

Section Four: Educational Quality

4.1 – Explain how high-quality educational services are developed by the consortium. Address the following:

- **How are decisions made about what kinds of courses and instruction to offer?**

Programming decisions at RAE are determined by gathering information from a variety of sources: SiD data, students' educational goals, and availability, staff and coordinators' input, consortium members' input, community needs, eligible ABE core content, allowable adult education activities outlined in WIOA, MN ABE standards, and activities identified in our local workforce plan.

The coordinators and intake staff actively engage with students to understand their specific educational objectives. Based on this information, programming is adapted to better serve the students. This year, Rochester Public Schools adjusted their bESL times, with elementary students starting at 8 a.m. In response, in-person programming was expanded to begin at 8:30 a.m., accommodating adult learners. The afternoon schedule was also modified to ensure parents could be home for their elementary-aged children.

At our monthly leadership meetings, SiD data is reviewed and discussed. Input from students is gathered through various methods, including in-person suggestion boxes and online forms. Students complete an annual survey, which includes the following questions:

- What is going well in your educational experience?
- What improvements could the school make?
- Are you learning what you want in your classes; if not, what would you prefer to learn?
- Do you find the staff to be welcoming and helpful?
- What additional classes would you like to see offered?
- What times can you attend school?
- Do you like the materials used in class?

The RAE manager holds quarterly meetings with consortium members to discuss programming, brainstorm new ideas, and address community needs. Additionally, the RAE manager and college and training coordinator gather monthly at the Bridges to Careers meetings with staff from Workforce Development, Inc., Rochester Community and Technical College, Mayo Clinic Human Resources, and Olmsted County Human Resources. This forum allows us to focus on current and future career pathways, students' issues, collaborations, and input from local employers regarding employment opportunities and concerns.

Furthermore, the program manager conducts monthly meetings with the Early Childhood program manager to discuss Family Literacy programming at Hawthorne Education Center, as well as regular discussions with the Community Education Director. Ongoing communication is maintained with community partners to gather feedback about the programming.

- **How are courses and instruction evaluated to determine whether they are high quality?**

RAE employs various methods to assess courses and teaching effectiveness. Probationary teachers undergo annual observations for their first three years, while non-probationary teachers are observed once every three years.

The teacher evaluation process at Rochester Public Schools (RPS) includes goal setting and data analysis, outlined as follows:

During a goal-setting conference, the teacher collaborates with the program manager to set at least one student outcome goal to focus on throughout the year. This goal, based on the S.M.A.R.T. goals formula, must be specific, measurable, achievable, and time-bound, which applies directly toward fostering student success. In pursuit of this goal, the teacher identifies appropriate instructional strategies, tools needed to measure progress, data to be collected, and which collection methods need to be used. After implementing these strategies, the teacher continues to gather data quarterly and records the student's progress using a designated form. Based on the analysis of this data, the teacher makes any necessary adjustments to their instructional methods.

The program manager conducts a minimum of two classroom observations utilizing the CLASS Tool, providing feedback and suggestions based on the observations. At the end of the year, a summative conference is held between the teacher and the program manager to review outcomes.

The CLASS Observation Tool assesses the quality of teacher-student interactions and encompasses several domains:

1. Emotional Support Domain includes: Positive Climate, Teacher Sensitivity, Regard for Students' Perspectives
2. Classroom Organization Domain includes: Behavior Management, Productivity, Negative Climate
3. Instructional Support Domain includes: Instructional Learning Formats, Content Understanding, Analysis and Inquiry, Quality of Feedback, Instructional Dialogue
4. Student Engagement

The CCRS ELA and Math Observation Guides are also employed when the RAE manager evaluates the instructional staff.

Teachers routinely convene during scheduled staff meetings and professional development days to focus on standards alignment and best practices.

Additionally, staff regularly analyzes and discusses the following SiD data: Measurable Skill Gains, Post-testing feedback, attendance, and retention. Student feedback plays a crucial role in evaluating programming and instruction, gathered through student surveys, suggestion boxes (both physical and online), and direct conversations with staff members.

