated with transferring to a different administrative department, the unit changed hands only months before a federal deadline requiring implementation of a state-wide adult education database. MAERS, the Michigan Adult Education Reporting System, was functional in short order, but due to its immediate implementation, data generated during 2000-2001 likely underestimates true participation levels.

**Enrichment/Leisure**

In contrast to those programs serving a specific need as described above, communities in Michigan are not limited by state law from using district general funds to devise community education programs. These are typically self-supporting programs funded by registration fees, local government contributions, school district funds, or a combination of these.

**Leisure and Enrichment Activity Participation.** Whereas the tables above capture enrollment in state- and federally-

funded adult education programs such as ESL and GED, the number of adults taking part in leisure or enrichment activities is much more difficult to estimate. In contrast to programs receiving state or federal monies, there exists no official enrollment reporting requirement, and short of regional community education association data, little state-wide data is currently available.<sup>5</sup>

Using census data, the U.S. Department of Education estimates that as many as 23 percent of adults 18 and over participate in what they classify as “personal development” courses. This includes courses related to health, hobbies or sport lessons, foreign languages, dance or music, and Bible study.<sup>6</sup> If Michigan citizens were to participate at the 23 percent level, the number of participants would approach 1.7 million. The Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education (MACAE) estimates that the number of people participating in adult education may be as low as 100,000 and as high as one million. Until a reliable mechanism for tracking adult education participation levels is created, determining of such levels will remain imprecise.

<sup>5</sup> The Michigan Association of Community and Adult Educators (MACAE) is in the process of estimating participation levels in adult and community education programs throughout the state.

<sup>6</sup> National Center for Education Statistics: *Participation in Adult Education in the United States: 1998-1999*.

## Youth Programs and Participation

The vast majority of educational opportunities for children outside the traditional classroom take the form of before- and after-school programs. According to a 1999 study by the National Center on Juvenile Justice, children are at the greatest risk of committing or falling victim to crime during the hours between 3 and 8 p.m.<sup>7</sup> In addition, it is estimated that due to increased numbers of working women and single-parent households, between 4 and 15 million children in the U.S. have no adult supervision during the hours immediately following the school day. Although some states have designated a portion of their state education agency to before and after-school programming, there is no arm of Michigan's education department that deals exclusively with after-school programming. The state is required to have an administrator of the federally-funded 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center program. Despite the fact that the majority of funded programs target upper-elementary and junior-high students, this position resides in the Early Childhood Education Division of the Education Department.

### Community Education for Children

Community education opportunities for children serve a larger range of needs and exist for different reasons than most adult programs. In addition to leisure activities akin to those adults might elect, children may participate in sports clubs or after-school enrichment classes for which they pay a participation fee. In addition to enrichment activities, many schools, with the help of federal funding, local partnerships, or charitable contributions, maintain after-school programs.

The distinction made between adult programs addressing a specific educational need, such as attainment of a GED certificate, and those for pleasure or personal edification figure less prominently among community education programs for children. A major factor in this is that after-school programming tends to be almost entirely local, with the exception of one substantial federal program, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> Century) program. The goal of post- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers is to offer a graduated funding mechanism for three years of programming. One requirement of 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant applications is a partner-

ship between a school district and a local organization, which can be a business, a non-profit or a religiously-affiliated entity. The end goal is that each program will work aggressively toward capacity-building and therefore secure a sustainable base for functioning once federal support has ceased.

Authorized in 1998 by the Workforce Investment Act, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program has provided more than \$51 million to after-school, before-school and summer programs in Michigan. The most recent round of grants to Michigan education agencies assists 13 different local school authorities, totaling \$11.16 million. Proposed budget cuts would allow currently awarded grants to continue through the original life of their grants, but as of 2004, no new programs would receive awards.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized in 2000 as NCLB, shifted the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program from a nationally competitive grant to a competitive grant administered directly by individual states. As a result, states have greater control over the specific programming to be supported by the grants, which allows states to prioritize based on the needs most prominent in their state. NCLB also altered the overarching goal of the programs to be funded by such grants, focusing more attention on participants' academic performance, parental involvement, behavioral problems, and dropout rates. In addition, stricter reporting guidelines accompanied the reauthorization of the program. Whereas the original grant program had been touted primarily as a means of protecting children from falling victim to or committing crime, the reauthorized version of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program focuses more specifically on academic achievement and at narrowing the achievement gap between wealthy and disadvantaged students.

