CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
RANCHO SANTIAGO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#87-0208
California Community Colleges
Curriculum and Instructional Resources Division

PROJECT TITLE

Orange County Adult Literacy Study

FISCAL YEAR | ID NUMBER | COLLEGE | DISTRICT
-------------|-----------|---------|---------
1986-87 | 87-0208 | Rancho Santiago | Rancho Santiago

FUNDING CATEGORY & AWARD | ELIGIBLE PROGRAM | PROJECT CATEGORY
------------------------|------------------|------------------
Grant = $12,135 | D --- Ed Services For New Clientele | Evaluation Model

PROJECT PRODUCT | PROJECT TOPIC #1 | PROJECT TOPIC #2 | ACADEMIC SUBJECT
-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------
Resource Materials | Literacy | | English

PROJECT DIRECTOR | PROJECT SUPERVISOR
-----------------|------------------
Julie Slark, Director Research and Planning | Betty Mills, Dean Instructional Services

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

In an effort to combat illiteracy in Orange County, the four community college districts—Rancho Santiago, Coast, North Orange County, and Saddleback—propose a project to identify public and private literacy education providers, assess the breadth and depth of the literacy curricula available through identified programs, determine the gaps and overlaps in county literacy programs, and develop an Orange County community college model for determining the appropriate role for the community college in providing adult literacy education.
"Illiteracy is a serious national and local problem, a human tragedy for those concerned. Current data indicate that there are at least 23 million adult Americans whose basic skills vary from almost none to a fourth grade level. Many millions more are classified as semiliterate . . . those whose skills are at the fifth to eighth level. Illiteracy is a fundamental problem in the sense that it is a contributing cause to many other social and economic problems. It can be remedied if, to an increasing degree, those who can help will mobilize educational and training opportunities and those who need help can be motivated to learn." (Project Literacy, U.S.)

In an effort to combat illiteracy in Orange County, the four community college districts -- Rancho Santiago, Coast, North Orange County, and Saddleback -- propose a project to identify public and private literacy education providers, assess the breadth and depth of the literacy curricula available through identified programs, determine the gaps and overlaps in county literacy programs, and develop an Orange County community college model for determining the appropriate role for the community college in providing adult literacy education.

The project will attempt to change the current, unacceptable situation of fragmented adult literacy education efforts by conducting a comprehensive study and evaluation of currently available services. The project objectives are:

1. To collect and assess information on current literacy education services available in Orange County. This will include information on public and private providers. Unavailable services and unnecessary duplication of services will be identified.

2. To determine the appropriate role for the community college as literacy education provider.

3. To develop a model for Orange County and other community colleges in the state which establishes a system for providing a coordinated comprehensive literacy education program, including all public and private providers.
4. To publish and disseminate the model to participating Orange County Community Colleges, all literacy-providers included in the study, and other community colleges in the state.

The project model will serve as a basis for planning instructional programs for Orange County residents in need of literacy instruction. Many other California counties may be faced with the same situation, and the product of this project may assist them in developing a similar model.

The Orange County Community College Consortium Steering Committee, members of county public and private literacy providers, the Project Director, and the Research Analyst will actively participate in various formative and summative evaluation activities. In addition, project staff will consult with county GAIN officials and local Project Plus participants asking them for their input, as organizers and disseminators of adult literacy education program information. Finally the Project Director will prepare the model developed during the course of the project for dissemination. This will be the beginning of a new direction for county community colleges. The end result will be a coordinated, articulated comprehensive county-wide literacy adult education program.

The consortium is requesting $23,557 from the Fund for Instructional Improvement. This will be matched with $5,592 in institutional funds for a total budget of $29,149.
Orange County Adult Literacy Study

1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR SERVICE ADDRESSED

1. This project addresses three of the eligible programs or services outlined in Education Code, Section 84381. First, the project will serve the special learning needs of educationally disadvantaged students who are functionally illiterate by developing a model for the community colleges' role in providing adult literacy education in Orange County (84381-c).