- **How does the consortium ensure that all students have access to sufficient intensity of instruction to make learning gains?**

RAE operates from Monday to Thursday from September to May, and Monday to Wednesday from June until early August. In Rochester, we offer a diverse array of ABE-eligible programming, catering to

learners at all levels—from beginning English Language acquisition to high school equivalency and preparation for college and training.

Our classes have varied start times throughout the day and week, available in both in-person and online formats. We feature seven levels of English Language Learning (ESL) programming, alongside specific classes for pronunciation/conversation and citizenship preparation. Additionally, we offer three levels each of reading and writing, and four levels of math throughout the week. Students also engage with Northstar Digital Literacy in our computer classes.

GED and State Diploma coursework is integrated into our advanced reading, writing, and math classes. Our college and training programs are extensive, with "Bridges to Careers" currently encompassing various pathways, including Healthcare, Education, Administrative Office Professional, and Community Interpreter, as well as academic skill development for other career options at RCTC or the Mayo School of Health Science.

Below is a detailed list of course offerings.

Rochester Adult and Family Literacy Course Offerings

ESL Courses	Days Offered	Time	Enrollment Description
ESL Level 0-1	M-R	8:30 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 1-2	M-R	8:30 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3	M-R	8:30 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 4	M-R	8:30 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 5-6	M-R	8:30 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Pre-Lit	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 1	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 2	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 4-5	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 5-6	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL 1-2 - Online	M-R	10:00 -11:30 am	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 0-1	M-R	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 2	M-R	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3-4	M-R	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 5-6	M-R	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 5-6 - Online	M-R	12:30 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3-4 - Online	M-R	1:00 - 2:30 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL 0-1	M-R	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 1-2	M-R	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3-4	M-R	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 1-2 - Online	M,W, R	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 3-4 - Online	M/W	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
ESL Level 5-6 - Online	M-R	4:00 – 6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Pronunciation/Conversation	M/W	8:15 - 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
Pronunciation/Conversation - Online	T/R	8:15 - 10:00 am	
Math Courses			

Math 1: Multiplying, Dividing and Intro to Fractions	M-R	12:00 – 12:30 pm	Open Enrollment
Math 2: Fractions & Decimals	M-R	11:45-12:30 pm	Semi-Managed
Math 3: %,Geometry and Pre-Algebra	M-R	Varies per quarter	Semi-Managed
Math 4: Algebra	M-R	Varies per quarter	Managed Enrollment
Math 2-3 - Online	M-R	2:00 - 3:00 pm	Semi-Managed
Reading Courses			
Reading 1 - online	M-R	8:00 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
Reading 2 - online	M-R	8:00 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
Reading 3 - online	M-R	8:00 – 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
Reading 1	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading 2	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading 3	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading 2	M-R	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading 3	M-R	1:00 – 3:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading 4	M-R	10:00 – 12:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Reading Combo 2-3 - online	R	6:00 - 8:00 pm	Open Enrollment
Writing Courses			
Intermediate Writing	M-R	9:00 - 10:00 am	Open Enrollment
NorthStar Computer Literacy	M-R	12:00 – 1:00	Semi-Managed
Citizenship Courses			
Multi-Level Citizenship	M-R	9:00 -10:00 am	Open Enrollment
Multi-Level Citizenship- online	T/R	4:00 -6:00 pm	Open Enrollment
GED Classes			
GED Social Studies - Online	M/W	3:00 -4:15 pm	Open Enrollment
GED Science - Online	T/R	4:00 - 5:00 pm	Open Enrollment
GED RLA - Online	W	6:00- 7:30 pm	Open Enrollment
GED Math - Online	M/W	3:00 -4:00 pm	Open Enrollment
GED Math	M-R	9:30 - 11:15 am	Open Enrollment
College/Training Courses: Two quarters are in-person and two quarters are online			
Reading and Writing for College and Career I	M-R	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Reading for College and Career II	M-R	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Writing for College and Career II	M-R	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Math for College and Careers I	M-R	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Math for College and Careers II	M-R	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Adult CPR/AED	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated

