



**State of New Mexico
Higher Education Department
Adult Education Division**

**Adult Literacy Local Programs
Annual Report
Preparation Guidelines and
Reporting Template**

2024-2025

Please email reports in PDF form to:
adult.education@hed.nm.gov

**Reporting Deadline
September 19, 2025**

**(Please email your reports to adult.education@hed.nm.gov no later than
5:00 p.m. on the due date.)**

Annual Program Report

2024-2025

Please note: You *must* complete every section of this report template. If you do not fully complete any section list below, the report will be returned to you for completion and resubmission.

Checklist:

- ☐ Complete Cover Page with Signatures
- ☐ Complete Narrative Questions
- ☐ Complete Data Questions
- ☐ Complete Financial Expenditures Questions
- ☐ Complete Student Needs and Satisfaction Questions

**(Please remove these instructional pages when submitting your final report.
Your submitted report should begin with the signed cover page.)**

New Mexico Literacy Program Annual Report 2024-2025

Annual Program Report Cover Page

Program Name:	Academic and Career Engagement (ACE) Center	
Institution or Organization:	San Juan College	
Address:	4601 College Blvd.	
City:	Farmington	
County:	San Juan	
Zip:	87402	
Main Phone:	505-566-3270	
Website:	https://sanjuancollege.edu/acecenter	
Social Media:	https://www.facebook.com/acecentersjc	
New Mexico Counties Served:	San Juan	
Submission Date:	9/18/25	
Program Director, Manager, or Coordinator Name and Title:	Jennifer Martinez – Maestas, Director of Adult Education	
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	Email:	bedoniev@sanjuancollege.edu

X  9/22/2025 _____
 Signature of the Chief Executive Officer or Designee DATE

Edward DesPlas, Executive Vice President

Typed Name and Title:

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Narrative Questions

Instructions: Please answer the following questions that address the scope of work for your program under its agreement with the New Mexico Higher Education Department. Please note that this report should be informative but *concise*. Remember that we have your original grant agreement and your continuation form, so you do not need to provide exhaustive, lengthy answers in most cases, nor cut and paste from previous reports. This report can provide us with a snapshot in time of your practices, a clear overview of your program year, and information on noteworthy changes that occurred. We use this information throughout the year to inform state reporting, help us prepare for technical assistance and monitoring activities, answer questions from the public and from legislators, and other purposes. *Please note* that we will post these reports on the HED website as public information.

1. Please share program highlights and accomplishments in the 2024-2025 program year. Please also share any significant changes in your program, context, and services.

The ACE Center has experienced growth and transformation during the 2024–2025 program year. We are proud to report the following highlights and accomplishments:

Enrollment and Student Achievement

- **Enrollment Growth:** Our program saw a significant 37% increase in student enrollment, reflecting a growing demand for literacy services in San Juan County.
- **Improved Student Outcomes:** There was a 28% increase in the number of students achieving their educational goals, a testament to the dedication of our staff and the effectiveness of our evolving instructional strategies.

Expanded Literacy Instruction

Recognizing a critical need in our community, we expanded our services to provide explicit reading instruction to adult education students who score below a fifth-grade reading level. This expansion directly addresses a significant instructional gap:

- 95% of AEFLA-enrolled students are reading at or below the fifth-grade level.
- 72% of AEFLA students are reading at or below a third-grade level.

This data shows the urgent need for targeted literacy and numeracy instruction as a foundational component of the literacy and adult education collaboration.

Staffing Enhancements

To support our expanding instructional offerings and growing student population, we increased our instructional team from one tutor to three tutors, ensuring more individualized support and increased capacity for delivering intensive literacy interventions.

Contextual Factors: Why Literacy is Paramount in San Juan County

Literacy needs are particularly urgent in San Juan County due to several regional challenges:

- High rates of intergenerational poverty and limited access to early childhood education have left many adult learners without foundational literacy skills.