Recognizing that a significant percentage of the County's adult population is in need of literacy education, this project will assess the scope and levels of adult literacy education services currently offered in the County. This Orange County Adult Literacy Study will include 1) identifying public and private adult literacy education providers; 2) assessing the breadth and depth of the literacy curricula available through the identified programs; 3) determining the gaps and overlaps in literacy programs in the county; 4) developing a model for community college participation in a county-wide, coordinated adult literacy education campaign.

Secondly, the project represents a collaborative effort among the four community college districts in Orange County to expand and improve traditional instructional programs aimed at adults who are deficient in literacy skills. Particular focus will be given to determining the needs of working adults, women reentering the job market, limited and non-English speaking immigrants, and the growing high school dropout population (84381-c,d).

Finally, this project represents the first comprehensive attempt to assess both public and private adult literacy education programs on a county-wide basis. As a result of the project, the four community college districts will have in place a model for developing an articulated, county-wide literacy education effort. In addition, the model will result in a defined, integrated role for the community colleges in serving the literacy needs of adults.

2. This project should be considered a new development.
3. This project will be conducted by a consortium of the Orange County community college districts: Rancho Santiago, Coast, North Orange County, and Saddleback.

4. Other sources of funds will not be used in this project.

BASIC AGENDA ADDENDUM

This project addresses the Board of Governor's Basic Agenda Addendum goals related to excellence and mission. Project activities are in line with the Board's recommendation on excellence "to create an operational definition of basic skills". The project assesses the breath and depth of adult literacy curricula in an effort to clarify levels of basic skills education. Furthermore, the project clearly addresses the Board's goal to clarify and fulfill the mission of community colleges by fully assisting the State's effort to review the mission as it relates to adult literacy.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

SPECIFIC PROBLEM

Current Situation

Local data on adult illiteracy is sketchy at best, a situation providing the motivation for this project. However, extrapolations of national data clearly define the extent of a serious national and local problem. Jonathan Kozol, in his 1985 book *Illiterate America*, claims that "sixty million U.S. adults - one third of our adult population - cannot read a daily paper, a book, a welfare form, the Bill of Rights, a housing lease, a road map, the antidote instructions on a can of kitchen cleanser, the work of God within the Bible, or the word of man within the verse of Milton or the tales of Tolstoy or the United States Constitution." Of course, the validity of statistics on illiteracy depends on what definitions of literacy are used in the research. But whether the figure is sixty million or twenty million adults, the problem of illiteracy is serious, and it significantly and adversely affects our social, political, and economic lives.

A recent Orange County needs assessment conducted by the United Way validated a deep concern about the growing county adult illiteracy problem. In Santa Ana alone, 94,000 adults are functionally illiterate; this number represents one third of the city's population. The adult illiteracy problem in Orange County is further compounded by a large immigrant population, primarily Latino, that needs to learn not only English but also basic literacy skills, often missing even in their first language. Although many non-native speakers of English eagerly enroll in English as a second language programs, a significant number do not seem to recognize the value of continuing their education to develop basic literacy skills.

The mission of providing adult literacy education in Orange County falls to two levels of public education, the adult schools and the community colleges, and a variety of private providers, including churches, service organization, and proprietary schools. At present, there is no coordination among the providers to deal with curriculum, instruction, or the changing needs of the community. Coordination is necessary to change the current situation of overlapping services, competing services, and inadequate services in many areas of the county and among various and distinct populations. Increasingly, the community colleges are assuming a greater role in providing basic literacy education to adults, whether they are enrolled in credit or non-credit programs. The role of providing for the basic literacy needs of adults has evolved into an important function of community colleges. As this role has become more important, the need to assess the literacy needs of the community and to determine which educational providers are best able to meet the various needs has become very important.