Certified Nursing Assistant	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Career Pathways	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Keyboarding for College	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Transition to College:D2L	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Medical Terminology and Body Systems	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Computer for College	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed
English 1117 Integrated class with RCTC and writing lab	T/R	9:30 – 12:00 pm	Managed and Integrated
National Retail Customer Service Certification - only online	Varies	varies per quarter	Managed and Articulated
Paraprofessional - Master Teacher Certification - only online	Varies	Once a year	Managed
Community Interpreter Certification - only online	Varies	Once a year	Managed
GED/Skills Enrichment Lab	M-R	8:30 – 4:00 pm	Open Enrollment

All of these classes, as with ESL as the distance learning platforms, allow students to make academic improvement. At intake, students are strongly encouraged to attend as many classes as their schedules allow, enabling them to reach their educational and employment goals quickly.

- **How does instruction incorporate the essential components of reading instruction(alphabetics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension)?**

All RAE teachers have completed the Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI) training this year, alongside the CCRS ELA Foundations training. These professional development opportunities have equipped our staff with the essential knowledge and skills to effectively incorporate key reading components into their curriculum and instruction. These components focus on phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. By emphasizing these pivotal elements and by training the support staff to assist teachers in administering the Diagnostic Reading Assessment, teachers receive the valuable insights needed to tailor their instruction, ultimately enhancing our students' reading proficiency.

Examples of evidence-based reading practices:

- Systematic phonics instruction: Teaching letter-sound correspondences in a logical sequence.
- Explicit vocabulary instruction: Directly teaching new words with definitions, examples, and context.
- Guided reading: Small group reading with teacher support at a student's instructional level.
- Reciprocal teaching: Students take turns leading a discussion about a text using questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting strategies.

- Fluency practice: Repeated reading of text with emphasis on accuracy, rate, and expression.

In addition, the CCRS English Language Arts Standards have been integrated across all classes, reflecting the three crucial shifts in reading instruction:

- Complexity: Regular practice with complex text and its academic language.
- Evidence: Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational.
- Knowledge: Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction.

For our English language learners, the ESL teachers utilize the English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education. This framework helps bridge the CCRS ELA standards for these learners, guiding the creation of effective lessons and ensuring rigorous instruction tailored to their needs.

The program manager has observed teachers using the following reading strategies in their classrooms: phonics, academic vocabulary, using non-fiction literature, citing evidence, pre-reading strategies, visualizing, summarizing, questioning, having students make inferences to deepen their understanding, etc.

Formative and summative assessments are used to determine whether students have mastered the essential skills and knowledge.

RAE is fortunate to have many highly qualified instructors with advanced reading education and training. These teachers provide an exceptional resource and act as mentors to the other teachers:

- Cyndi - completed the STAR training
- Lucille - completed the LETRS training, Orton Gillingham training, Reading Teacher Licensure Certificate, and a Masters in Literacy Education
- Ric - holds Reading Teacher Licensure Certificate and a Masters in Literacy Education
- Anne - holds a graduate-level reading certificate
- Julie - is currently completing Reading Teacher Licensure Certificate

4.2 Describe the consortium's distance/hybrid learning programming and how it has expanded in recent years. Address the lessons learned and best practices adopted, as well as intentions and plans for continued improvement of distance and hybrid learning.

During the COVID pandemic, RAE shifted all its programming to an online format. To facilitate this transition, staff were equipped with laptops, multiple monitors, document cameras, and various other tech tools. They also underwent training on Google Meet, Google Calendar, Google Classroom, and other Google Workspace applications. Even after in-person classes were able to resume, the demand for online programming remained clear. Today, RAE proudly offers both online and in-person options, with a range of online classes available throughout the day. [See red highlighted items in "Rochester Adult and Family Literacy Course Offerings" above.]