Concomitant with the shift of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program to the state-administered level, funding for the program jumped from \$265 million to \$1 billion. This increase may be only temporary, however. Despite numerous studies reporting gains in both achievement and behavior of students participating in after-school programs, the U.S. Department of Education appears unconvinced. A study released in 2003 by the Department, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., examined a national sample of 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs during 2000-2001, concluding that the programs

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<sup>7</sup> National Center on Juvenile Justice: *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*.

had negligible impact on academic improvement and that the overall success of the program was ambiguous at best.<sup>8</sup> The study has been criticized for studying an unrepresentative sample of programs and for focusing only on one year of data. In addition, the data was collected during the first year of implementation of the new achievement-oriented NCLB requirements, and numerous centers were in a period of transition to meet achievement and grade improvement goals. The President cited the study as support for the FY 2004 federal budget proposal to eliminate funding to new 21<sup>st</sup> Century grants.

**Programs in Michigan.** Beyond 21<sup>st</sup> Century-funded after-school programs, little is known about where after-school programs exist in the state and how many people they serve. The state does not collect statewide or district-wide data on after school programs, making generalizations about state trends virtually impossible. Some cities, however, have initiatives geared toward coordinating after school opportunities. The City of Detroit, through funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, administers a program called “Mayor’s Time,” through which it is hoped that more will be learned about the status of existing programs in the Detroit area, the potential demand for additional programs, and how coordination among programs best can be achieved. Mayor’s Time is in the process of collecting data regarding participation and availability of programs.

**Programs in Other States.** While numerous cities and metropolitan areas offer information about after school programming, most states lack a central repository for this information. There are a few exceptions to this, however. **Alabama** has taken a proactive approach both to assessing need and to connecting people with programs. The Program for Rural Services and Research at the University of Alabama, through grants from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, developed a publicly-accessible internet database of the 600 after school programs in the state. The second phase of the project is to draw upon existing programs to develop a portfolio containing best practices and implementation guidelines for new programs. **Illinois**, through its 2000 After School Initia-

tive legislation, requires the state to collect data about after school programming. Though this initiative is still conducting a needs assessment, data collection begun in 2001 has generated a great deal of information regarding programs in Illinois. Detailed statistics regarding the number of programs, the number of children served and whether or not staff development was offered are available to the public. **Maryland** offers a searchable database of all programs in Maryland regulated by three different state agencies, the state’s Child Care Administration, Education, and Health and Mental Hygiene Departments, but there is no differentiation between which programs are licensed child care providers and which are after school programs.

Due to the local nature of most after school programs, the lack of a national repository for after school contact information is not surprising. However, the transition of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program to a state-administered block grant makes it important to answer the question of the location and type of programs in existence in a given state. In deciding which districts are most in need of federally-funded after school opportunities, a statewide network would help avoid duplication of effort.

### Challenges for Programs aimed at Children

The Afterschool Alliance, a non-profit advocacy group located in Washington, D.C. and Flint, focuses on after school opportunities for children. The Mott Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education jointly founded the group in 1999 following the announcement that after school programming would be a key component of the No Child Left Behind initiative. The goal of the partnership is to maximize the benefits of federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants by combining federal monies for program costs with Mott Foundation support for the training of instructors and program coordinators, evaluation and public awareness activities.

The Alliance estimates that less than half of the children in need of after school programs in the United States have access to them. To the detriment of groups advocating for widespread implementation of after school programming, four challenges face those who wish to estimate both the number of children served and the demand for after school programs in a given area. First, a surprising lack of common nomenclature exists for after-school programs around the country. These may be referred to as after-school programs, extra learning opportunities, out-of-school time or extended-day programs (although this more often refers to daycare cen-

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Education: *When Schools Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Community Learning Centers Program (2003)*. Numerous organizations, including the Afterschool Alliance, have been vocal in pointing to the wealth of studies showing significant gains as a result of participation in after school programs.

ters in schools and not specifically to structured after-school programs). There is also little overlap in treatment of after school programs by researchers and advocacy organizations. The Harvard Family Research Project refers to out-of-school time, the National Governor's Association to extra learning opportunities, and the Education Commission of the States to extended-day programs. This lack of a common language among those who would fund initiatives, those who participate in them, and those who study them precludes a clear snapshot of participation in after school programs.

