ALE RFP 2020 Questions and Answers

All applicants are required to use the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019. All applicants are encouraged to review the NYRS Guidelines. Both will be posted as part of the Q & A. If your agency submitted an application prior to release of the Q&A and updated documentation, please review updated documentation and resubmit application (Program Component Worksheet) as needed.

Contract/Fiscal

1. Why is "audit" a non-allowable expense with ALE dollars? Non-profits of a certain size in NYS are required to have an annual audit to qualify for Grants Gateway certification, and many 501(c)(3) boards of directors feel an annual audit is a "best practice" even when the size of the entity does not require it.

Ans: Grants Gateway states: "Organizations with revenues less than $250k need only provide a copy of the most recent internal financial report. Organizations with revenues of less than $750k but greater than $250k must provide a financial statement reviewed by a CPA. Organizations with revenues greater than $750k must provide an independently audited financial statement." This guidance is applied to the agency as a whole, and because it is not a requirement specifically for the ALE funding stream, auditing services cannot be readily assigned to only the ALE program. These are fees that would need to be supported by the agency at a local level.

2. Can you please explain the rationale for funding "down the list" in the event of additional appropriations, rather than offering incentive funds for existing programs to exceed their benchmarks and mandates?

Ans: Applicants are only eligible to receive funds up to the initial proposed amount. Should additional funds be made available, partially funded applications will be fully funded first, and then awards will be made continuing down the list until the funding ends.

3. According to the RFP, "Both NYC and Rest of State lists will be used in case additional funds are appropriated. The additional funds will be divided between New York City and ROS in the proportion used in the original allocation. Partially funded applications will be fully funded first, and then awards will be made continuing down the list until the funding ends. If all applications are fully funded for either ROS or NYC before the funding ends, that funding will transfer to the other region." Is there a situation in which there is additional funding left after the above allocations occur? Can the additional funding then be allocated to high performing programs already receiving the maximum amount so they can serve more students, fund their programs at the true cost of operation or provide additional services to their students?

Ans: Yes. If all funding from one region is exhausted, the additional funds go to a different region. Funding will be awarded according to ranking, until the funding is exhausted or all programs are funded. Additional funding cannot be awarded to an applicant for more than the amount applied.

4. Annual funding for Component A for New York City is $3,791,150. The maximum award for Component A requests from New York City-based institutions is $250,000. Should we assume that NYSED will issue 15 to 20 contracts to city-based institutions?

Ans: Yes.

5. If an agency accepts partial funding, how does it submit the remainder of their program for funding through the 'rest of state' fund.

Ans: If an applicant is given and accepts the opportunity to receive partial funding to operate an abbreviated program, it will work with ACCES- Adult Education Program Policy to submit an updated budget and workplan. Applicants cannot submit the remainder of their program for funding.

6. On page 16 the RFP states: "double space between titles…..as well as all text in charts, figures, and graphs." -When we enter data in charts do we have to double space between each data entry?

Ans: Yes.

7. Regarding the Budget Narrative (beginning on page 49) the RFP leaves space beneath each table for the narrative explanation. If our explanation goes longer than the allowed space, may we extend the explanation to an additional page?

Ans: Yes.

8. Are we allowed to Fedex the package?

Ans: Yes, providing it is postmarked by the deadline listed in the RFP.

9. What is meant by an abbreviated program? If an agency accepts partial funding, will program results be prorated? Does the agency determine those numbers, or does the state, or is it negotiated?

Ans: In the event that NYSED is only able to award partial funding to a project, the applicant would be given the option of an abbreviated program. The results are prorated by the state. If an applicant is given and accepts the opportunity to receive partial funding to operate an abbreviated program, it will work with ACCES- Adult Education Program Policy to submit an updated budget and workplan.

10. In the budget are consortium partner expenses listed under contracted services or in the categories for which they are used? For example, if a consortium partner uses their funding for Salaries, would the expense be listed in the lead agency's FS-10 under Contracted Services or Salaries?

Ans: Consortium partner expenses are to be included within the Purchased Service category on the FS-10.

11. For Component A, we would like to clarify if we are supposed to type our narrative into the word document version of the RFP, specifically on pg.43-56.

Ans: The Narrative should be completed in a Word document and cover all points addressed within pages 43-56.

12. May we include rent in the indirect?

Ans: Rental of space for STAC location. Proposal must describe how the rent is calculated and to whom it is paid. Agencies cannot charge space to this project if the space is owned by the agency. Rental costs for space cannot be more than 10% of the total program budget.
Indirect costs are costs of activities that benefit more than one program or objective and, therefore, cannot be readily assigned to only one specific program or objective. They are generally classified under functional categories such as general maintenance and operation expenses, general office and administration expenses, general overhead expenses, and other allowable general expenses.

13. What can we include in the indirect costs?

Ans: Please see response #12 above.

14. What is the allowable indirect rate, if any?

Ans: Not-for-Profit Community-Based Organizations may use 2.6%; however, these agencies may apply for a higher rate, up to 8%, by completing the FS-87-R forms which are available by contacting Grants Finance directly. The completed FS-87-R must be submitted to Grants Finance no later than January 30th for review and approval. The rate for higher education institutions is 8%. The calculated rates are the maximum indirect cost rates for these agencies.

15. Where do we list Case Managers in the budget, under "professional" or "support" staff?

Ans: This determination is up to the applicant. Either code would be suitable for approval of NYSED.

16. If lease of equipment exceeds $5000.00 which code does it get listed under? And does it need prior approval?

Ans: These costs would be listed under equipment code 20, all budgetary items would need prior approval from NYSED via the FS-10/FS-10A approval process.

17. On page 38, does the question asking if the applicant is prequalified refer to the applicant's status in Grants Gateway.

Ans: Yes.

18. On the RFP's Grants Gateway webpage, under Grant Opportunity ID, it notes, "Non-Gateway." We would like confirmation that the application DOES NOT need to be submitted via Grants Gateway and that we are to submit the electronic copy to ALERFP@nysed.gov and mail the original plus 2 copies to the address listed in the RFP.

Ans: The application is not submitted through the grants gateway. In addition to the hard copy submission as described in the RFP, please email the electronic copy to ALERFP@nysed.gov by 01/10/2020.

19. The lead agency is prohibited from sub-granting funds but is permitted to contract for services from consortium partners (p.4) Please expand on the difference more clearly so we can avoid appearing to sub-grant where we intend to contract.

Ans: A Consortium is a partnership among organizations where each member must meet eligibility requirements of the RFP. Each member of the Consortium is expected to provide the same or similar activities/services that result in a coordinated program that meets or exceeds the accountability measures of the RFP. Members of the Consortium are not subject to the 25% subcontracting limits. The applicant is prohibited from sub-granting funds to other recipients.

20. Do all consortium members need to pre-qualify in Grants Gateway, or just the lead?

Ans: Only the applicant agency/fiscal agent needs to be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application date.

21. "…Subcontracting is limited to 25% of the annual budget."
Does this apply to individual instructors who are not employees but work on contract, or are you referring to subcontracting to other agencies?"

Ans: The subcontracting limit refers to subcontracting with other agencies.

22. Application Due Date and Mailing Address: Submit one (1) original and two (2) copies of the complete proposal, and one (1) electronic copy (Word or pdf) of the application. Postmarked by 01/10/2020. How do I submit the electronic copy? Is there an email address it is supposed to go to? Or a web portal where it is uploaded?

Ans: In addition to the hard copy submission as described in the RFP, please email the electronic copy to ALERFP@nysed.gov by 01/10/2020.

23. Are all partners of a consortium required to provide the Disability Benefits documentation?

Ans: Only the applicant agency/fiscal agent is required to provide the Disability Benefits documentation.

24. Are all partners of a consortium required to provide the Workers Compensation documentation?

Ans: Only the applicant agency/fiscal agent is required to provide the Workers' Compensation documentation.

25. Can an administrative fee be built into the budget for the consortium lead since being the lead entails significant work? If this is allowed, is there a limit to the fee?

Ans: No. ALE funds are to be used to provide direct services. NYSED has established a minimum level of direct service of 20% to be provided by the fiscal agent.

26. Do all partners of a consortium complete the Attachment S-1?

Ans: No. The applicant agency/fiscal agent should complete box #3 to list subcontractors or other entities with whom the Contractor will share data.

27. Does an agency have to be registered in the Federal System for Award Management/SAM to be awarded the contract?

Ans: No. Federal System for Award management is for federal funded programs only.

28. P. 16: “Limit the proposal narrative to no more than ten pages.” Does the abstract count as one of the 10 proposal narrative pages?

Ans: No, it does not count as part of the 10 pages.

29. Where do pages 46, 47, 48 go in the application? Are these pages addenda or considered part of the 10-page narrative?

Ans: No, these pages do not count as part of the 10-page limit.

30. How do you want the electronic copy? Via email (to who or to which email address, CD ROM, or on a USB mailed with the three hard-copy applications?

Ans: See #18, electronic copies should be sent to the ALERFP@nysed.gov.

31. Please confirm that the Program Budget Category and Narrative are not included as part of the 10-page limit of the proposal narrative.

Ans: No, the Program Budget Category and Narrative are not included as part of the 10-page limit.

32. P. 35 re: Subcontractors: “For vendors using subcontractors, a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire and a NYSED vendor responsibility review are required for a contract.” Does this term subcontractors refer to non-lead consortium partners?

Ans: This does not refer to non-lead consortium partners, but if any of the non-lead consortium partners are to receive over $100,000 over the 5-year contract they are required to complete a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire.

33. If applying as a consortium, are Vendor Responsibility Questionnaires and review required for all consortium partners or just the lead?

Ans: Only the applicant agency/fiscal agent needs to complete a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire, unless the non-lead consortium partners are to receive over $100,000 over the 5-year contract, then they are required to complete a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire as well.

34. P. 36-37: Do all consortium partners also have to submit proof of worker’s compensation and disability insurance or does only the lead agency have to do that?

Ans: See above #23 and #24.

35. P. 49: Budget Categories salaries for professional staff, code 15: Can we list positions that are both administrative AND instructional instead of either/or? For example, an executive director who tutors and teaches classes? How would you categorize that in the administrative or instructional column? At small programs we all wear many hats.