Before participating in online classes, students are required to attend a technology onboarding training session. This flexibility enables RAE to cater to students' diverse needs and remove obstacles to

schooling. Common reasons students opt for online classes include childcare, transportation, and/or health concerns.

Recognizing the importance of digital literacy alongside academic skills for future workforce success, RAE instructors integrate the Northstar Digital Literacy standards into their curriculum. Each classroom is equipped with either a Chromebook or iPad cart to enrich the learning experience and teach essential technology skills as part of the digital literacy framework. Additionally, we provide Chromebooks or iPads on loan for students to access online classes.

Many online platforms were also researched and evaluated to help teachers create a more interactive classroom. The math and reading instructors use IXL and MobyMax's prescriptive assessments to identify students' academic gaps, which allows students to focus on their individual math and reading needs. The distance learning platforms currently in use are these:

- IXL
- Read Theory
- MobyMax
- Northstar Digital Literacy
- Teacher Verified DL Lesson (TVM)

The total number of contact hours generated in 2023-2024 from these distance-learning platforms was 11,069.

RAE incorporates the following best practices in relation to hybrid and distance learning:

- Eleven teachers and the manager have participated in a distance learning basics training either online or in-person with Susan Wetenkemp.
- Eleven teachers completed the distance learning TMV certification
- Individual technology onboarding sessions are conducted with students in online classes. The sessions address how to find the student's school email, how to access a Google Meet, how to navigate Google Classroom, how to find things on the Google Calendar, how teachers will send messages, and how to get further help with technology problems.
- At intake, every student (both online and in-person) is signed up for a MobyMax account and shown how to access this DL platform.
- Northstar Digital Standards are embedded into the curriculum.
- Teachers have technology carts with classroom sets of Chromebooks or iPads in their classrooms.
- Teachers demonstrate the different DL platforms in their classrooms.

Plans for the future include these commitments:

- Continue to analyze SiD data to make educated program planning decisions.
- Continue to gather student input.
- Continue to gather community input.
- Develop a budgetary rotation for technology updates and replacement.
- Have seven new teachers complete the distance learning basics training either online or in person.
- Have all teachers complete the Google Docs module on Northstar Digital Literacy.

4.3 Give an overview of how the consortium has integrated all three sets of the state's content standards for ABE (CCRS, ACES/TIF, and Northstar) into instruction to date. Address the following:

- **What content standards training have staff participated in? What percentage of instructional staff have participated in Foundations Training for each of the three sets of content standards: CCRS Foundations, ACES Foundations and Northstar Foundations?**

The RAE manager has prioritized standards training and implementation for the past eight years. RAE is proud to have a highly qualified and trained staff.

CCRS

- 94% of the instructional staff have completed the CCRS foundations training.
- 82% of the instructional staff who teach ELA have completed the CCRS ELA cohort training
- 50% of the instructional staff who teach math have completed the CCRS Math cohort training during the pilot phase

ACES/TIF -

- During the school year 2014-15, all staff employed at that time participated in ACES/TIF training.
- All new staff are required to complete the online ACES training.
- In 2023 94% of the teaching staff participated in an ACES/TIF refresher training
- In 2025 the one new teacher hired completed the ACES/TIF foundation training online.

Northstar Digital Literacy

- 100% of instructors have completed the Northstar Digital Foundations training.
- 89% of instructors have completed the following Northstar Digital Literacy Modules and tested to receive a certificate: Basic Computer Skills, Internet Basics, Using Email, Windows 10, and Microsoft Word. Some instructors have completed all the modules.
- 33% of instructors are Northstar proctor certified.
- 4 support staff are Northstar proctor certified.

By completing the training, educators are better prepared to implement the standards into their curriculum and instruction. The implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards, Northstar Digital Literacy Standards, and ACES/TIF Standards allows us to offer high-quality programming for our students across all courses offered.