A second factor impeding after school program visibility is the relative lack of information exchange among existing programs. As a result, numerous programs in a given region may unknowingly compete for students. Increased coordination among after school program providers would decrease the likelihood that programs are unevenly distributed. The Afterschool Alliance and the U.S. Department of Education have both developed web sites to aid in program design and implementation of after school programs. These are extremely helpful to those who may be interested in starting a local program, but they do little to connect existing providers in a given area to one another or to connect potential providers with existing programs.

A third factor impeding accurate measures both of participation in and need for after school programming is that the nature of funding carries with it no incentive for reporting numbers to state education departments. With the exception of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program, local funding tends to be temporary and not subject to any type of state reporting requirements. The state Department of Education does not require that schools operating after school programs report participation levels or track the impact of after school programs.

Finally, competing goals may complicate the debate over after school programming. The Afterschool Alliance web page describes the three benefits of after school programming as keeping kids safe, helping working families, and improving academic achievement. When President Clinton announced the inception of Community Learning Centers in 1997, they were presented as safe places in which learning could take place. In a 1997 U.S. Department of Education publication, Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School, the following statement described community learning centers:

By offering a safe learning environment before- and after-school and during the summer, schools can become Com-

munity Learning Centers that help children read, learn more, and avoid destructive or dangerous activities. The programs can be simple, focused on a single goal, and funded by reallocating existing resources. Or they can address an array of conditions, involve many community partners in a systems-building approach, and attract support from many sources. In both cases, after-school and summer learning opportunities in a safe, drug-free environment can make a profound difference in children's lives.<sup>9</sup>

The inclusion of after school centers into No Child Left Behind brought with it a shift in focus such that academic achievement alone served as the driving force behind the initiative. At present, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers are described as follows:

The term community learning center means an entity that assists students in meeting State and local academic achievement standards in core academic subjects, such as reading and mathematics, by providing the students with opportunities for academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other activities during nonschool hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before and after school or during summer recess). These activities reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students served. In addition, literacy and related educational development services are offered to families of participating students.<sup>10</sup>

The current administration's stance on after school programs centers on academic success. In the absence of any revision of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program's statement of purpose, there is little chance that reduction in juvenile crime and benefits of affordable child care will serve as compelling reasons to prevent cuts to federal after school funding. The four factors listed above impede communication and collaboration among advocates of after school programming, but they do not pose insurmountable barriers. Even in the absence of federal after school funding, numerous local opportunities may be pursued. In addition, local funding sources may carry with them fewer limitations on the goals and outcomes associated with after school programs, as may be the case with federal grants under the 21<sup>st</sup> Century program.

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<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Education Archived Publication: *Keeping Schools Open as Community Learning Centers: Extending Learning in a Safe, Drug-Free Environment Before and After School*, July 1997. <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/LearnCenters/benefits.html>, accessed May 5, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Department of Education Website: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, <http://www.ed.gov/21stccle> (accessed May 5, 2003).

### Implications for Reduction in Funding of Community Education Programs

Recent budget shortfalls across the nation are impacting community education programs. A federal budget proposal threatens to cut all new funding for 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs, virtually eliminating after school programs in many states unless alternative sources of funding can be secured. Measures to combat budget shortfalls will likely lead to widespread reductions in adult education expenditures. Moreover, an economic downturn typically increases unemployment, resulting in larger numbers of qualified candidates for educational programs designed to improve prospects for employment.

Currently, federal funds are allocated based upon census figures for a state's proportion of adults over 16 who have not completed high school and are not currently enrolled in school. Federal funding for adult education programs is heavily tied to a state's own provision of resources. The nature of the current federal funding mechanism for adult education programs is such that a state will be held harmless for a 10 percent or smaller reduction in state expendi-

tures. However, every dollar of reduction beyond 10 percent is accompanied by an equal reduction in federal support. In Michigan, the Governor's proposal to cut adult education in 2003-2004 by \$57.5 million would cause federal funds for adult education to disappear completely.