Ans: Yes, administrative AND instructional positions can be included within code 15 provided that the equivalent FTE and title is clearly defined.

36. Referring to page 8 of the RFP, "These partnerships must be described in writing and signed by both parties." Should we include these written agreements in our application, or should they be kept in our office file?

Ans: Written agreements should be included with in the application and will not count towards the 10 pg. limit.

37. Should the electronic copy be by CD, flash drive, or email?

Ans: See above #18

38. Does the one-page Abstract count against 10-page limit on the Proposal Narrative?

Ans: No, it does not count as part of the 10 pages

39. Re: consortiums: (pg. 4 of RFP): "The applicant agency must be an eligible grant recipient. All other consortium members must be eligible grant participants, as defined by the program statute or regulation." Does this mean all members of an ALE consortium have to be prequalified in Grants Gateway and not just the fiscal agent? What other program statutes or regulations are you referring to?

Ans: Only the applicant agency/fiscal agent needs to be prequalified in the Grants Gateway by the application date. Program statuses or regulations refer to the eligibility requirements in the RFP.

40. Are letters of support accepted from partners who would not be funded through ALE funding, but who collaborate with the applicant in providing ALE services?

Ans: No. Letters of support are not considered.

41. On page 16 of the RFP it states "Do not include any materials not required by this RFP as these materials will not be evaluated, e.g. Newspaper articles, annual reports, letters of support from non-collaborating partners." Will you accept letters of support from collaborative partners?

Ans: No.

42. Will applications that propose to provide more than one form of service be scored higher?

Ans: No. All applications will be based on the merit of meeting deliverables as stated in the RFP.

43. In the Rest of State pool, is it possible for a program that was not awarded regionally to outrank a partially funded program from another region?

Ans: No.

44. How recent should a nonprofit agency's Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire be?

Ans: The Agency's Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire must be updated within the past year.

45. Can you specify which documents you need for - Disability Benefits Documentation (encouraged) and - Worker's Compensation Documentation (encouraged)?

Ans: Proof of Workers' Compensation Coverage.

To comply with coverage provisions of the WCL, the Workers' Compensation Board requires that a business seeking to enter into a State contract submit appropriate proof of coverage to the State contracting entity issuing the contract. For each new contract or contract renewal, the contracting entity must obtain ONE (1) of the following forms from the contractor and submit to OSC to prove the contractor has appropriate workers' compensation insurance coverage:

Form C-105.2 – Certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance issued by private insurance carriers, or Form U-26.3 issued by the State Insurance Fund; or

Form SI-12– Certificate of Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance; or Form GSI-105.2 Certificate of Participation in Workers' Compensation Group Self-Insurance; or

CE-200– Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from NYS Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.

Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage

To comply with coverage provisions of the WCL regarding disability benefits, the Workers' Compensation Board requires that a business seeking to enter into a State contract must submit appropriate proof of coverage to the State contracting entity issuing the contract. For each new contract or contract renewal, the contracting entity must obtain ONE (1) of the following forms from the contractor and submit to OSC to prove the contractor has appropriate disability benefits insurance coverage:

Form DB-120.1 - Certificate of Disability Benefits Insurance; or

Form DB-155- Certificate of Disability Benefits Self-Insurance; or

CE-200– Certificate of Attestation of Exemption from New York State Workers' Compensation and/or Disability Benefits Coverage.

M/WBE

1. If consortium partners are considered contractors, how does this impact MWBE calculations.

Ans: If consortium partners are considered contractors, this shouldn't impact M/WBE calculations, as there will most likely be areas of opportunity under the categories: Purchased Services, Supplies and Materials, and Travel Expenses. Furthermore, the name of the applicant agency/fiscal agent that is designated as the consortium's "lead" must comply with NYSED's M/WBE policy. The M/WBE participation goal for this grant is 30%.

2. If a consortium partner uses all their funding for Salaries would that amount be excluded from MWBE calculations?

Ans: If a consortium partner uses all their funding for salaries, under the "Salaries for Professional Staff" or "Salaries for Support Staff" categories, those calculations will be excluded from M/WBE calculations. However, if salaries are listed under the "Purchased Services" category, those calculations will not be excluded from M/WBE calculations.

3. If the MWBE requirement isn't met in a particular year, is it possible to make up the difference in subsequent years of the grant contract?

Ans: Because the M/WBE Unit reviews grants for a given grant term on an annual basis, every year, the grantee must meet (or exceed) the 30% M/WBE goal. Should they be unable to meet the 30% goal, we ask that they request a partial waiver for that particular grant year and provide sufficient evidence of good faith efforts.

4. Do we need to collect proof of MWBE Worker's Compensation Coverage and Disability Benefits Coverage for the application?

Ans: Proof of M/WBE Worker's Compensation Coverage and Disability Benefits Coverage is not necessary to collect and submit for the grant application.

5. Re: Equal Opportunity Staffing Plan: If we plan to hire employees for this project, how do we account for future employees of unknown gender and ethnicity on this report?

Ans: As stated under the Staffing Plan Instructions, "Where the work force to be utilized in the performance of the State contact/project cannot be separated out, the Bidder/Applicant shall complete this form for the Bidder/Applicant's total workforce." Therefore, please complete the form for the (current) total work force.

6. Re: Equal Opportunity Staffing Plan: What do we put down for the project number?

Ans: Once awarded, a project number will be provided to you by the program office. Until then, please leave this section blank.

ALE Programing

Eligibility:

1. Are BOCES eligible to apply for the ALE RFP that was just released?

Ans: No, in order to be eligible, an applicant needs to be a not-for profit agency/organization. While we appreciate your interest in serving the adult literacy community, according to Commissioner Regulation Section 164.2 "a not-for profit organization means a two-year college, four-year college or university, community-based organization, library or volunteer literacy organization, and other institutions organized on a not-for-profit basis". School districts and BOCES are not eligible to apply for this grant because they are government entities and aren't organized on a not-for-profit basis. There are other adult literacy program grants and state aid through NYSED that school districts and BOCES can apply for such as Welfare Education Program (WEP), Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Employment Preparation Education (EPE) state aid.

2. Are BOCES eligible to apply for the State Adult Literacy Education opportunity?

Ans: See Answer provided in #1 above.

3. Are BOCES that currently receive WIO or EPE funding eligible to apply for this Adult Literacy Education funding?

Ans: See Answer provided in #1 above.

4. Can you confirm that BOCES are eligible to apply for RFP #GC20-010?

Ans: See Answer provided in #1 above.

5. We produce a series of special vocal programs that are language based whereby our Performers sing in languages of various countries and then provide translations of those Songs in English. And we supply carefully explained translations of the languages used. I am interested to know if you would consider an application from us to provide our services within the NY State Adult Literacy Education Program 2020-2025?

Ans: See Answer provided in #1 above. If you meet the eligibility requirements, your proposal will be rated, scored and ranked accordingly. Funds will then be administered using the ranking system as described within the RFP.

Participant Eligibility:

1. Also, under Eligible Program Participants, the second bullet reads: "Do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent…" Please define, or tell us where to find, the definition of "recognized equivalent". Do you mean recognized by the US Department of Education or BY NYSED? Does a secondary diploma from another country disqualify a student?

Ans: "a recognized equivalent" refers to the New York State High School Equivalency diploma. More information on attaining this diploma can be found on www.nysed.gov

2. Is the family literacy component a requirement of all applicants?

Ans: No, this is not a requirement.

3. Is it preferred to focus on one area, such as a borough, neighborhood, community, within a RAEN? or is it ok to be spread out to we can reach more people? Please advise in light of "An eligible provider must also provide information regarding its outcomes for participants related to employment"

Ans: No, there is not a preferred focus. However, it is up to the applicant to identify and describe the population to be served.

4. Are we able to apply for only ESOL instruction?

Ans: Yes. Organizations may opt to serve only ABE or only ESOL students.

5. Can the program be ESOL only with referrals to HSE or do we need to provide HSE?

Ans: Yes. Organizations may opt to serve only ABE or only ESOL students.

6. Is there a required or recommended cost per participant for each type of service?

Ans: No. Every applicant should know their break-even point given their expenses to operate the class. As a department, we cannot provide that guidance as it is customized to each agency.

7. Can organizations propose to provide more than one form of direct instructional service for Component A? For example, can an organization propose to provide ABE, ASE, and ESOL services in a single proposal or does an organization have to prepare separate requests for each category of service?

Ans: Yes. An organization may propose to provide ABE, ASE, and ESOL services in a single proposal provided that at least 50 percent of the participants receiving services must be at the lowest beginning New York Reporting System (NYRS) of Adult Basic Education and/or English for Speakers of Other Languages that is NYRS Levels 1 and 2. Up to 50% can be for participants at the highest two levels of Adult Secondary Education that is NRS Levels 5 and 6. These students must be preparing to take the NYS HSE exam leading to a New York State HSE diploma.

8. Can we choose only an ESOL direct instructional program and not ABE, ASE or HSE programming?

Ans: Yes. Organizations may opt to provide only ESOL instruction.

9. For ESOL programming, can we do only the first 4 NRS Levels or do we have to do all 6 NRS Levels?

Ans: Yes, provided that the organization, as a whole, is serving at least 50 percent of the participants at the lowest beginning New York Reporting System (NYRS) of Adult Basic Education and/or English for Speakers of Other Languages that is NYRS Levels 1 and 2.

<u>Program Budget:</u>

1. Can I claim 1/2 of our yearly office rental costs is an instructional cost because we teach classes at our facility, assess students, which is pre-instruction, and tutors meet their students here for instructional purposes?

Ans: Yes, rent is an allowable expense for this initiative. Proposal must describe how the rent is calculated and to whom it is paid. Agencies cannot charge space to this project if the space is owned by the agency. Rental costs for space cannot be more than 10% of the total program budget.

2. Page 26 of the RFP mentions indirect rates, and states that "Not-for-Profit Community-Based Organizations may use 2.6%; however, these agencies may apply for a higher rate,

up to 8%, by completing the FS- 87-R forms which are available by contacting Grants Finance directly." This section appears to apply only to Component B, but the analogous section for Component A (pp. 16-17) does not mention indirect rates. Could you please provide guidance on applicable indirect rates for Component A.