- **How are the standards used to plan for instruction and course offerings?**

The standards assist instructors in better understanding where to focus their efforts and how to shape their instruction. In addition, they provide a framework for all curriculum development and lesson planning. RAE instructors have spent many hours unpacking the standards and prioritizing how often throughout the year each standard will be taught. Teachers have had paid collaborative planning time to develop CCRS lesson plans and share ACES/TIF and digital literacy lessons and ideas with each other. These lessons are loaded into a shared curriculum folder to which all teachers have access.

For the past several years RAE has focused not only on implementing the CCRS, ACES and Northstar standards but also on incorporating more writing into the curriculum at every level.

This year the program continues its previous work but will also focus on evidence-based reading instruction and how to incorporate more reading strategies into the curriculum at every level.

- **How does the consortium ensure instructional materials are aligned to content standards?**
- 83% of instructors completed the year-long cohort training in either ELA or Math, so they would have the knowledge, tools, and resources to align instructional materials with the content standards.
- Instructors who participated in the CCRS ELA or Math cohort were required to evaluate their own instructional materials using the ELA/Math CCRS Evaluation & High Value Action Alignment Tool.
- Instructors are required to apply the CCRS Evaluation & High Value Action Alignment Tool to evaluate any new materials they want to order. This information is then shared with the program manager before purchases are made.

4.4 Give an overview of the college and/or career-focused programming, including integrated education and training(IET), transitions to postsecondary, or programming that helps students attain a recognized postsecondary credential.

RAE collaborates with a network of community partners to develop career-focused programming that aligns with the needs of local industries. Together, targeted learning outcomes are established that equip students with the vital skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their selected careers. This programming also lays a strong academic foundation, ensuring students can transition seamlessly into postsecondary institutions and fulfill any necessary degree requirements for their career trajectories. By incorporating the ACES/TIF standards, the program emphasizes the essential employability skills that are critical for success in both higher education and the workforce throughout our career pathways initiatives.

In partnership with Rochester Community Technical College (RCTC), Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI), and local employers, RAE provides comprehensive supported career pathway programming. Our students benefit from various supports, including:

- The RAE college and training coordinator provides academic and pathway counseling as well as guidance to navigate systems and refer students to local resources.
- The RCTC transition advisor provides career counseling and postsecondary navigation support.
- The WDI navigator provides barrier removal and sometimes financial support.
- The local employers provide classroom support and help in curriculum development.

Read more about this collaboration in Section 5.3

The SE ABE programs utilize transition funds to deliver Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming collaboratively to all ABE students in the SE region. The SE ABE managers convene to determine the IET programming that will be offered online to students throughout the region. Each site is responsible for supporting the students they enroll in these IET classes. The regionally offered IET classes include Paraprofessional, Community Interpreter, and National Retail Customer Service.

The following chart lists all the career-focused courses offered at Rochester Adult Education – Hawthorne Center.

Name of course	IET	Certification and/or transferable experience	Number of articulated credits transferred to RCTC
Paraprofessional	yes	Master Teacher Certification	none
National Retail Customer Service	yes	NRF Certification	3 college credits
Community Interpreter	yes	Community Interpreter Certification	None
Certified Nursing Assistant	yes	Nursing Assistant Certification and transfers into Advanced Hospital Nursing Assistant Certificate Program	5 college credits
Adult CPR/AED	no	Transfers into Advanced Hospital Nursing Assistant Certificate Program	1 college credit
Career Pathways	no	Transfer into Healthcare Office Professional Certificate Program, Administrative Office Professional Program or Elective Credit	1 college credit
Keyboarding for College	no	Transfer into Healthcare Office Professional Certificate Program, Administrative Office Professional Program	1 college credit
Medical Terminology/Body Systems	no	Transfer into Healthcare Office Professional Certificate Program	2 college credits