As a result, Section 107 programs, which rely primarily on student FTE counts for funding, would likely face significant declines in program provision. In order to remain viable, Section 107 programs may be forced to charge tuition for their programs. As mentioned above, instances of charging tuition in the 1960s did not result in the demise of the state's adult education program. The \$20 million funding for Section 108 programs would be eliminated completely under the governor's plan. Due to their direct connection with local workforce development boards and interaction with local adult education providers, Section 108 programs may be in a position to generate funding through private sources or through local partnerships.

### Accountability in Community Education

Accountability for educational performance of K-12 schools lies at the center of the current No Child Left Behind legislation. For traditional schools, standardized tests are used to track the performance of students from year to year to determine whether they are improving relative to themselves and to their peers. Unlike K-12 educational institutions with a fairly stable student base from which achievement can be measured longitudinally, the pool of citizens from which adult education participants come is more diverse and reflects greater fluctuation in terms of age, skill level and previous education experience. A system of accountability for community and adult education mirroring that for traditional K-12 schools is precluded by such factors as overwhelming diversity of programs, multiple funding sources, and inconstant and unpredictable student populations.

Community education programs operating in the absence of state or federal funding may rely upon a system of accountability akin to customer service: If a program does not respond to local demand or if users are not pleased with the offerings, they will cease to pay a fee to participate. By contrast, after school programs funded by federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century grants are required to submit documentation recording participation levels, demographic information, standardized test scores and other indicators to the U.S. Depart-

ment of Education each year. Failure to achieve goals can result in the delay or suspension of remaining grant installments. Further, the requirement that schools secure partnerships with community organizations or businesses as part of the grant application process marks an attempt to build capacity at the local level so that programs remain viable after the grant has expired. Once federal funding has ceased for an after-school program, if it is able to generate external financial support, accountability remains an option, rather than a requirement.

For traditional adult education programs, such as for GED or ESL, the tradition of both state and federal funding raises accountability issues. Due to a strong history of support for adult and community education in Michigan, state legislators have consistently funded such programs in this state. The enthusiasm fueling expenditures, however, has not always extended to the development and implementation of sound accountability measures.

In 1985, the Citizens Research Council of Michigan published a report about the financing of adult education in Michigan. Criticisms of the program as it existed in the 1980s included the "profit factor," the fact that adult pupils could be counted in a school's state aid membership,

even though adult programs were less expensive to operate than traditional K-12 programs. Adult pupils have since been removed from a school's membership count for state aid, and adult pupils receive less per-pupil funding since the passage of Proposal A in 1994. In addition, the report highlighted the fact that the state had no strict policy for targeting the type of services that should be offered, whom should receive them, or how they should be delivered.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the inception of Section 108, the Partnership for Adult Learning, and its different model of delivery through local Workforce Development Boards indicate that the state showed an interest in experimenting with different types of delivery and accountability for adult education programs.

Despite the fact that state funding for adult education declined steadily from \$285 million in 1994, appropriations for programs outlined in Section 107 have remained at or near \$80 million since 1997. As previously mentioned, 90 percent of Section 107 funds are distributed based on participant attendance and enrollment and 10 percent is distributed based on completion of adult education objectives, such as passing a GED test, achieving English proficiency, or improving by at least one grade level in reading or mathematics. In addition, there is currently no cap on the amount of funds to be expended on program administration at the local level.

The distribution of Section 107 funds according to pupil attendance rates raises some issues related to financial controls and pupil count auditing practices. State funds are typically disbursed during the early portion of the school year based on fall adult education FTE counts. Once adult pupil counts are audited by Intermediate School Districts, there are often refunds or payments necessary to reconcile reported and audited counts. Historically, the state has not been strict about ensuring that over- and underpayments were processed in a timely manner. The Auditor General's office, in a performance audit of the state adult education program in 1997 noted that 1) the Department had not established a continuous quality improvement process to monitor and improve the effectiveness of the program, and 2) that the state program's funding mechanism was based on participant enrollment and attendance rather than on

program outcomes.<sup>12</sup> The Department responded that it agreed with these findings and that it would recommend changes in the Program's funding system.