Ans: Not-for-Profit Community-Based Organizations may use 2.6%; however, these agencies may apply for a higher rate, up to 8%, by completing the FS-87-R forms which are available by contacting Grants Finance directly. The completed FS-87-R must be submitted to Grants Finance no later than January 30th for review and approval. The rate for higher education institutions is 8%. The calculated rates are the maximum indirect cost rates for these agencies. These rates apply to both Component A and Component B.

3. Can expenses associated with occupancy (rent, insurance, telephone, dsl, etc.) be included in the budget if case management and/or instruction takes place on the premises

Ans: Yes, these are allowable expenditures.

4. Program Budget: Is a case manager considered an instructional expense? What if the case manager also does intakes, testing, follow-up surveys. Are those considered instructional expenses?

Ans: Yes, these would be considered instructional expenses

5. P. 6 of ALE RFP: "When submitting an application, subcontracting is limited to 25% of the annual budget. Subcontracting is defined as non-employee direct personal services and related incidental expenses, including travel." Does subcontracting refer to other consortia partner agencies who are not the lead/fiscal agent?

Ans: No. A Consortium is a partnership among organizations where each member must meet eligibility requirements of the RFP. Each member of the Consortium is expected to provide the same or similar activities/services that result in a coordinated program that meets or exceeds the accountability measures of the RFP. Members of the Consortium are not subject to the 25% subcontracting limits.

6. Is travel from instructional sites, RAEN meeting and trainings an allowable expense?

Ans: Yes. Travel from RAEN meetings and trainings are an allowable expense. Examples of non-allowable expenditures include: Participant travel and field trips.

7. For component B, the RFP calls for a budget for the first year only. This is different than other RFP's that ask for budgets for each of the five years. Our organization has fixed costs (like rent) that increase a percentage every year and we also provide annual cost of living salary increases for staff. For these reasons our costs for years 2-5 will be higher than our costs in year one. Recognizing that the maximum budget in any given year is $450K, how should we design our budget so it reflects these annual increases? Should our one-year budget be based on the maximum annual costs?

Ans: The submission of an annual project budget will be required. The annual budget cannot exceed the allowable maximum budget allotment for the project year. It is incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate that their program costs are necessary, justified, reasonable and cost effective.

8. Can a budget include: Translation costs for recruitment materials or translation of assessment and survey forms into the native languages of students? Interpretation costs for in-person or phone calls (for case management purposes or for collecting employment indicators post-exit)? Travel costs for staff attending professional development activities? Occupancy and utilities?

Ans: It is incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate that their program costs are necessary, justified, reasonable and cost effective. Please see pages 17, 26 & 30 of RFP for further guidance on allowable costs.

9. In calculating "real cost" for services, what is the competitive hourly pay rate for instructors?

Ans: Every applicant should know their break-even point given their expenses to operate the class. As a department, we cannot provide that guidance as it is customized to each agency.

10. Are seasonal staff (i.e. staff hired for 3 months) required to fulfill the professional development hours (14 hours)?

Ans: Yes. All paid staff, regardless of their length of employment, must fulfill the required 14 hours of professional development.

11. Does the 80% of the instructional costs include just the lead agency or are subcontractors included in that portion?

Ans: Consortium members are not Subcontractors.

<u>Case Management:</u>

1. "… such as assessment, counseling, and referral for childcare and transportation" The case management training explicitly differentiates referral from counseling. Please define what counseling you are expecting us to provide.

Ans: Case management should provide referrals to address participants' specific needs including, but not limited to, employment, training and apprenticeship programming, access to benefits, physical and mental health, legal services, financial services, and housing. Case managers are expected to help all students register for Job Zone. A broad overview and specific instructions can be found at the DOL website. NYSDOL and NYSED will be providing additional training on Case Management and Job Zone for funded programs.

2. When calculating the number of participants projected (to determine an appropriate case management FTE) should we estimate unique individuals enrolled over the course of the first budget period (who attend 12 hours or more), or use a different calculation?

Ans: The case management metric is designed to reflect the average number of students attending the program at any given time. However, case management must be provided as the student is associated with the program which means it should include students who are in the process of accruing the first 12 contact hours and pretest.

3. Are there any specific degrees or skills the case manager must have?

Ans: No, there is no specific degree.

4. Does case management, data entry and educational counseling staff belong under Professional Services or Support Services in the Budget? RFP: "Grant funds are intended for direct services to individuals. The reasonable costs of appropriate support services, such as educational counseling and case management, to supplement the applicant's instructional program are allowable."

Ans: Typically, case management, data entry and educational counseling staff are found in the Support Service Category; however, this decision is made by the applicant.

5. Can we get a clearer picture of what is required from a case manager? What are the duties of a full-time case manager? How does the work have to be documented? Does someone have to take care of x number of students per day? Does someone have to make regular visits? Travel? One full time manager is required for every 200 students served - does that mean if you serve 250, the requirement is 1.25?

Ans: Case management should provide referrals to address participants' specific needs including, but not limited to, employment, training and apprenticeship programming, access to benefits, physical and mental health, legal services, financial services, and housing. Case managers are expected to help all students register for Job Zone. A broad overview and specific instructions can be found at the DOL website. NYSDOL and SED will be providing additional training on Case Management and Job Zone for funded programs. Case managers are required to attend 14 hours of Professional Development through the RAEN. Tracking of case management duties will be tracked though the Case Management portal in ASISTS for this purpose. 1 full time Case Manager is needed for every 200 participants served. So, if a program is serving 250 students, it would be expected to have the equivalent of 1.25 FTE for case managers.

6. I understand the requirement of 1 full time case manager per 200 learners. Can these hours be split over multiple positions? For example, an organization that has 100 learners spread over multiple geographic locations has 4 program coordinators (1 per site). Can each of these coordinators perform 5 hours of case management per week to satisfy the case management requirement? It would be very costly and inefficient to have a single case manager travel hundreds of miles a week to serve our learners.

Ans: Yes, as long as the required Case manager FTE, based upon enrollment, is met, the position can be split.

7. If we serve less than 200 students, do we still need a FT case manager?

Ans: Yes, a Case Manager is required and would be based upon a prorated amount. If a program is expecting to serve 100 students, then it would be required to include a case manager equivalent to .5 FTE

8. Must a case manager be a paid employee, or can the position be filled by trained volunteers?

Ans: A Case Manager is a paid employee.

9. Please tell us how to calculate the number of participants served. For example, if I plan to enroll 200 students in total, does this mean I need 1 FTE for case management, or as a memo from Mr. Purga to EPE, WEP and WIOA programs dated Sept. 24 suggests,

should we calculate an average daily attendance throughout the year and determine the FTE by that?

Ans: The number of participants to be served should be calculated on the average daily attendance at any given time during the fiscal year.

10. The intended caseload for 1 FTE Case Worker is 200 individuals served, is this over the term of the contract or annually?

Ans: Annually.

11. What exactly is required in case management?

Ans: Please see answer #5

12. Does all case management need to be in person? Can some be done electronically (as part of developing computer literacy), such as taking surveys, identifying areas of need, etc.

Ans: All case management must be delivered in person.

13. Will case management time count as contact time for the learner?

Ans. Yes, providing it is documented in the data system ASISTS.

14. Can case management be done by volunteers, or must it be done by staff?

Ans: Case manager is a paid position.

15. Can a case manager be shared within a consortium?

Ans: Yes.

16. Does the case manager need to be a separate person/position, or could it be one role in a larger position?

Ans: Yes, it can be combined with a different position.

17. The Case Management Ratio is one FTE for 200 students. Is that prorated based on the number of students or is it 1 full time for up to 200 students? In other words, if the program serves 100 students, do we need 1.0 FTE, or 0.5 FTE?

Ans: Yes, it is prorated based on the number of students. If the program serves 100 students, they would need a 0.50 FTE

18. Can the Case Management requirement of one fulltime Case Manager for 200 students be met by two or more part-time Case Managers whose hours are equivalent to one fulltime staff member (35hr/wk)?

Ans: Yes.

19. p.7, Case management: If case management is to be provided by a current part-time staff member, must that person's hours be increased by 7.5 hours/week per 40 students to be served? Is the case manager to be budgeted as support staff or professional staff? What if the current staff member assuming the case management responsibilities is already professional staff? Is there an option to allow case management to be handled by a knowledgeable volunteer?

Ans: Case management is a paid position. It is up to the agency and their HR department to determine what category (Professional or Support) to place the case manager as well as how the hours per week are broken down. Typically, if an agency is required to have a .5FTE case manager, approximately 20 hours is to be dedicated to this position to meet the .5FTE requirement.

20. Does the case manager have to complete the Job Work Zone registration with all participants? Some participants will be referred to or referred from the local One-stop where this process is done there.

Ans: All students must be registered on JobZone.

21. Can there be one Case Manager for the entire consortium or does each program have to have their own case manager?

Ans: Case management can be shared within the consortium.

22. Can a proposal include a more favorable student to case manager ratio? (ie. 1 case manager per 100 participants?).

Ans: Yes.

23. Is a case manager required for programs serving fewer than 200 participants?

Ans: Yes, the case manager position would be prorated per the size of the program being proposed.

24. Can we fund the Case Manager role with partial matching funds?

Ans: No.

25. Can the Case Manager role be included as an in-kind role (i.e. a role subsidized through another funder)?

Ans: No.

26. Can the mandatory Case Manager be "in kind" funded through other private or public sources, or does the Case Manager salary need to be included on the ALE budget?

Ans: No, the case manager position cannot be in kind.

27. If the Case Manager can be in kind, are there any restrictions on the type of funding used to support that position? Specifically, could WIOA/Literacy Zone funding be used to support this position?

Ans: The case manager position cannot be in kind.

Consortium

1. If you have lost an agency since the last ALE grant, you are considered a "new" consortium," correct?

Ans: Yes, if you have a new consortium configuration, then you would be considered as a new consortium.