Community colleges attempt to accommodate all types of students and, to some extent, to guide student to programs that fit their aspirations and abilities. The number of poorly prepared students, however, has become a primary concern. The decline in achievement exhibited by both secondary school graduates and dropouts in the 1970s hit the colleges with
full force and has been increasing in intensity in the 1980s. The issue of the illiterate student has become central to community college instructional planning. Whether community colleges pick up the seventeen-year olds who have left high school early or whether they serve as a bridge between schooling and work for older students, teaching literacy fits within their role of connecting people with opportunities. They will be involved in literacy education in one form or another. Therefore, it is essential that community colleges define their role for meeting the critical needs of illiterate adults, and that they do this in coordination with all other literacy education providers. Achieving the goal of an articulated, county-wide literacy education campaign will depend upon having accurate information on the number, needs, and types of services available to illiterate members of the community.

Building on Current Practice and Literature

While innumerable national and local reports and studies detail in often dramatic terms the problem of adult illiteracy in America, very little has been done to catalogue, evaluate, or coordinate current literacy education services. This project will attempt to address the problem of uncoordinated and often unknown literacy education efforts in Orange County. The problem exists because of the number and different types of public entities which provide services in the county. The problem is compounded by the significant number of private sector deliverers, who have no mandate to coordinate with the public schools and colleges.

This project will attempt to change the current, unacceptable situation of fragmented literacy education efforts by conducting a comprehensive study and evaluation of currently available services. To this date, only two county-wide efforts have attempted to address this problem. Both of these activities have had specific intentions and audiences that do not relieve the need for a comprehensive, county-wide study.

The first literacy programs' study affecting the County was the cataloging of available services conducted by the Orange County Literacy Coalition, which is affiliated with Project Plus and a local PBS affiliate, KOCE TV. This effort consisted of listing and disseminating to the public information on available adult literacy education programs. The emphasis was on private, non-profit providers, and no effort was made to coordinate or evaluate programs. The Coalition project has resulted in greater public awareness of available services, but has not addressed the problems of coordination, filling gaps in services, or definition of roles among providers.

The second literacy programs' study was a part of the planning process for the County's GAIN plan. A component of the plan is a listing of public literacy and occupational education providers. This effort included community colleges, adult schools, and ROP's. Although the resulting "catalogue" offers a listing of programs it made no effort to coordinate programs among deliverers or to evaluate appropriate service delivery roles among schools, colleges and others.

In short, this project represents new and much needed research in the area of adult literacy education. If, through a county-wide consortium of public and private providers, we can
develop and implement a model for assessing literacy education programs, evaluating delivery roles, and coordinating program delivery, the adults in need of basic reading and writing skills in Orange County will be much better served.
3. Population To Be Served

POPULATION SERVED

Initially, the project will serve the schools, colleges, and private providers in the county who currently offer adult literacy education programs. These will include community colleges, adult schools, and private profit and non-profit agencies. The project will focus on determining unavailable services, unnecessarily duplicated services, and defining the most appropriate role for the community colleges in serving adult literacy needs.

Ultimately, the project should result in a coordinated, comprehensive adult literacy education campaign for Orange County. Current estimates of county adults in need of literacy education range from 1 out of 5 county-wide to one-third of the population of Santa Ana, the county's second largest city. This would translate into over 200,000 adults in the county in need of literacy education.
4. Objectives

OBJECTIVES

1. To collect and assess information on current literacy education services available in Orange County. This will include information on public and private providers. In addition, unavailable services and unnecessary duplication of services will be identified.
   Budget Amount: $16,658

2. To determine the appropriate role for the community college as a literacy education provider.
   Budget Amount: $4,426

3. To develop a model for Orange County and other community colleges in the state that establishes a system for providing a coordinated, comprehensive literacy education campaign, including public and private providers.
   Budget Amount: $4,426

4. To publish and disseminate the model to participating Orange County community colleges, all literacy providers included in the study and other community colleges in the state.
   Budget Amount: $3,639
5. Workplan Narrative

[NO “WORKPLAN” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]
6. Expected Outcomes

Desired Outcomes

The ultimate outcome of this project is to combat illiteracy in Orange County in a systematic manner. To achieve this, a multi-faceted model will be developed which will (1) assess the scope and levels of literacy education services currently available, (2) define services not currently available or unnecessarily duplicated, and (3) determine literacy education needs and the appropriate role for the community colleges in providing services. The study will result in a plan for delivering comprehensive literacy education to Orange County adults as well as a model needs assessment for other consortia of cooperating community colleges.