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- A large rural population often faces geographic and technological barriers to educational access.
- Many learners are unemployed or underemployed, and improving literacy is a critical step toward workforce readiness and long-term self-sufficiency.

Our program's strategic expansion into explicit literacy instruction is a direct response to these contextual factors, and we remain committed to equipping our learners with the essential skills they need to thrive in education, employment, and everyday life.

2. Please describe your main challenges in 2024-2025 and what you are doing or plan to do to address them.

The ACE Center's biggest challenge for FY25 is the lack of budget funds to hire additional instructional staff and provide the level of training necessary to meet student needs. The training required for evidence-based, explicit reading instruction, particularly approaches rooted in the Orton-Gillingham methodology, is both complex and resource intensive. These programs demand significant time commitments, are costly to implement, and require highly trained instructors to deliver effectively. Without sufficient funding, scaling these supports to reach more students has been difficult.

To address these challenges, we are prioritizing strategies that maximize the impact of existing resources while actively seeking external support. This includes:

- **Leveraging Partnerships and Grants:** Actively pursuing grants, donations, and community partnerships that could provide funding for professional development and additional staff.
- **Building Staff Capacity:** Offering internal professional learning opportunities to extend current staff's expertise in evidence-based literacy practices, even if full certification is not immediately feasible.
- **Phased Training Approach:** Implementing training in stages so instructors can begin applying strategies with students while continuing their professional development over time.
- **Data-Driven Focus:** Concentrating resources on students with the greatest literacy needs to ensure that the limited staff and training efforts are directed where they will make the most impact.

Despite the financial and logistical obstacles, the ACE Center is committed to advancing student success in literacy. By strategically combining limited internal resources with external partnerships and targeted training, we aim to sustain progress and ensure that students with learning difficulties or disabilities continue to receive high-quality, research-based instruction.

3. Please describe the modalities in which you provided literacy services in the 2024-2025 program year (e.g., one-on-one tutoring, small group tutoring, face to face classes, online tutoring, etc.), and the different populations whom you served (e.g., adult English language learners, parents, adults with disabilities, etc.) in as much detail as possible. If applicable, describe how these

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modalities and populations served were different in 2024-2025 than they had been in previous years.

The ACE Center offers literacy services through in-person classes that meet two days a week for three hours each session. To support student learning, we integrate Essentials Education MindPlay, an evidence-based program rooted in the Orton-Gillingham approach, which provides structured, multisensory instruction tailored to individual needs. This combination of face-to-face instruction and adaptive technology ensures that learners build strong foundations in reading, writing, and comprehension while progressing at their own pace.

4. Describe New Mexico geographical areas (specific communities and counties) you are serving. What pathways do you see in expanding your area of service?

Service Area: San Juan County, New Mexico

The ACE Center primarily serves San Juan County, located in the northwestern corner of New Mexico. This region is geographically and culturally diverse, with a unique blend of rural landscapes, small towns, and suburban communities. It is also home to a significant Native American population, particularly from the Navajo Nation, as well as Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute communities.

Major Communities Served

- Farmington – The largest city in the county and a central hub for commerce, healthcare, and education. Farmington also serves as the regional anchor for many surrounding rural areas.
- Aztec – The county seat, known for its historic and cultural assets, including the Aztec Ruins National Monument, and for being an important educational and government services center.
- Bloomfield – A growing small town southeast of Farmington, situated near the San Juan River and close to the Salmon Ruins, providing educational and cultural connections to the region's past.

Smaller Communities Served

- Kirtland – A small community west of Farmington, near the Navajo Nation, with strong agricultural roots.
- Shiprock – A major community on the Navajo Nation, named after the iconic Shiprock formation, and an important cultural and service center.
- Navajo Dam – A community near Navajo Dam and Lake, well-known for fishing, recreation, and tourism opportunities.
- La Plata – A rural community north of Farmington, near the Colorado border.
- Flora Vista – A residential community between Farmington and Aztec, situated along the Animas River.
- Waterflow – A rural community west of Farmington.