2. If a consortium lost a partner between the 2015 ALE grant and the 2020 ALE grant, will the consortium lead submit the 2018/19 Consortium Report Card to show effectiveness, or does the consortium lead have to use the Demonstrated Effectiveness Chart in the RFP? For example, LV X merged with LV Y in 2016. The original 2015 RFP had LV X as the lead, with LV Y and LV Z as consortium members. Now, LV Y has merged with LV X, and LV Z is still a member of the LV X consortium group. Report card or chart?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

3. Please clarify these statements that seem to contradict: A minimum level of direct service of 20% must be provided by the fiscal agent in a consortium (p.4) however, subcontracting is limited to 25% of the annual budget (p. 6)
   a. How do these numbers apply for a consortium?
   b. Are consortium partners considered sub-contractors?
   c. Would a consortium of 3 partners – where the lead serves 40% of the participants, another partner serves 45%, and a third serves 15%. – be allowed?

Ans: No, consortium members are not considered subcontractors. The percentage to be served by each consortium member is up to the lead. The lead must provide 20% of direct service; however, there is no minimum/ maximum requirement for the other consortium members regarding population to be served.

4. If a consortium's members remain the same, but the lead changes, what data should be submitted for Demonstrated Effectiveness?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

5. If we are a consortium with the same lead as in the current ALE contract, but one fewer partner, are we considered a new consortium? If we are considered a new consortium, is it correct that we use Appendix 1 to "demonstrate effectiveness"?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

6. If we are a new consortium, can we choose among the following options to "demonstrate effectiveness" on Appendix 1, the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart: a) use aggregated 2018-19 numbers/data from each member of the new consortium; b) use the numbers/data of the proposed lead agency from 2018-19, or c) use the student numbers and benchmarks from 2018-19 of a consortium partner that will not be the lead/fiscal agent?

Ans: No. As a new consortium, the agency would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart. Please refer to the new Program Component Worksheet release as part of Question and Answers.

7. If we are a new consortium and may use aggregated numbers/data from the consortium partners, do we base "participants" (Appendix 1) on the number of students that each partner proposed to serve in 2018-19, that each actually served in 2018-19, or that we propose to serve successfully in the new RFP 2020-2025?

Ans: Your projections should reflect your expectations for your program relevant to this RFP.

8. If we are part of a consortium, can one agency above the others focus on HSE obtainment and Fast Track numbers, or would all members of the consortium be committed to focusing on these areas?

Ans: Yes, this is allowable provided that the consortium, as a whole, is providing at least 50 percent of the services at the lowest beginning New York Reporting System (NYRS) of Adult Basic Education and/or English for Speakers of Other Languages that is NYRS Levels 1 and 2.

9. For Component A, are we allowed to apply as a lead for one application and be listed as a subcontractor in another separate application?

Ans: No.

10. For Component A, are we allowed to apply as a consortium in one application and also submit a completely separate application as a regular applicant?

Ans: No.

11. If the consortium lead is the same as last time and the consortium partners are the same minus one partner, then do we submit a NYSED NYRS Report Card for FY18/19 or do we submit a completed Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

12. As a new consortium you will not submit report card, correct?

Ans: All new consortiums would need to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

13. Demonstrated Effectiveness p. 11 of ALE RFP: If an ALE consortium has a report card for the 2018-2019 fiscal year containing the data of three agencies, and plans to form a new consortium with only two of those three agencies, can we still submit that report card data for the ALE RFP or do we have to complete the demonstrated effectiveness conversion chart?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

14. Do we need to have any Partner Agreement letters for this RFP and if so, how many? I didn't see this stated anywhere in the RFP. If we do need Partner letters, is there any agency in specific that we need to have a letter from?

Ans: It is not required for an individual agency as applicant to provide copies of linkage agreements or letters of support. If applying as a Consortium, partnership agreements are required to fully describe the program.

15. Referring to consortium report card. My agency was part of a three agency consortium for the last five years. I will be applying with only one of the agencies for the next five years. Do we attach the most recent report card reflecting three agency data, or do we complete Appendix 1?

Ans: In this scenario the applicant would be considered a new consortium and would have to complete the Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart.

Component A- Programing:

1. Do we need to have signed, written agreements as indicated on p. 8 for the transition of ASE students into higher education if we are one of the listed NYSED approved institutions?

Ans: Yes.

2. RFP: "All staff members providing instruction (full and part-time) must attend professional development provided through the RAEN that reflects the work done with Master Teachers at the NYSED/CUNY institutes supported NYSED." Can you clarify what is meant by work of Master Teachers? Is that for the RAEN Component B to think about or for grantees of Component A?

Ans: Neither. This is an expectation of the training offered through the RAEN.

3. How does this statement on page 17 apply to non-profit agencies? “Projects must operate under the jurisdiction of the local board of education or other appropriate governing body”. Does the agency’s own board of directors suffice as an appropriate governing body or is support from the local board of education required?

Ans: Yes. The appropriate governing board is sufficient.

4. Should we include a signed agreement with our ASE post-secondary partner in the application packet?

Ans: Yes.

5. There seems to be a strong emphasis on HSE in this grant. Will applicants whom include HSE as part of their grant be looked at more favorably than an applicant that doesn’t? Will an applicant working with an immigrant population interested in ESOL classes exclusively be at a disadvantage?

Ans: HSE services are optional. Applicants choosing to exclusively work with only one of the approved areas of instruction, as noted in RFP, will not be at a disadvantage.

6. For Component A, do program charts such as the NYS’s Performance Targets Program Component Worksheet, Program Information Sheet, and the budget charts count towards the narrative page limit of 10 pages? (RFP pg. 46-56)

Ans: No.

7. The annual performance report is due no later than the first Friday in October. If this refers to the ASISTS report, is this a later deadline than in the past? Also it is different than the August 15th date listed on page 82.

Ans: This is referring to the new accountability process that will be launched by NYSED after awards are made. The deadlines are as listed in the RFP.

8. In the past, the state has issued RFPs for stand-alone or complementary service funding. Does NYSED expect the services to be provided with Component A funding to be stand-alone (e.g., to support a separate program), complementary (e.g., to support an element of an existing program), or whatever best suits the service providing institution?

Ans: Yes. The ALE funding is meant to support stand-alone programming.

9. If we are not an existing grantee, should we show existing adult literacy students' statistics from our adult literacy program (that may be funded through another entity) or from courses such as civics, naturalization, workforce or other adult literacy efforts?

Ans: Yes, all of the above.

10. Will NYSED create a learning community of Adult Literacy Education providers to support professional development? Is the creation of a learning community an ingredient of RAEN professional development activities? Does NYSED intend to have professional development activities that extend beyond those provided by the RAENs?

Ans: No. This question is irrelevant to the STAC application.

11. Will there be priority given to applications that include ASE/HSE?

Ans: No.

12. Will proposers who do not include an Adult Secondary Education [HSE preparation] component on their program design be at a disadvantage in their submission? Is the ASE component a mandatory deliverable of the ALE proposal?

Ans: Neither.

13. Are we allowed to use NYSED ALE support to enhance/blend funding into an existing successful adult literacy program? (I.e. funding from private funders or city discretionary funding.)

Ans: Yes, programs are allowed to use other forms of funding to support ALE programs; however, if an applicant should use other NYSED funding (WIOA), the performance reporting for those students would then shift to the NRS guidelines.

14. Page 8 of the RFP states that "Every Adult Secondary Education Program should have a strong partnership with the local SUNY, CUNY community college, or other NYSED approved post-secondary training institutions and establish referral arrangements to bridge programs that support postsecondary transition if the agency is not going to operate a postsecondary transition program. These partnerships must be described in writing and signed by both parties." However, the application checklists on pp. 15, 29/30 and 38 do not mention signed agreements. In fact, p. 16 of the RFP states: "Do not include any materials not required by this RFP as these materials will not be evaluated, e.g. newspaper articles, annual reports, letters of support from non-collaborating partners, etc." Should we include signed agreements with institutions of higher education?

Ans: It is not required for an individual agency as applicant to provide copies of linkage agreements or letters of support. However, if the proposal includes ASE programming, there should be a reference to the strong partnership the program has with the local SUNY, CUNY community college, or other NYSED approved post-secondary training institutions.

15. P. 47: program component worksheet: Does every program applying for ALE have to fill in student numbers and contact hours for family literacy?

Ans: No. Programs applying for Component A are not required to provide family literacy services.

16. P. 6 of ALE RFP: Programs of Instruction: “Assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children.” Are all programs applying for ALE required to do family literacy?

Ans: No. Programs applying for Component A are not required to provide family literacy services.

17. Page 7 of the RFP states that "Education in a language other than English will not be supported as a stand-alone service. Basic education in another language can only be supported if integrated into English Language literacy classes to achieve English language educational gains." Could you please provide further detail on how you are defining "stand-alone" and "integrated"? For example, could we enroll students in a Spanish-only class and separately in in a second English language class? Or does “integrated” mean that any foreign language instruction must take place at the same time and place as English language instruction, and during the same class time?

Ans: As stated in the RFP, "Education in a language other than English will not be supported as a stand-alone service.” This means that classes cannot be taught in a language other than English. Basic education in another language can only be supported if the instruction is integrated into English Language literacy classes to achieve English language educational gains. Instruction in a language other than English is not allowed as a stand-alone class.

18. I read that up to 50% of funding can be used on HSE classes as well as ABE classes. My question is, is it mandatory to include HSE and ABE projected classes in this proposal?

Ans: At least 50 percent of the participants receiving services must be at the lowest beginning New York Reporting System (NYRS) of Adult Basic Education and/or English for Speakers of Other Languages that is NYRS Levels 1 and 2. As long as this percentage is met at least the ESOL, it is not mandatory to include HSE and ABE classes in this proposal.

19. Can 100% of the funding request be for ESOL programming NYRS levels 1-2?

Ans: Yes, organizations may opt to serve only ESOL students.

20. In the “Demonstrated Effectiveness Chart,” you need to prove you have successfully served the number of students you asking funding for in this grant, correct?

Ans: Correct, it is incumbent upon the applicant to provide the data analysis that they would like to have considered to demonstrate program effectiveness whether that performance report was generated for NYSED or an external source. Verification of the data would be requested of the applicant, if necessary.