EXPECTED IMPACT AND TRANSFERABILITY

Impact on Other Disciplines

Heretofore, there has been no coordination among literacy education providers in Orange County. No one has studied the qualitative and quantitative adequacy of adult literacy education services. This project will create a county-wide community college model which will produce a coordinated, articulated plan for providing comprehensive literacy curricula needed to fill the gaps and do away with overlaps in county literacy programs. The community college will establish its appropriate role as a literacy provider efficiently and effectively. This model eventually will serve as the basis for planning instructional programs for Orange County residents in need of literacy instruction.

Project Continuance

The development of the model for the four Orange County community college districts will be completed during the 1987/88 fiscal year. Having focused on research, development and dissemination of the model and pertinent information, this project will be the basis for improving instructional offerings and developing new instructional programs, depending upon the community college district, for the fall 1988 school year.

Project Adaptability

This project will serve as a model for the four Orange County community college districts. Not only is the concept of the four districts working together to develop a coordinated, comprehensive literacy instructional plan innovative, but it is a first step in coordinating with other public and private literacy providers. This networking and communication can only improve literacy education for Orange County adults. Also, this project will serve to demonstrate the importance of a coordinated, articulated county literacy campaign. It is an investment in a literate Orange County population.
Many other counties in California may be faced with the same situation as Orange County concerning literacy. The product of this project may assist other California community colleges in developing a similar model for their counties. The four community college districts involved in this project will disseminate the model statewide and expect to provide additional information on this project wherever needed.
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION PLAN

Procedure/Outcome Evaluation.

Because the outcome of this project is a model to be followed by the four Orange County community college districts, it is necessary to evaluate how the model was derived. Therefore, the Orange County Community College Consortium Steering Committee will evaluate project criteria used to evaluate the information gathered by the Research Analyst. Also, staff of county public and private literacy providers will be asked to review and evaluate information gathered from them by the Research Analyst. Then, they will be asked to review and evaluate the model prior to finalization of the project. Other project objectives will be monitored and corrected for error on an ongoing basis. The importance of the project's adherence to designated timelines is critical for the project's success.

Procedures and activities will be continuously evaluated throughout the project by means of an informal review process. The Steering Committee will be asked to review, monitor and adjust goals, if needed. In addition, project staff will ask staff from the county's GAIN program and from the Orange County Literacy Coalition to provide evaluation input at several points during the life of the project.

Data Collection and Treatment

The Research Analyst will be responsible for collecting and compiling information from county literacy providers for the purpose of developing a coordinated, articulated comprehensive model for the four community college districts. The Project Director, together with the Research Analyst, will review all information gathered and the project model to determine the comprehensiveness of the project.

Project Incorporation

The project will not be incorporated into the four community college districts' instructional plans during the 1987/88 school year. The model will be the basis for restructuring and developing literacy curriculum beginning in the fall of 1988.
8. Dissemination Plan

INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION

The Project Director will prepare the model developed during the course of the project for publication. The Director will also be responsible for the dissemination of pertinent project information and the project model to the four Orange County community college districts, appropriate community college staff, county literacy providers and other community college districts. After the project model is disseminated, the Project Director, Research Analyst and members of the Steering Committee will conduct a dissemination presentation for Orange County providers and other interested educational entities.
[NO “BUDGET NARRATIVE” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]