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- Fruitland – Located near Kirtland, known for agriculture and a rural lifestyle.
- Upper Fruitland – A Navajo Nation chapter located adjacent to Fruitland.
- Hogback – A small community located along U.S. Highway 64, near Shiprock.

Pathways for Expansion

Looking ahead, the ACE Center envisions several pathways to expand its service area and impact:

1. Stronger Partnerships with Tribal Communities – Expanding outreach and programming within the Navajo Nation and surrounding pueblos to address barriers in access to education, training, and support services.
2. Regional Collaboration – Building stronger ties with educational institutions, employers, and community organizations in neighboring counties such as McKinley, Rio Arriba, and Sandoval, creating a more interconnected service region.
3. Rural Access Initiatives – Expanding virtual and mobile service delivery to reach more remote areas of San Juan County where transportation and infrastructure challenges limit participation.
4. Cross-State Opportunities – Exploring collaborations with nearby Four Corners communities in Colorado, Arizona, and Utah, recognizing the shared economic and cultural ties across state borders.

Literacy Program Growth

To strengthen educational outcomes across the county, the ACE Center is committed to growing enrollment in our literacy program by focusing on the following pathways:

- Increasing advertising efforts to raise awareness and visibility of services.
- Collaborating with San Juan County Schools to promote literacy opportunities among students and families.
- Developing new family literacy initiatives that engage parents and caregivers alongside children, creating a multi-generational impact.

In addition, we recognize that New Mexico has many literacy deserts—areas with limited or no access to literacy resources. As the Northern Regional Representative and an NMAEA Board Member, the ACE Center Director is working to expand ACE Center literacy services beyond San Juan County to minimize these literacy deserts and ensure that communities across the region have access to quality literacy support.

By continuing to strengthen community partnerships, expanding geographically, and advancing literacy-focused programming, the ACE Center can ensure that more New Mexicans have access to the pathways and support they need for educational achievement and long-term success.

5. Describe any cooperative arrangements your organization has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of literacy activities. Please specify degree of formality for each arrangement described (e.g., purely informal agreement vs. MOA/MOU.) How have these

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collaborations supported your program's goals? Do you refer students to other NMHED-funded adult education programs? If so, please describe.

The ACE Center partners with the Department of Workforce Solutions to support students in their career development. Workforce Solutions offers workforce preparation services and unemployment assistance. Students may be referred to our AEFLA Adult Education program or may choose to enroll concurrently in Adult Education courses.

6. What key or impactful professional learning (PL) activities did you and/or your team (teachers, tutors, staff, etc.) participate in during the 2024-2025 program year? What program needs did the PL address? What were the outcomes and influences of this PL, if any, in your program?

Key Professional Learning Activities

During the 2023–2024 program year, all ACE Center Literacy Tutors/Instructors and the Director actively engaged in a variety of professional learning opportunities. These included weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) centered on high-impact instructional practices, as well as participation in national and regional conferences such as COABE, ProLiteracy, and MPAEA, along with multiple state-sponsored trainings.

Program Needs Addressed

These professional learning activities were carefully chosen to strengthen instructional practices, enhance student engagement, and ensure staff remain up-to-date with evolving research and best practices in adult education. The program's needs—particularly around delivering high-quality literacy instruction, increasing student persistence, and supporting diverse learning styles—were addressed through ongoing exposure to evidence-based strategies and collaborative reflection.

Outcomes and Influence

Professional learning has become a cornerstone of the ACE Center's instructional culture. As a result of these activities:

- Tutors and instructors have incorporated new high-impact practices that directly improve student outcomes.
- The team has built a stronger sense of collaboration and shared accountability through weekly PLCs.
- Staff report increased confidence in their instructional skills, especially in adapting lessons to meet students' unique needs.
- The program has seen measurable growth in its capacity to deliver high-quality, student-centered instruction.