21. In the “Demonstrated Effectiveness Chart,” do you show the number of students you plan on serving? So, if I plan on serving 50 in the grant. I need to demonstrate effectiveness for 50 students? I need to show I can meet the benchmarks with 50 students?

Ans: The target is a benchmark programs should reach or exceed for that particular NYRS level. If funded, programs are required to meet the NYRS accountability guidelines and enter required data in ASISTS.

22. “All awardees will be required to submit a quarterly report through the online SED monitoring tool housed on SED’s Business Portal." The Business Portal appears to require a login and password issued by SED. How do we obtain that?

Ans: Successful applicants will be provided with access to the system once contracts are executed.

23. All awardees will be required to submit a quarterly report through the online SED Monitoring tool housed on NYSED's Business Portal
    a. Can you provide more information?
    b. Is this a new reporting requirement?
    c. Will data be pulled directly from ASISTS, or will we have to submit separate reports?

Ans: Yes, this is a new reporting requirement. Successful applicants will be provided with access to the system once contracts are executed.

24. Is there a maximum percentage of ESOL participants we can serve?

Ans: No, there is not a limit on the percentage of ESOL participants to be served.

25. Is there a minimum number of hours required for instruction?

Ans: The program requirements for hours of instruction are not less than 6 hours per week.

26. Is there a minimum or maximum number of program hours required for any of the service types?

Ans: The program requirements for hours of instruction are not less than 6 hours per week.

27. Referring to performance targets on page 12. Are these targets subject to annual increases?

Ans: Yes, the NYRS performance targets are subject to change.

28. Specifically, if the adult education and language learners' activities can be facilitated through partnerships, or must they be facilitated directly by the awarded agency?

Ans: No, an organization may not sub-contract the instructional program.

29. What professional development opportunities are being provided for clerical/financial staff who are not involved in program?

Ans: Clerical/financial staff whom contribute to AEPP funded programs are welcome to attend any trainings administered by NYSED/RAEN~~.~~

30. Is there a recommended "cost per seat" for instructional services?

Ans: Every applicant should know their break-even point given their expenses to operate the class. As a department, we cannot provide that guidance as it is customized to each agency.

31. There are many factors including the new TABE 11/12, a more robust intake procedure including required case management, and math testing for ABE that will make serving a student more expensive than in 2015 and affect the "cost per student", which could lead to a reduction in the number of students served. Will a reduction in student numbers based on the reality of the true costs of serving a student reflect negatively on the applicant?

Ans: There are no minimum and/or maximum numbers of participants to be served annually for applicants requesting the maximum award. Applications are rated based upon a uniform set of criteria. It is incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate that their program costs are necessary, justified, reasonable and cost effective.

32. Is there a recommended number of clients to be served per contract and/or a suggested cost per participant? It looks like it is up to the proposer to project participant numbers as per the worksheet on page 47 of the RFP, but please confirm if that is indeed the case or if you have any recommendations on the number of students to be served.

Ans: There are no minimum and/or maximum numbers of participants to be served annually for applicants requesting the maximum award. Applications are rated based upon a uniform set of criteria. It is incumbent upon the applicant to demonstrate that their program costs are necessary, justified, reasonable and cost effective.

33. What is the cost per student?

Ans: Every applicant should know their break-even point given their expenses to operate the class. As a department, we cannot provide that guidance as it is customized to each agency.

34. How many hours of instructions are needed per course?

Ans: A course must provide at least 6 hours per week of instruction.

35. How should we calculate the number of contact hours for the Program Component Worksheet? Is it simply the number of instructional hours offered?

Ans: Your projections should reflect your expectations for your program over the course of the project year.

36. Do you have a recommended number of contact hours for different elf levels?

Ans: A course must provide at least 6 hours per week of instruction.

<u>Fast Track-</u>

1. Is there a format for proposing a customized Fast Track strategy? What is the approval process?

Ans: The format and approval process are the same for any proposed instruction.

2. Can workshops related to test-taking skills or computer-based testing skills be incorporated into the six hours of intense math instruction or must they be separate?

Ans: Yes.

3. How should we project Contact Hours for the Fast Track component, given that students will complete different numbers of packets (at 24 hours each) and attend varying numbers of intense math instruction sessions and related workshops?

Ans: Similar to any proposed instruction, the applicant will need to calculate and propose contact hours for Fast Track programming.

4. How should the intensive 6-hour math sessions and two x two sessions be identified on the Program Information Sheet?

Ans: They should be explicitly identified. Please refer to Appendix 4 and new Program Component Worksheet for further information.

5. Should we record Fast Track and/or NEDP programming on the Program Component Worksheet? If so, where? If not, is the program narrative the only place to reference these programs?

Ans: They should be explicitly identified on the Program Component Worksheet, reflecting the program narrative.

6. A teacher is required to sign off on the Fast Track packet completion form (Appendix 5) presented by a student. Does the signature indicate an assessment of the student's work or an assurance that it has been completed? Have you any guidance on what criteria the teacher would use?

Ans: The teacher should sign off on the packet when completed by the student. The teacher is assuring, by their signature, that the student has mastered the necessary skills for that packet.

7. Under the Fast Track option, must the two x two sessions be separate from the 6-hour intensive math sessions? Alternatively, can they be combined so that some students are doing only math and others are doing math plus one other area in the two x two session?

Ans: They can be combined as appropriate.

8. Can or should a program expect to have more than one instructor or tutor in the two x two sessions?

Ans: This entirely depends upon the content areas selected and the experience and expertise of the teacher.

9. Must a given two x two session focus on math and one other specific TASC area or could it be open to, for example, students who failed math and writing AND other students who failed math and science?

Ans: Each two x two session for different content areas should be specified and justified given the proposed population to be served.

10. If separate workshops (e.g. on test-taking skills or test anxiety) are offered to students under Fast Track, how should these be indicated on the PIF?

Ans: The Program Information Form identifies where instruction is provided. The PIF should identify the locations of where the workshops will be offered and the content for each.

11. Is there a suggested minimum number of students that a program should plan to serve using the Fast Track model?

Ans: No.

12. Fast Track: On page 9 of the RFP there is a list of FAST Track HSE options, Is it possible to combine them in the program design? For example, can we combine 2 Math Grasp packets and 4 (6) hour intense math sessions? Can we change the options and do 12 (3) hour intense math sessions?

Ans: They can be combined but should be explicitly identified to the needs of the proposed population to be served.

13. Fast Track: Is there a minimum number of Fast Track GRASP packets a participant must complete to meet the requirements of this program?

Ans: No. The purpose of the Fast Track math GRASP packets is to tailor the packets to the individual student to enable passing the TASC math subtest. So some students may need only one or two packets to help them address specific math deficiencies while others may need more, depending upon their math deficits.

14. On the Program Component Worksheet, do we list the projected number of Fast Track HSE participants and contact hours under ASE?

Ans: Yes. Please specifically indicate Fast Track students under ASE.

15. Does a learner need to be at NYRS levels that correspond to ASE program (levels 5 and 6) to use Fast Track packets?

Ans: No. Teachers have the discretion to provide Fast Track packets to students below levels 5 and 6. In fact, program experience has shown that students below levels 5 and 6 will benefit from the packets. This especially true of students being assessed with TABE 11/12.

16. Also, in order to use Fast Track, it states "All participants must be tested with the TASC readiness assessment forms 6 and 7." We have not tested any of our learners with the TASC readiness assessment. Do we need to be certified to administer that test like we are with TABE?

Ans: The TASC readiness assessment is required. There is no formal certification to administer the TASC readiness.

17. All of our ASE level learners get their TASC readiness through our BOCES. Can we continue to partner with BOCES for the testing requirement and still use Fast Track?

Ans: Yes, providing the BOCES will share the results.

18. Is a required outcome for programs using Math Fast Track include that participants attain a High School Equivalency by the end of the program's fiscal year? If so, please indicate where this is stated in the RFP.

Ans: The purpose is to prepare participants to pass the math sub-test of the TASC test and obtain a HSE diploma. There is no specific year end requirement. However, the focus on Fast Track is on participants who have just barely failed TASC subtests, so that tailored instruction should enable them to take and pass the TASC test expeditiously and more effectively than if the instruction was not focused and individualized.

19. On page 9 - under bullet Short Term Instructional Options- regarding the use of Fast Track Math Instruction - can the intense math instructional sessions be scheduled for weekday mornings, and not only evenings and Saturdays - because programs do offer morning HSE classes.

Ans: Yes, whatever times are convenient for programs and participants, your design should be described well in your proposal.

20. Can we increase or decrease our fast track numbers after the first year of the contract?

Ans: Numbers can always be increased. The limit for *reducing* proposed numbers is a 10% leeway and must be preapproved by NYSED.

21. Can our instructional program be a combination of 90% ESOL students and 10% Fast Track ASE?

Ans: Yes, there is flexibility in what can be provided so long as they are clearly identified.

22. For the Fast Track program, do we have to teach all of the TASC subjects (Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies) or can we just focus on one subject, e.g., Math?

Ans: It depends upon what the participant needs to pass the TASC test.

23. At what NRS Levels should we start Fast Tracking students?

Ans: This will depend on the student population being served. For the Fast Track GRASP Packets, there is no minimum Educational Functioning Level. For all other Fast Track options, again there is no minimum requirement, but the programming should be described to support the identified proposed population.

24. Can we include a small number of participants for Fast Tracking? For example, 25 Fast Tracked students out of 250 unduplicated enrollments? Is there a minimum number of students?

Ans: There is no minimum. However, please review the answer to question 18 above and review revised Program Component Worksheet for further guidance.

25. Are Fast Track students counted as part of our contractual student number? I'm sure they are but how is that indicated if not on the program component worksheet?

Ans: Yes. They are included in the contractual student number. They should be explicitly identified on the program component worksheet.

26. If a program is going to serve Fast Track students, who don't need a TABE test, do we list those students on the program component worksheet for traditional adult ed instruction?

Ans: No, they should be listed under Fast Track programming only.

27. Is Fast Track optional or required?

Ans: It is optional.