Reading and Writing for College and Careers I	no	Transferable Experience	6 developmental credits - used for placement at RCTC
Reading for College and Careers II	no	Transferable Experience	4 developmental credits - used for placement at RCTC
Writing for College for College and Careers II	no	Transferable Experience	4 developmental credits - used for placement at RCTC
Math for College for Careers I	no	Transferable Experience	3 developmental credits - used for placement at RCTC
Math for College and Careers II	no	Transferable Experience	4 developmental credits - used for placement at RCTC
Transition to College/D2L	no	Transfers for Elective Credit	1 college credit
Computer for College	no	none	none

4.5 Give an overview of secondary credential/adult diploma programming, which supports ABE students in completing a high school and/or equivalency diploma.:

- **Which secondary credential/diploma options are offered?**
- **How are students advised in selecting the option that works best for them?**

RAE provides preparation classes for both the GED and the Adult High School Diploma (ADP), giving students a pathway to complete their secondary education. The ADP program has been part of RAE's offerings since its pilot ten years ago. While many students opt for the GED, RAE is committed to offering a classroom setting as an alternative to taking a high-stakes test.

A dedicated GED/ADP coordinator assists students in aiming for their educational goals which is accomplished at orientation sessions which are held twice a month, available in the morning, afternoon, and evening. After attending an orientation, each student meets individually with the coordinator to create a personalized educational plan and set their goals. During this meeting, students receive information about the Adult High School Diploma option and can choose which path they would like to take.

For those who select the GED route, the coordinator places them in suitable classes aimed at enhancing the necessary academic skills for passing the GED tests. Conversely, if a student opts for the ADP, the coordinator assists in obtaining their transcript, which is subsequently evaluated. The coordinator and the student then review the evaluation results to determine the classes necessary to meet ADP requirements.

In addition to support from the GED/ADP coordinator, our English and Math teachers collaborate with ADP students to help them meet their goals. Once students complete their coursework, RAE staff upload their achievements to a portfolio for state review, ensuring that credits are awarded appropriately.

4.6 Give an overview of the consortium's process to effectively serve eligible adults with disabilities, including learning disabilities (this should include a referral process when needed).

- **How do providers identify and utilize appropriate accommodations for students (and staff)?**
- **What data and/or information do you have that shows how effectively eligible adults with disabilities are being served?**

RAE is dedicated to supporting all students with disabilities, including those with learning disabilities, by providing a range of resources and services designed to foster their success.

In 2003, Rochester Adult Education – Hawthorne Center underwent renovations to enhance accessibility, featuring ramps, an elevator, automatic doors, and grab bars. Today, it fully complies with ADA standards, and designated parking spaces for individuals with disabilities are marked for their convenience.

Students are organized by their literacy levels, progressing through their learning based on skill mastery rather than time spent in class. This approach allows all students, including those with disabilities, to learn at a pace that suits their individual needs. Coordinators, teachers, and students collaborate to create personalized plans that ensure the necessary accommodations for academic achievement. RAE benefits from the expertise of a staff member who has experience teaching and is licensed in special education.

RAE serves numerous students residing in group homes or collaborating with community partners aimed at assisting adults with disabilities. These partnerships facilitate effective communication with RAE's intake staff to establish the appropriate accommodations tailored to each learner's needs. This information is then shared with instructional staff to ensure they are well-prepared to integrate the student into their classrooms.

In addition, RAE collaborates with PANDA to provide adaptive devices for students requiring additional support. We currently have a braille machine and a braille keyboard for our visually impaired students. PANDA also offers valuable resources and training for our staff. Previously, all teaching staff have engaged with and discussed the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles outlined on the PANDA website.