Professional learning remains a priority for the ACE Center and NMHED because it directly sharpens staff skills, fosters innovation, and allows us to make a deeper, lasting impact on the learners we serve.

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Data Questions

Please answer the following questions that address data and performance in your program. Use your LACES database to collect data for students, hours, goals and tutors. You can present your data in the form of a table, graphs, or a narrative.

1. How many students were served in your program during the 2024-2025 fiscal year? Please, include total number of students with non-zero hours from *Student Calendar Hours Report* from LACES **student** area reports. Use the following parameters to generate your data: Date is Between 7/1/2024 AND 6/30/2025.

Total number of students with non-zero hours: 92

2. Out of students that were included in item 1, how many students received services to improve their low-level reading and math literacy levels? Please **exclude** students that received ESL or HSE preparation services. After you have reported this number, please answer the following two questions here as well: 92

- a. What can your agency do to expand services for such low-level literacy students?

Expanding Services for Low-Level Literacy Students

Our agency can expand services for students with very low literacy skills by:

- Increasing entry-level classes that focus on phonics, vocabulary, and practical skills for daily life and work.
- Creating a volunteer-based literacy program to recruit, train, and support community members who provide one-on-one or small-group tutoring.
- Offering individualized and small-group tutoring with trained volunteers and peer mentors.
- Using multisensory tools such as technology, visuals, and hands-on activities to reinforce learning.
- Providing professional development for instructors in best practices for teaching beginning literacy and trauma-informed approaches.
- Connecting students to support services such as counseling, childcare, and transportation.
- Partnering with libraries, workforce centers, and community organizations to expand learning opportunities.

These strategies will help us meet learners at their current level, build confidence, and support long-term academic and personal success.

- b. What kind of assistance might you need from us to succeed in this expansion?

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To ensure the success of our expansion, several areas of support would be invaluable:

1. **Increased Budget for Staffing and Training**
A larger budget will allow us to hire additional tutors and provide comprehensive training to ensure high-quality instruction.
2. **Professional Development in Evidence-Based Reading Instruction**
Training opportunities in approaches such as the Orton-Gillingham method and other evidence-based literacy practices will strengthen our team's ability to serve students effectively.
3. **Marketing and Outreach Support**
Assistance with marketing efforts will help us expand awareness of our services and reach learners across all areas of our community.
4. **Volunteer Recruitment and Training**
Guidance and training on best practices for recruiting, retaining, and training volunteer tutors will enable us to build a sustainable and skilled volunteer base.
5. **Fundraising Training**
Support in developing fundraising strategies and capacity will be critical to securing the resources needed for long-term growth.

With these forms of assistance, we will be better equipped to expand our reach, improve instructional quality, and build the infrastructure necessary for lasting impact.

3. How many hours did students spend learning in your program in 2024-2025? Please include total hours by different category as well as average number of hours per student with minimum and maximum number of hours that students spend. Use *Student Calendar Hours Report* from LACES **student** area Reports. Use the following parameters to generate your data: Date is Between 7/1/2024 AND 6/30/2025.

Total Hours of All Students:

Instruction: 2,238.75

Computer: 0.00

Preparation: 0.00

Travel: 0.00

Other: 0.00

TOTAL: 2,238.75

Average Total Hours: 24.33

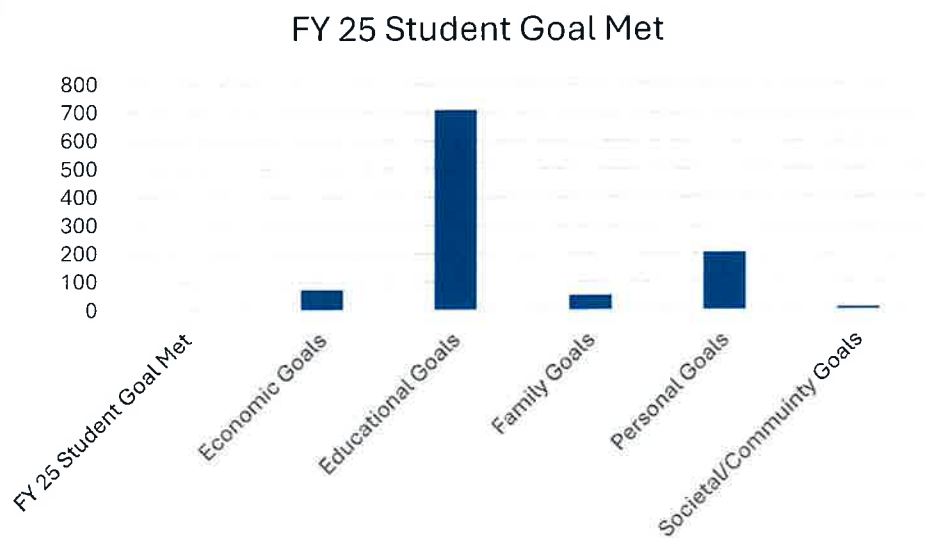
Maximum: 170.5

Minimum: 1.5

4. Of the students who were served, how many met their goals? Attach *Goals Met in Time Period by Type Summary* from LACES **student** area Reports. Use the following parameters to generate your data: Goal Met Date between 7/1/2024 and 6/30/2025.

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Goals Met: 1,044



5. How many hours did tutors spend working with students in 2024-2025? Please include total number of tutors with non-zero hours, total hours by different category as well as average number of hours per tutor with minimum and maximum number of hours that tutors spend. Use *Tutor Calendar Hours Report* from LACES **Tutor** area Reports. Use the following parameters to generate your data: Date is Between 7/1/2024 AND 6/30/2025.

Total number of tutors with non-zero hours: 3

6. When you look at your program outcomes, how effective do you gauge your program to be, and why? Discuss areas of both strength and challenge, grounding your answer in the data.

When reviewing our program outcomes, we gauge our program to be highly effective based on both enrollment trends and student achievement data.

Areas of Strength

- **Enrollment Growth:** Our program experienced a 37% increase in student enrollment, which demonstrates the growing need and demand for literacy services in San Juan County. This growth not only reflects the program’s visibility and relevance in the community but also indicates that our outreach and reputation are resonating with students.
- **Improved Student Outcomes:** We also saw a 28% increase in the number of students successfully achieving their educational goals. This success is a direct reflection of our staff’s dedication and our commitment to rigorous instruction. Our approach is grounded in the four pillars of reading—phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension—which ensures students receive intentional and research-based support tailored to their needs.

Areas of Challenge

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- We need to create a volunteer-based literacy program to provide small group and one-on-one tutoring options for students. Currently, our capacity limits us to serving only a small portion of the community despite a widespread high need for literacy services.
- Scope of unmet need:
In San Juan County, many adults and youth are underserved by current literacy programs. The county population is about 120,000 people, and socioeconomic indicators suggest substantial poverty and education challenges.

Statewide, literacy outcomes are low. For example, in the 2021-2022 school year, only 34% of students in grades 3-8 achieved proficiency in English Language Arts (ELA) in NM. For economically disadvantaged students the rate was 22%, for English language learners 13%, and for students with disabilities 9%. [New Mexico Legislature](#)

NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) results show that only about 21% of fourth graders and 18% of eighth graders in New Mexico scored at or above proficiency in reading—both below national averages. This suggests large room for improvement. [New Mexico Legislature](#)

- Because of these data, our current reach is not sufficient. We may be missing many who need help but can't access it — whether because of limited class size, far distances, scheduling issues, or lack of awareness.
- Another challenge is resource constraints: funding for staffing, training, materials, and oversight of tutoring; recruiting volunteers; ensuring quality and consistency in tutoring; and tracking impact in small settings.