28. Does this mean we can offer a twice-a-week class that splits the time between math and another subject?

Ans: Yes.

29. Is there a minimum number of hours or time period required for these classes?

Ans: Classes must be 6 hours per week, so each of the twice a week classes must be 3 hours in length for a total of 6 per week.

30. Are fast track students considered part of the total enrollment number?

Ans: Yes, and it should be explicitly identified as Fast Track students.

31. Can the Fast Track Model have a different design than the short-term options provided; for example, can a Fast Track Math class meet 8-10 hours per week for 2-3 weeks, focusing only on Math (using Grasp packets as the basis for traditional classroom instruction provided by teacher) for students who need a "boost" to pass the Math TASC section?

Ans: Yes. The program must articulate the design of the proposed instruction.

32. It was suggested at a RAEN meeting for program managers that proposals that included Fast Track options would be looked at more favorably than those that do not include any Fast Track options. The Evaluation Rubric for Component A (pages 88-93) does not specifically provide points for the inclusion of any Fast Track option. Please clarify if the inclusion of Fast Track will be looked at more favorably and increase the likelihood of

being funded compared to programs that do not include any Fast Track option. If yes, where would the points for this be found in the Evaluation Rubric?

Ans: This suggestion is erroneous. There are no additional points or priority placed on Fast Track programming. It is a new option of ALE funding.

33. How would an ALE program use the 24 contact hours for students completing a Math GRASP Packet? Fast Track has no hour requirement and ALE is not funded per contact hour.

Ans: When the teacher in an ALE program signs to indicate that the Fast Track Math GRASP packet is completed (skills have been mastered), the program will record 24 contact hours for that packet in ASISTS. Tutorials for data managers will be made available after awards are announced.

34. Will we be penalized if we don't offer HSE/Fast-Tracking?

Ans: No.

NEDP-

1. What is the TABE requirement for NEDP? Is there no TABE testing at all or is there one TABE test that determines if a student may be in a NEDP program? If the later, what is the NRS level the student must achieve on the TABE?

Ans: There is no TABE testing necessary for students being enrolled in NEDP. Should the student be moved back to a traditional classroom then a TABE test would need to be administered.

2. The CASAS website states, "The NEDP program does not require students to take any timed, high-stakes tests. However, demonstration of academic mastery at the 9th grade level equivalency on the CASAS Assessments, as well as a score of 9.0 or better on the TABE D in reading and math, is required for program admission." Will this be a requirement for programs planning on offering the NEDP under NYS ALE funding? Will potential students who do not score 9.0 on TABE D be excluded from participating?

Ans: As stated in the RFP, there is no TABE testing necessary for students being enrolled in NEDP.

3. Is NEDP training for staff ongoing or it is cyclical? Will training for coaches be available as soon as programs learn they have an award to offer NEDP at their sites?

Ans: NEDP in-person training at the agency site is delivered to new staff, i.e., advisors and assessors, when agencies are approved to provide the program. NEDP also sponsors ongoing and refresher training opportunities for agency staff.

4. What costs per student are required by the funded program to administer the NEDP?

Ans: The cost per student will vary by program, this is left to the program to design and propose.

5. Will programs proposing to offer NEDP need to include the following costs or are these paid for by NYSED at no penalty to the program? From the CASAS website: "…NYSED will pay an annual site fee of $950 (established by CASAS) for each site. NYSED will also

pay for replacement training for up to 20 staff statewide set at $1,350 per individual. For new agencies, NYSED will pay a fee of $100 per person for each Online Assessment Administrations Web Enrollment Unit (WEU) for up to 10 clients, plus a $15 handling fee for each agency, and $7500 for new staff training (up to five agency staff)"

Ans: The costs identified in question 4 are included in the NYSED contract with CASAS and are not intended to be an expense of participating agencies.

NYRS, Accountability and Data:

1. Demonstrated Effectiveness: How do we report on "Required Secondary Outcome Measures"- and Family Literacy Outcomes - there is no measurable /quantifiable data described in the RFP?

Ans: A program would articulate and share any success they have had with any of the Secondary Outcomes and Family Literacy Outcomes.

2. p.40, #3, Student data security: When DRC scores the TABE tests for us, is DRC considered our contractor because scoring is considered to be included in our purchase of the tests, or does NYSED pay DRC for scoring through its own contract?

Ans: Question #3 on the student data security form (Attachment S-1) asks the applicant to list all persons/entities, including subcontractors, with whom you will share Student Data. All purchased services, including assessment costs, should be included in the applicant's budget.

3. In Appendix 1, under the column, "% of participants moving from EFL to the next," can NYSED clarify what this column means? Does this mean % of the participants who are qualified to move onto the next level or the % of the enrollment numbers overall who move onto the next level?

Ans: This column should include the number of students who demonstrated they have moved from one level to the next by way of an assessment tool.

4. Regarding question 4 of the program narrative (effectiveness of adult education instruction), is it OK to briefly mention how we were rated as proficient on our report card and ranked in Quartile 3 but are not submitting that report card due to a change in our consortium for 2020-2025? We are submitting a demonstrated effectiveness chart and will discuss that data in our grant proposal.

Ans: Under your circumstances the report card is not relevant.

5. "Appendix 1: In addition to Measurable Gain, all applicants must demonstrate their previous effectiveness in the following areas: • Transition to postsecondary education • Referral to skills training or apprenticeship programs • Transition to employment All applicants must complete the following chart. Data shared in the chart must pertain to participants served in the 12-month period between July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019: " - Similar to the question above - how are these to be measured? And what happens if these do not apply to the majority our population?

Ans: All of the outcomes mentioned above are relative to the populations proposed to be served under this RFP. It is incumbent on the applicant to demonstrate they have the capacity to provide services in each area listed above.

6. In a presentation given by Rosemary Matt in October 2019, the benchmark for HSE attainment, survey rate, employment were listed as “To Be Determined” on the slide. On page 46, the chart indicates the Performance Targets for 2020-2025 including HSE Diploma at 90% and employment is 74%. Are these now the official benchmarks that were “TBD” in October 2019? Additionally, the survey rate was not listed in the RFP - has that benchmark been determined?

Ans: The survey rate has not yet been determined. The Performance Targets listed in the RFP are federal targets for New York State. Local state benchmarks have not yet been set.

7. The Performance Target Worksheet included in the application clearly indicates that program targets are consistent with NYS 2020-2025 targets and those targets are identified for each program type offered by the applicant: ABE, ASE, and ESOL. - does this mean to only include the page you provided?

Ans: Yes.

8. On page 10 of RFP - it states the New York participates in NYSDOL's UI data matching process and the process requires the participants Social Security No., refugee number, or work visa number. The current ISRF only requests a person's Social Security number. Will it be modified for FY 2020 to include the refugee number and work visa number?

Ans: Yes, however these numbers do not guarantee a match in ASISTS.

9. Other than the WIOA requirement to inquire about a participant’s salary in the 2nd quarter post exit and WIOA's requirement for employment status in the 4th quarter post exit, how does this grant differ from the WIOA grant (given the emphasis on employment)?

Ans: As stated in the RFP, an ALE funded program must follow up for employment attainment in the second quarter after exit. This is unrelated to WIOA.

10. RFP: "Additional Outcome Categories: 1. Health Literacy 2. Financial Literacy 3. Functional Literacy 4. Family Literacy 5. Community Outcomes 6. School Relations 7. Workforce Readiness 8. Legal Services 9. Citizenship 10. Social Service 11. Career Exploration 12. Voting 13. Postsecondary transition Under each of these broad outcome categories, programs will enter into ASISTS specific outcomes associated with the populations of students they serve. " I do not see measurable data. Please clarify how you want the outcomes to be reported?

Ans: Programs are expected to refer students via case managers to services within each community that can support these additional outcome categories. The program must track the referrals they make under each category and to which agencies in the electronic data system.

11. What is the method for collecting data on secondary measures?

Ans: Survey students.

12. RFP states: "Up to 50% can be for participants at the highest two levels of Adult Secondary Education that is NRS Levels 5 and 6. These students must be preparing to take the NYS HSE exam leading to an HSE diploma." --- How does this apply to ESOL?

Ans: It does not apply to ESOL.

13. In an ESOL class, do we have to refer participants in the highest two levels (NRS Levels 5 and 6) to an HSE/ASE program?

Ans: If it is appropriate for those students, then yes.

14. Does having ESOL classes for NRS Levels 5 and 6 mean we have to eventually refer students to a HSE/ASE program?

Ans: If it is appropriate for those students, then yes.

15. My agency already provides family literacy services particularly to our English Language Learners. We feel we are ideally positioned to do more of this. However, I don't understand if Family Literacy is a new program that ALE will fund or is it simply one of the new outcomes that we can measure? I notice that the chart on p. 47 has Family Literacy broken out. Are the learners who qualify under this initiative part of our overall learner count with the same post-testing and MSG requirements? Or is it a separate program from the ABE, ASE and ESOL programs?

Ans: Family literacy is not required in the ALE RFP and this is not new to ALE funding. If Family Literacy Services are provided under this initiative, learners should be included and as part of the overall learner count with the same accountability expectations under NYRS reporting measure outcomes. This data should be included on the Program Component Worksheet. Please see the revised Program Component Worksheet for further guidance.

16. Appendix 1 - when you write "Percent of Participants moving from one EFL to the next" - which participant number do you mean? # of participants, # with 12 contact hours, # that was pretested?

Ans: The number of students (participants) that count toward any accountability measure are those who accrue a minimum of 12 contact hours and have a valid pretest.

17. In identifying eligible participants, are we correct in assuming that NYRS levels 1 and 2 include levels 1, 1.5, 2 and 2.5 as indicated on Chart 6 (p.83)?

Ans: NYRS Levels 1 and 2 include Levels 1, 1.5, and 2.

18. How do you define “# of Participants” (as opposed to “# of Participants with 12 Contact Hours or more)? At which point would someone whom expresses interest in a program be counted as a Participant?

Ans: The number of students (participants) that count toward any accountability measure are those who accrue a minimum of 12 contact hours and have a valid pretest.