Accommodations have included but are not limited to the following:

- Sign language interpreter
- ADA compliant building
- Preferential seating
- Large print, braille materials, and magnifying device
- Reading glasses (available on-site)
- Technology devices
- Differentiated instruction
- Testing accommodations: time and quiet space
- One-on-one tutoring
- Care providers allowed in classrooms
- PANDA consultation
- Braille equipment and materials

- Extended testing time
- GED accommodations
- Other support as needed

When an ABE teacher or staff member is concerned that a student may have a disability, they will work with the student to refer them to other agencies so they can access additional community resources. Some of these agencies include:

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Rochester Reading Champions
- Family Services
- Public Health Nurse
- Medical referral to the appropriate clinic
- RCTC's Disability Support Services
- Zumbro Valley Mental Health
- SEMCIL

Students are guided in accessing their SiD data, empowering them to track their progress and celebrate their achievements. They also have the option to share this information with community organizations they're engaged with. Our coordinators maintain regular communication with family members and community partners listed on the adults with disabilities data release form. This open dialogue enables us to gather diverse feedback on how effectively RAE is supporting adults with disabilities. The program is proud to report that many of our students with disabilities have reached significant milestones, including level gains, IET certifications, GED completion, and successful transitions into post-secondary education or employment.

4.7 Describe how volunteers are utilized and trained in the consortium. Address the following:

- **What are common activities and roles for volunteers?**

We have Instructional volunteers who work directly with students on academics:

For the '24/'25 school year, Hawthorne had a group of 29 instructional volunteers that delivered 1,719 hours of instruction under the direction of Hawthorne teachers and staff. Those hours were fairly evenly split between ESL (928 hours) and ABE (791 hours).

Instructional volunteers serve either in the classroom, under the close direction of the teacher, or in the Learning Lab, working one-on-one with students on their homework assignments under staff supervision. We also have two volunteers who are Orton-Gillingham trained and deliver high-level reading tutoring through a collaboration with the Rochester Public Library Reading Champions program. Starting February 2025, we will have approximately 4 University of Minnesota Rochester (UMR) students each semester who will volunteer in the computer lab or classroom working directly with Hawthorne students.

We have four other categories of Non-Instructional volunteers that support Hawthorne Education Center in non-academic capacities:

1. Collaborations with local college programs:

In the fall and spring, we have a collaboration with the Winona State University Nursing Program. Under this collaboration, there were a total of 16 nursing students who delivered health-related lessons to ESL classes. The students operate under the direction and supervision of their WSU Nursing Professor, Brooke Maleszewski DNP, AGPCNP, MSN, RN. They also work with the Volunteer Coordinator to complete a program orientation, Literacy Minnesota's *Module 2: Working with Adult Learners*, and classroom observations before they begin presenting to students. Topics presented include: Heart Health, Stress Management, Nutrition, Winter Safety, Fire Safety, How to Read a Medication Label, Tips for Doctor and Pharmacy Visits, Flu & Covid Vaccine Information, and Tuberculosis Education.

The collaboration with University of Minnesota- Rochester (UMR) will also deliver some non-instructional volunteer hours. The spring 2025 semester, 2 UMR students worked on a Clothing Drive and Giveaway event and 2 UMR students worked with a staff member on writing a grant.

2. Hawthorne Helps Volunteer-Run Program:

We have a completely volunteer-run group called Hawthorne Helps with 20+ volunteers. "Hawthorne Helps is a partnership between Rochester Public School's Hawthorne Education Center & 1st Unitarian Universalist Church with support from local Faith, service & business groups. Volunteers distribute essential items twice monthly that cannot be purchased with SNAP, including personal care, cleaning supplies, paper products and seasonal items. They provide school supplies to new students year round and also assist with Channel One Mobile Food Market".

3. Conversation Circles Volunteers:

Conversation Circles is a group of non-instructional volunteers who come as they are able to have conversations with students over the Noon hour. This is offered every Tuesday for one hour and always under the supervision of a licensed teacher. This spring, we started a second hour of Conversation Circles specifically for our Family Literacy parents, who were previously unable to attend this group due to having lunch with their preschoolers. By adding a second hour, we are able to extend this offering to an additional 25 students.