In a financial audit of the Department of Education issued in 1998 covering fiscal years 1996-1997, the adult education program again came under fire. The auditors found that federal adult education funds had not been allocated based on actual participation levels, resulting in instances of both over- and underpayments to districts. In addition, where instances of overpayment had occurred, the Department was found to have been lax in recovering these funds. The Auditor General's office strongly recommended revised internal controls on overpayment recovery as well as stricter pupil count procedures.

After the adult education unit came under the auspices of the Department of Career Development in January 2000, a financial audit of that Department through October 2000 again found that the Department lacked proper internal controls over federal funds allocated to the ABE and ESL programs. In 2002, the Department of Career Development introduced measures to decrease student count errors so that instances of over- and underpayment could be reduced.

Aside from problems associated with basing payments on student counts, a further weakness of the state administered adult education program is that Section 107 gave little room for the establishment of new programs when funding stagnated near the \$80 million level. Programs that had not existed prior to 1995 were not authorized, unless an adult program in another location ceased to exist. There has been no substantive revision of criteria allowing new programs funded under Section 107 since 1996.

Section 108 programs, by working in conjunction with local workforce development boards, have more flexibility in terms of beginning a program if need is demonstrated in a given region. In addition, whereas Section 107 funds are distributed based on attendance, the \$20 million appropriated for Section 108 in FY 2002, 2003 and 2004 is allocated based upon the following criteria:

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<sup>11</sup> Citizens Research Council of Michigan: *The Financing of Adult Education in Michigan*, May 1985.

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<sup>12</sup> State of Michigan, Office of the Auditor General, Executive Digest #3119196, Adult Education Program, April 1997.

- 34 percent for the proportion of the family independence agency caseload in a local workforce development board's region;
- 33 percent for the proportion of people in a local board's region over age 17 who do not have a diploma; and
- 33 percent for the proportion of people in a local board's region over age 17 for whom English is not a primary language.

A reasonable system of accountability will combine both attendance and student outcomes but should not be based entirely on only one of these. Due to the wide range of students enrolled in adult education programs, a system

relying solely upon achievement may lead to some students being shut out of programs if a program fears that the student will be unlikely to advance grade levels within 900 hours of instruction, and therefore result in a reduction in funding. Furthermore, adult education participants are frequently individuals who were unsuccessful in school due to an undiagnosed learning disability or emotional condition, and therefore enter adult education programs with formidable challenges beyond mere language and mathematics acquisition. While achievement should not be the only factor against which to measure the success of an adult education program, a system based on attendance does little to ensure that best practices and quality teaching figure prominently in adult education classrooms.

### Conclusion

In contrast to most other states, Michigan has long shown considerable dedication to community education. State funding of adult education began as a means to support local communities in their endeavors to provide learning opportunities to those who had not completed high school or whose first language was not English. The administrative realignment of the state's adult education unit from the Department of Education to the Department of Career Development in 1999 may indicate increased emphasis on workforce preparation as the driving force behind adult education. This is reasonable for many young people who have dropped out of high school and can quickly be brought up to workforce-ready competence. However, evaluating adult programs on how successfully they prepare adult learners for employment may compromise services to those who require longer periods of instruction to overcome learning disabilities that may have precluded prior academic success.

In addition, the alacrity with which school districts have taken advantage of statutory loopholes in the past gives pause to those who otherwise advocate increased funding for adult

education. In the face of budget cuts, swift and deep reductions to adult education programs may be indicative of an underlying dissatisfaction with the current adult education system. Perhaps in the face of a future restoration of funding, greater emphasis can be placed on determining what the goals of the program should be, how to measure whether these are being met, and how a more reliable system of accountability may be instituted.

After school opportunities are a further component of community education. With the exception of programs funded through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grants, Michigan does not monitor or track the existence or quality of after school programs. In light of the state's responsibility in distributing federal after school program dollars, comprehensive data regarding after school opportunities would enable the state to determine which areas are most in need of supplemental education services and would allow the state to distribute federal funds in the most equitable manner possible.