19. In completing the Appendix 1 Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart, should participants be counted only once if they remained enrolled for the full year and moved through multiple NYRS levels or should they be reflected on each line for every NYRS level they moved through? Are there any additional resources to assist non-profits in completing the Appendix 1 correctly?

Ans: Students (participants) will count only once in a fiscal year. Please review the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019 and NYRS Guidelines which were included with the posting of the Questions and Answer document.

20. The NYRS/EFL Chart on page 81 (Appendix 2) does not show the present NYRS/EFL used to show measurable gain i.e. level 1, level 1.5, level 2, level 2.5,etc. Will a participant be able to show MSG if when tested moves from NYRS Level 1 to level 1.5 or say level 2.5 to level 3?

Ans: Yes.

21. Are participants allowed to be enrolled in ALE funded programs that at intake obtain pre-test scores in NYRS Level 6?

Ans: Yes.

22. How does the high employment target align with ALE's mission of serving the lowest 2 NYRS Educational Functioning Levels?

Ans: All areas of programming are held to the same employment target.

23. On page 46, the New York State's Performance Targets as they relate to educational gain, reflect five ABE levels and 6 ESOL levels. On page 83, the NYRS Educational Functioning Levels Assessment Chart 6 reflect 10 levels under TABE 11/12, nine levels under BEST Plus 2.0 and nine levels under BEST Literacy. How do these two charts relate to one another?

Ans: Refer to the new chart, included on the NYRS Guidelines, posted with the Q & A.

24. Are the Additional Outcome Categories new for NYRS? What will be the process for entering specific outcomes into ASISTS?

Ans: Yes, NYRS includes new outcomes for ALE providers. Please review the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019 and NYRS Guidelines which were included with the posting of the Questions and Answer document. The awarded programs will be responsible for entering customized Additional Outcome Categories as described in their proposal.

25. As written on page 12 "In addition to the core outcome measures, NYRS establishes the following secondary outcome measures that SED is requiring for all agencies funded under this RFP." Will we collect this information in ASISTS? And will there be benchmarks associated with the outcomes?

Ans: Yes, this information will be collected and recorded in ASISTS. No benchmarks have been set.

26. Are "educational gains" solely gains made in the process of achieving high school equivalency / achievements in an academic system, or can they be gains in learning and use (education) of the English language?

Ans: Please refer to page 10 of the RFP for a full description of Measurable Skill Gain and how these outcomes will be counted for NYRS.

27. Since we will be required to survey students regarding whether they have reduced public assistance, will we be required to ask students for proof of the amount of public assistance they receive, or can we just go by what they say?

Ans: No, students do not need to furnish proof to back up their responses to survey questions~~.~~

28. Please clarify the difference between Educational Functioning Level National Reporting System (NYRS) Level - those for New York's Reporting System?

Ans: Please review the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019 and NYRS Guidelines which were included with the posting of the Questions and Answer document.

29. RFP: "The effectiveness of adult education instruction is demonstrated through the 2018/2019 NYRS on report card OR data demonstrated in Appendix 1 - Are you asking for data from all current funding streams?

Ans: It is incumbent on the applicant to determine and demonstrate their effectiveness. An applicant should include areas they deem appropriate.

30. RFP: "The effectiveness of adult education instruction is demonstrated through the 2018/2019 NYRS on report card OR data demonstrated in Appendix 1. - If one had an ALE grant in the past - does one need to include an earlier report cards? or only data from 2018/2019?

Ans: The RFP calls for the relevant report card from FY2018/2019.

31. RFP: "The NYS Performance Targets, should be included as part of your program to indicate that program targets are consistent with NYS 2018-19 targets and those targets are identified for each program type offered by the applicant: ABE, ASE and ESOL (see Program Component Worksheet)." IS this requirement met by adding the sheet provided?

Ans: Yes.

32. Programs will use the standard survey instrument in conducting participant follow up surveys…What tool is this and where do we find it?

Ans: The tool will be released to those awarded under the ALE grant.

33. Could you please clarify whether the "passing rate" is based on the number of participants served by the program, or on the number of participants who are actually tested?

Ans: The number of students being referred to take TASC test.

34. For Component A, there are Required Secondary Outcome Measures listed, in addition to the NYS Performance Targets. Will these outcomes be tracked in ASISTS?

Ans: Yes.

35. I am the executive director of two organizations. We are in the process of merging but the actual consolidation of the organizations will not happen until mid 2020. It certainly makes sense for us to apply as one organization in this grant cycle. Do we need an MOU from the boards of both organizations to agree to this or can the two orgs just be part of a consortium? We also may go in with another organization as a third partner in a consortium but want to inquire about the need for an MOU

Ans: No, if an agency is in the process of consolidating organizations, we will not need an MOU. We request a written statement explaining the merger and where you are in the process.

36. In several places, the RFP says that 50% of participants receiving service must be NYRS Levels 1 and 2, and that 50% may be/can be at Levels 4 and 5. First, kindly clarify: does NYRS Levels 1 and 2 include 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5? And does ESOL low level include NYRS 3.5?

Ans: When the RFP refers to NYRS Low Levels 1 and 2, it is referring to Levels 1, 1.5, and 2 in either ABE or ESOL

37. Is the NY High School Equivalency Diploma performance target of 90% (referenced in chart 3 on p.12 of the RFP) likely to be reviewed and potentially amended (lowered) once the grant has been awarded?

Ans: This is a federal target and subject to change.

38. P. 46. The NY High School Equivalency Diploma target rate is 90 percent. That seems like a very high percentage, setting us up for failure if we provide HSE services. Is there any way this target will be adjusted by SED?

Ans: This is a federal target and subject to change.

39. Our agency has not previously been funded through this grant, though we have run many adult literacy programs. We have never been required to use the TABE or BEST assessments, but our programs have collected data on outcomes (e.g., subsequent enrollment in training/employment). Would we still be eligible if we complete Appendix 1 based on the data we do have, or is data from these assessments (or similar ones) required?

Ans: Completion of the Demonstrated Effectiveness Chart is the required element. An applicant should articulate how they arrived at the data entered into the chart if they have not used the standard assessment tools.

40. The Purpose of the Grant states that "At least 50 percent of the participants receiving services must be at the lowest beginning NYRS of Adult Basic Education and/or ESOL, i.e. NYRS levels 1 and 2. Up to 50 percent can be for participants at the highest two levels of Adult Secondary Education i.e. NRS levels 5 and 6". Is it permissible to propose, for example, that 100 percent of participants could be served by either an ABE or an ESOL program (at least 50 percent of whom are at NYRS levels 1 and 2)? In this case, zero percent of participants would be served by an Adult Secondary Education program (of whom zero percent – which is below the specified upper limit of 50 percent - are at NRS levels 5 and 6)? Or, is it a grant requirement that, in addition to an ABE and/or an ESOL program offering, program participants must also include individuals who will be served by an ASE program (of whom up to 50 percent of the total number of participants can be at NRS levels 5 and 6)?

Ans: Serving NYRS Levels 5 and 6 is not a grant requirement, it is an option.

41. we operate in a county that has three state-funded and high-performing adult education programs that offer high school equivalency instruction to students at Levels 4 and 5; we offer complimentary and proficient services to students at Levels 1 and 2. Will points be deducted if we do not expand our services to include Levels 4 and 5

Ans: No.

42. Question 4 (p. 44) asks us to describe how NYRS core goal setting is integrated. Can you specify whether core outcomes include anything other than employment after exit and HSE attainment?

Ans: It also includes Measurable Skill Gain.

43. Grantees must submit an annual performance report at the end of each grant period…Is there a form for this and where can we find it?

Ans: This is a new process and will be released to all awardees when the process is complete.

44. In our region BOCES handles almost all of the ASE work although we certainly partner with them to provide additional assistance for students who are not able to attend BOCES classes or who require extra support. The RFP indicates that there will be more stringent requirements for ASE programs (T-TAF is required and "strong partnership with . . . approved post-secondary training institutions", attendance at HSE network meetings and participation in apprenticeship programs). If we continue to serve ASE students simply as a partner to BOCES, will all the above requirements apply to us? Can we continue to count students who are at the ASE level in our enrollment numbers if they meet testing and hours requirements? Is there any penalty in the RFP process if we choose not to include ASE in our proposal?

Ans: To count ASE students in an applicant's proposal, they must meet all requirements as described in the RFP. There is no penalty if you do not include ASE students.

45. NYRS ESL levels 1 through 3.5 are designated as beginning levels. In the past, 50% of our low-level students were to come from levels 1 through 3.5. In the RFP, it now says level 1 and 2. Can you please clarify, if this is a change in policy or possibly something that might have been overlooked?

Ans: As the RFP states, 50% of the lower level students must include NYRS Levels 1, 1.5, and 2 of either or both ABE and ESOL students.

46. On page 44 of the ALE RFP, regarding proposed outcomes and accountability, it states: "Describe how NYRS core and secondary goal setting is integrated into the program's operating strategy." Page 13 of the RFP lists four required secondary outcomes (reduction in public assistance, citizenship skills, voting behavior, and general involvement in community activities.) Appendix 2, on page 81, lists 13 additional follow-up outcome categories: (health literacy, financial literacy, functional literacy, family literacy, etc.) So my question is, are we just supposed to address the required outcomes on page 13 or should we also address the categories listed on page 81?

Ans: Applicants should address both.

47. How many months must the program run for in the fiscal year?

Ans: 12 months constitute the fiscal year running from July 1 through June 30.

48. Do students need to prove their citizenship status?

Ans: No.

49. P. 10: “Measurable Skill Gain will be counted when: comparing the participant’s initial lowest Educational Functioning Level, as measured by an NYSED approved pre-test, with the participants’ educational functioning level, as measured by an NYSED approved post-test in the lowest score area.” Does this mean that measurable skill gain will no longer count if it occurs in the subject that is not the lowest educational functioning level?

Ans: Measurable Skill Gain for NYRS reporting counts in EITHER math or reading. Students must be tested in both once they have moved from NYRS Level 1 reading to NYRS Level 2 reading.

50. P. 10: “New York participates in NYSDOL’s Unemployment Insurance data matching process. This process requires the participant’s Social Security Number, refugee number or work visa number.” Can we input refugee numbers or work visa numbers into ASISTS for the unemployment data matching? I thought only social security numbers are data matched for employment.