7. When you look at your program data, what changes would you like to implement and why?

We are committed to expanding enrollment to meet the significant needs of San Juan County while ensuring that the success of neurodivergent students remains a top priority. Our efforts will include strengthening professional learning opportunities to better support neurodivergent learners and launching a volunteer tutor program to provide additional academic support.

8. What pathways could lead to increased enrollment for your program?

Pathways to Increased Enrollment

1. Community Partnerships

Building strong relationships with local schools, libraries, workforce centers, and social service organizations can help connect potential learners to the program. Word-of-mouth from trusted community partners often reaches adults who may not otherwise know about literacy services.

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2. **Targeted Outreach & Marketing**
Expanding outreach through bilingual flyers, social media campaigns, local radio, and community events ensures that diverse audiences are aware of literacy opportunities. Sharing success stories from current and past learners can help remove stigma and inspire others to join.
3. **Wraparound Support Services**
Providing childcare, transportation vouchers, technology access, or connections to social services helps reduce barriers that often prevent adults from enrolling or staying in a literacy program.
4. **Employer Engagement**
Partnering with local employers to offer workplace literacy, English language, and digital skills classes can increase enrollment by reaching learners directly where they work. Employers benefit from a more skilled workforce, while employees gain confidence and advancement opportunities.
5. **Fundraising**
Fundraising plays a critical role in supporting program expansion and accessibility.

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Financial Expenditures

Please provide the following information about your financial expenditures.

Additional grants, funding from partnerships, etc.

- 1. Please list other sources of support for your program and their contributions for PY 2024-2025.

Source	Amount
N/A	

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Student Needs and Satisfaction Questions

Please answer the following questions about student needs and satisfaction in the literacy services provided by your program and its sub-grantees, if any. If you have *not* collected all of this information, please indicate this and plan to do so in the upcoming program year. If you need assistance from NMHED to think through this data collection process, please do not hesitate to reach out.

1. Describe the processes used to collect information regarding student needs, goals, and satisfaction. If you have worked to identify student interests and needs in your local community (in addition to those students who have already joined your program), please describe that process here as well.

The ACE Center conducts a comprehensive onboarding process to better understand and support student needs and goals. As part of this process, students meet with an instructor/coach who provides guidance and referrals in key areas such as food, housing, transportation, and mental health services. We also connect students with local community resources to ensure their well-being. In addition, the Center carries out in-depth qualitative research using focus groups and other methods to evaluate student satisfaction and continuously improve our support services.

2. Please characterize your student population's stated needs and goals, grounding your response in the data you have collected.

Our students benefit from reducing barriers, receiving explicit reading instruction, and engaging with differentiated strategies designed to support neurodivergent learners. Our goal is to create a meaningful learning environment that ensures access to high-quality instruction in a small-group setting, facilitated by a highly trained instructor.

3. How does your program help students meet these needs and goals?

Our literacy programs empower students to reach their goals by providing inclusive, rigorous, and high-quality instruction, paired with intensive coaching, proactive advising, and barrier reduction.

4. What do you plan to do in the upcoming program year to improve the processes that you use to collect and analyze student needs, goals, and satisfaction?

Next year, we will prioritize amplifying the student voice—ensuring that students have a meaningful seat at the decision-making table and that their perspectives are carefully considered. We will do this by intentionally integrating qualitative data and student feedback into our processes. In addition, our Data Management Analyst will hold weekly meetings with literacy staff to examine data and trends, using those insights to guide informed decision-making.

5. What do you plan to do in the upcoming year to improve students' ability to meet their goals and improve their satisfaction with your services? How can NMHED help?

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In the coming year, our priority will be to build a volunteer-driven literacy program that broadens our impact and strengthens literacy opportunities. With NMHED's continued funding of Propel, we can maintain access to high-quality training that empowers our volunteers and enhances program success.