4. Preschool Classroom volunteers:

The last category of non-instructional volunteers is our Rochester Family Literacy volunteers. They serve in the preschool rooms, under the direction and supervision of the preschool teachers.

This year, all of these non-instructional volunteers delivered 1,467 hours of community service to Hawthorne Education Center.

How do volunteers enhance student success in the consortium?

Hawthorne teachers say this:

“Volunteers are able to provide the one-on-one assistance that teachers may not be able to provide to struggling students. Students look forward to the one-on-one attention they receive from volunteers.” ~Ric Dwyer

“Suzanne, my volunteer, brings additional information to topics that I might not be aware of. Also, I am able to have another group leader when I break into two groups. She supports students in their writing, and she gives constant encouragement.” ~Marcia Hartman

“Volunteers can give vital support to individual students for a longer period of time during a class period, enabling the classroom teacher to continue with instruction for the larger class.” ~Cyndi Faris

“Our Hawthorne volunteers are special people that greatly enhance the learning of our students. Our volunteers provide many things such as one on one help students may not otherwise get, and they assist teachers with small group learning and classroom management. In addition, I often see our volunteers providing friendly smiles and greetings to welcome our students.” ~Kathy Loecher

“In math class, volunteers will sometimes be able to give students a different perspective and way of solving problems. This can enhance students' understanding of the concepts they are working on.” ~Mary Kramer

“Volunteers enhance student success by helping them succeed faster! Sometimes in my writing class, I can't get to everyone as fast as I'd like or as they need, and a volunteer can get there and give feedback so it's great! Also, they enhance their success in speaking and listening because they are very involved in our conversational activities. Modeling after them as they converse is great practice, as is listening to them and conversing with them as native English speakers.” ~Michelle Ackerman

How are the consortium's volunteers oriented and trained? (Training requirements are outlined in the Volunteer Training Standards Policy.)

All new volunteers complete a volunteer application, MN background check, building orientation and receive the Volunteer Handbook, which goes over confidentiality and volunteer code of conduct. Volunteers who are responsible for helping students in either a classroom or tutoring setting are required to complete 4 hours of training from Literacy Minnesota (Core Module 2 and another training of their choice) either asynchronously, through live webinars, or in-person trainings held at Hawthorne Education Center. Instructional volunteers who are in their second or more year of

volunteering are required to obtain 2 hours of ongoing training each year. This may be through Literacy MN or through in-person training offered on-site.

Because all volunteer activities will occur under the supervision of a licensed teacher, Hawthorne volunteers are not required to complete the 12-hour training through Literacy Minnesota.

The Volunteer Coordinator offers in-person training sessions twice per year. For new instructional volunteers, these can count towards their required 4 hours of initial training. For long-term volunteers, this can count as their 2 hours of ongoing training. For non-instructional volunteers, these are optional, but provide an opportunity to learn and connect with other volunteers.

What training is provided and/or required on an ongoing basis for volunteers, locally and/or through other entities? (Volunteers who have tutored for more than one year are required to participate in a minimum of 2 hours of professional development annually after initial training, as outlined in the Volunteer Training Standards Policy).

As outlined in the previous section, we have our Instructional volunteers complete 4 hours of training their first year and 2 hours of ongoing training each subsequent year. We supplement with in-person training options twice a year that can also be used to fulfill our volunteers' training requirements.

In the '24/'25 school year, we offered two different in-person training opportunities for our volunteers.

- December 4, 2024: A group of 12 volunteers gathered in-person to complete the Literacy Minnesota training *Understanding the Somali People: History, Culture and Migration to Minnesota*.
- March 20, 2025: Meghan Boyle from Literacy MN, came down and presented *Core Module 3: Instructional Best Practices: Working with Learners* to a group of 9 instructional volunteers.

Some were new volunteers who needed to complete their 4 hours of initial training and some were long-time volunteers who needed ongoing training hours. Based on volunteer feedback, we plan to continue offering in-person training opportunities to supplement the online resources available through Literacy Minnesota.