Ans: All will be collected in ASISTS but there is no guarantee that any may match.

51. P. 80: Re: Last edition used: If we put TABE 9/10 or Best Plus 2.0, is that what you are looking for regarding assessments last edition used?

Ans: Yes.

52. P. 80: transition to postsecondary education: If someone enrolled in college, can we list that as an outcome/result?

Ans: Yes.

53. P. 9: “Should one agency apply as the lead with a consortium of other members, only one ASISTS account will be created to support the lead consortium agency.” Will the non-lead consortium members have the ability to input their data into this single ASISTS account? Will the non-lead consortium members have the ability to see the data from all consortium members in this single ASISTS account?

Ans: Those decisions will be left to the lead consortium agency.

54. What is the New York Reporting System as it pertains to Adult Basic Education and/or English speakers of other languages? What is level 1? What is level 2?

Ans: Please review the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019 and NYRS Guidelines which were included with the posting of the Questions and Answer document.

55. What mechanism exists for collecting and reporting on the Secondary Outcomes?

Ans: These outcomes are reported in ASISTS.

56. Appendix 1: Demonstrated Effectiveness Conversion Chart: Age range of Participants. Are we just supposed to list the youngest and oldest ages of participants in each NYRS level?

Ans: Yes.

57. In the Outcomes chart at the bottom of the Demonstrated Effectiveness chart, in columns 2 & 3, do we only list outcomes for the students referred to that institution or employer? Should we list total outcomes for all students?

Ans: Yes, for those referred.

58. Grantees must submit an annual performance report. Does this refer to the report that is annually pulled from ASISTS or is this a different report?

Ans: No, this is a new process for NYSED accountability. The reporting will be done in an electronic survey system designed and maintained by NYSED. Further direction will be shared with all those awarded under this RFP.

59. Is there a benchmark for Employment Outcomes?

Ans: Yes, refer to page 46 of the RFP for Employment Outcome.

60. Will Employment Outcomes be a part of the Report Card?

Ans: Yes.

61. Will it be required to report Follow Up Outcomes?

Ans: Yes.

62. Is there a benchmark for Follow Up Outcomes?

Ans: Yes, refer to page 46 of the RFP. Please review the revised Program Component Worksheet dated 12/10/2019 and NYRS Guidelines which were included with the posting of the Questions and Answer document.

63. Will Follow up Outcomes be a part of the Report Card?

Ans: Yes.

64. If participants switch levels, do they count as "new students"? (I.e. from one class level to another,)

Ans: No.

65. How does NYSED count students as duplicated vs. unduplicated?

Ans: Students are counted only as unduplicated.

66. Will programs who have not previously been funded or had access to ASISTS lose points for not having ASISTS as a part of their existing continuous improvement strategy? (pg 44)

Ans: No~~.~~, As long as a program describes how they will use it should they be provided ALE funding.

67. p. 40, paragraph 1: Does this include DRC where we send tests for scoring? Or are they automatically covered because they are required [and contracted?] by the state? [Explanation: We do buy materials directly from DRC, but is the scoring included in the purchase of the materials, or does the state pay for it separately through a contract?]

Ans: Attachment S-1 should list any persons/entities with whom the Contractor (grantee) will share Student Data. Any materials necessary for assessing students in this RFP must be included in the proposed budget.

68. Are grantees penalized for inability to collect employment indicators in the second quarter after exit date if they are unable to make contact with students (due to change of contact information or other barrier)?

Ans: Yes, no completed survey will be counted as an unemployed student.

69. Will both ALE funded LV Programs and HSE EPE funded programs that serve the same student get credit for HSE attainment (can the student submit two T-TAF forms from each program with their respective HSE Prep Codes)?

Ans: There is currently no provision at NYSED to grant credit to more than one program for an HSE attainment.

70. When asking for the "Percent of Participants moving from one EFL to the next, should we us the "# of Participants with 12 Contact Hours or more" or the " # of Participants Post Tested" as the denominator?

Ans: The number of participants with 12 contact hours or more.

71. It is not stated, but is the "initial" Educational Functional Level re-established annually, as it is now?

Ans: Yes.

72. On page 10 of the RFP under the Data Reporting section, it notes, "Describe clearly the process the program will use to collect and report Social Security Numbers and to keep them secure." We do not collect social security numbers in our Adult Literacy Program and feel it can have a negative impact on our enrollment numbers. Can NYSED clarify about the need for gathering social security numbers? If we do not have this system in place, will points be deducted from our application?

Ans: No, a mechanism for collecting Social Security Numbers is not required. As the RFP states, the program is responsible for following up on EVERY student after exit. The collecting of Social Security Numbers is one way to accomplish that follow up requirement. Manual survey is the only other option, as every student must be followed up on. As long as one of these two follow-up methods are addressed, points will not be deducted.

73. On the page 38, in the Application Checklist, should the worksheets (performance targets chart, program component worksheet for traditional adult education instruction, program information sheet) and appendix 1 (demonstrated effectiveness conversion chart) be included as Required Documents?

Ans: The list of items needed for submission of Program Component A can be found on both Page 15 of the RFP and the Application Checklist on page 38.

74. On page 13 of the RFP there is a chart indicating "Additional Outcome Measures Required for Family Literacy Programs." Are these additional outcomes required of all programs

offering ESOL and/or ABE/HSE instruction? Or is a family literacy program considering a discrete subset of what may be funded through this grant, distinct from an ESOL or ABE program?

Ans: Family Literacy programming is an option.

75. Are we meant to identify the specific additional outcomes for each of the areas listed? Is there a minimum of outcomes to be determined? Will it be possible, as with Literacy Zones, to alter the outcomes to be followed up on or to add outcomes not initially identified in the proposal?

Ans: Yes, the awardee must provide the list of additional outcomes under each category. There is no minimum/ maximum for any one category. It is up to the program to explicitly describe any additional outcome they will collecting and how they are proposing to do so.

76. In prior years gain in either math or reading would count under ALE. This section seems to say that only improvement in the lowest skill area would count for gain. Please clarify.

Ans: Measurable Skill Gain will be counted in either math or reading regardless of which is lower.

77. How are Required Secondary Outcome Measures recorded? Will these measures be included in Report Cards?

Ans: They will be recorded in ASISTS. They are not reported on the NYRS Report Cards.

78. Is the 90% target for HSE Diploma (chart, p. 12) based on the number of students sent to take the test? In other words, is the denominator all students sent by the program to take the TASC?

Ans: Yes.

79. When asking for the "Age Range of Participants" would it be sufficient to include the age range of our entire Adult Literacy portfolio or do you need it separated by Educational Functioning Level? Does ASISTS have a report that can provide this information?

Ans: Yes, the age range for the entire program is fine.

<u>Component B -STAC</u>

1. Can you clarify the activities that the STAC would be responsible for in relation to this deliverable? Provide technical assistance and disseminate information to ensure understanding the Workforce Innovative Opportunities Act (WIOA) requirements and opportunities for ALE funded programs to effectively connect with local workforce development network

Ans: The STAC is meant to enrich and supplement deliverables provided through the RAEN. The STAC, in coordination with ACCES-AEPP regional staff, the accountability specialist, and the RAENs, must provide programming and monitoring of ALE funded programs while connecting ALE funded programs by connecting programs with their local workforce development network and WIOA funded programs within their region.

2. Will attendance at workshops or trainings provided by the organization funded through Component B, as described on p. 7, be counted as part of the required 14 hours of professional development?

Ans: No.

3. In component B, the RFP reads: STAC must track the ACCES-AEPP required professional development hours. Every ALE funded staff member must achieve 14 hours of PD from their respective RAEN office. Can you clarify how this will work? Will the STAC be making entries into ASISTS for these data? How will the STAC know if a staff member from an ALE funded program takes a workshop in his or her RAEN? Is this in addition to the PD tracking the RAENs do in ASISTS?

Ans: As described in the RFP as part of the deliverables, successful applicants will provide a joint RAEN/STAC plan approved by AEPP that explicitly shows coordination with the RAEN(s) and ensures that the STAC supplements and supports AEPP priorities and RAEN activities. Although RAEN PD trainings will be captured in the ASISTS by the RAEN, STAC directors will have the responsibility of following up on the ALE funded programs within their Region to ensure programs are UpToDate on the required AEPP PD trainings.

4. For Component B, on page 21, while training is not allowed in other areas, volunteer training is listed here as allowable. Is that accurate?

Ans: Yes.

5. The application checklist calls for ACCES-AEPP FY 2018-19 Report Card OR Completed Appendix 1. For Component B applicants, this data does not exist. Should we disregard that Required document?

Ans: Correct, Component B applicants are not required to provide a Report Card OR Completed Appendix 1.

6. Is the STAC involved in the Corrective Action process? They are not listed as one of the parties.

Ans: Yes, The STAC is meant to enrich and supplement deliverables provided through the RAEN. The STAC, in coordination with ACCES-AEPP regional staff, the accountability specialist, and the RAENs, must provide programming and monitoring of ALE funded programs.

7. In its role as NYC STAC, the LAC has offered excellent professional development workshops over the past few years. Would it be possible to count training done through the STAC towards the required 14 hours of professional development?

Ans: No. All of the 14 hours of professional development must be provided through the RAEN only.

8. For Component B, on page 26, under non-allowable expenses the word "Student" is used several times. Who are the STAC "Students" you are referring to that these non-allowable expenses pertain to?

Ans: The students served by any ALE funded program within the STAC's area.

9. For Component B, on page 21, 22, and 60, the RFP refers to Common Core. On pages 7, 16, 27, 59, 96, and 97, the RFP refers to Career and College Readiness. Should the STACs focus on both or just Career and College Standards?

Ans: College and Career Readiness Standards.

10. For Component B, on page 21, the header of the table called STAC Deliverables includes the phrase "The following areas will be the entire focus of the STAC." Does this mean that the "following areas" will only be covered by the STAC and not the RAEN. If it means something else, can you please clarify?

Ans: The applicant must focus on the deliverables of the STAC and how they support the work of the RAEN.