



MCAEL ANNUAL REPORT TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Scope of Services

MCAEL is contracted by Montgomery County to be the convener and coordinator for adult English services in the county. The contract is administered by the Montgomery County Public Library department. MCAEL must promote English Literacy, leverage private and public monies for Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services, and assist ESOL providers in building their capacity to increase the quality and quantity of ESOL services they provide.

MCAEL continues to provide capacity building and public education and engagement regarding the need for and benefits from adult English classes (ESOL) for our neighbors. MCAEL's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan calls for increasing the number of adults the coalition serves annually from about 15,000 a year to 21,000 per year through increased outreach, new access points for adult learners, and we continue to align our programs to meet the needs of adult learners and county priorities.

Throughout FY22, MCAEL undertook the following activities in line with the general purpose of the funding and the specific Scope of Services identified in Section II of the contract, with the following results:

1. Maintain a database of ESOL providers, teachers, advocates and advocacy groups that serve the residents in Montgomery County or could be of benefit to ESL providers that serve Montgomery County residents.

MCAEL maintains a broad database of people, groups and partners in the Montgomery County ESOL world. This includes, but is not limited to donors, allies, advocates, instructors, program staff, elected officials, businesses, and community leaders. MCAEL maintains segmented communication lists to provide both general information to the network and our partners, as well as targeted information for both staff and instructors at ESOL organizations. The entire database now includes 3,229 e-mail addresses (up from 2,808 in FY20 and 3,124 in FY21). In FY22, MCAEL also began a process to incorporate an integrated e-list subscription process online and to clean the MCAEL newsletter lists.

Salesforce Customer Relationship Data Summary:

| | FY21 | FY22 |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Providers | 293 | 297 |
| Instructors | 1,007 | 1,101 |
| Community | 1,824 | 1,831 |
| Total: | 3,124 | 3,229 |

2. Provide notice of funding and grants opportunities, national and state policy issues, best practices and professional development by e-mail alerts to County ESOL providers. The contractor must provide at least one such notice per week.

MCAEL continues to use a variety of tools (such as e-newsletters, e-blasts, social media, targeted emails, an anniversary campaign, and coordination with the County) to maintain ongoing communications with county ESOL programs as well as other partners and community members. We provide information on funding opportunities, professional development, as well as local, regional and national issues that are related to the work of the coalition.

- Increased communication efforts for County ESOL programs are underway with the addition of two new communication staff members who began in the spring of FY22.
- MCAEL serves as a communication hub by utilizing a range of social media channels and our website to disseminate information & connect community members. New in FY22, MCAEL increased reach and engagement by utilizing Instagram in addition to its previous flagship Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts. MCAEL also utilized partners' communication channels to engage a broader audience through its People of MCAEL campaign (i.e., Montgomery College, CASA, Inc., and Community Reach).
- MCAEL circulated a total of 67 e-newsletters or e-blasts, including 23 e-mails sent to Instructors/Providers and 28 to the MCAEL community e-list (July 2021-June 2022). Additional social media and website postings shared information, current events, coalition news and events throughout the month.
- One promising practice in FY22 included a new Summer Tech Series that engaged County ESOL providers in trainings year-round. June offerings included a Racial Equity Brown Bag and a class on "Navigating Zoom."

3. Administer grants to providers of adult English literacy services, with the purpose of supporting existing activities, expanding activities, and improving the capacity of providers to deliver high-quality services. For FY22, MCAEL awarded \$1,285,000 in grant funding with funds provided by Montgomery County. The funding supported 28 adult English literacy programs administered by 20 organizations.

- Grant funding allowed adult ESOL programs to:
 - Enroll 7608 learners over the entire fiscal year
 - Serve 4641 unique learners
 - Offer 710 classes, including 590 online, and 120 in-person
 - (Note that MCAEL trainings and information allow county organization to in turn reach another 5,000-6,000 learners)

FY22 has shown to be a learning curve for our grant partners after two years of virtual learning, with many switching to an in-person or hybrid format. In most cases, grant partners had been successful in implementing a plan that considered all the factors influencing their learner group. A lot of the programs

kept providing students with services by combining in-person training with online tools like Zoom or Google Meet. Some observations and notes about this year:

- Overall, in FY22 MCAEL grant partners were able to serve 92% of the number of duplicated learners and 91% of unique learners they planned to and held 104% of the number of planned classes.
- Program Grant partners reported that 2650 learners passed the classes they attended, out of a total of 4085 enrolled, or 62.6% (These are managed enrollment classes where learners are expected to attend all class meetings.)
- Overall, grant partners reported that they raised/spent at least \$1,046,846 in non-MCAEL funding and used \$513,653 in in-kind contributions for their FY22 classes. This again shows that the County funding is a catalyst to support other fundraising that the ESOL programs leverage.

In addition to its grants program, MCAEL offers instructor workshops, provider meetings, network meetings, technical assistance and ongoing information exchange, and other resources that non-grantee organizations and their staffs utilize. Thus, the total reach of the coalition is between 15,000-20,000 learners engaged by the coalition network through MCAEL supports and services.

FY22 Start-Up Grants

We launched a special grant opportunity for start-up adult ESOL classes in December 2021, with a maximum of \$5,000 and grant period January 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022. The goal of this grant program was to provide greater access to MCAEL grants for community and faith-based organizations in Montgomery County that may not have the staff and/or volunteer capacity or resources to participate in the regular grant cycle, and to increase the number of classes in areas of need. Some observations about this special grant opportunity:

- Four community organizations applied for this grant, requesting nearly \$15,000
- Three organizations (*Kings & Priests Court Int'l Ministries Inc, Francophone Africans Alliance, and Islamic Center of Maryland*) were awarded \$13,000
- This funding enabled these programs to:
 - Enroll 44 learners
 - Serve 38 unique learners
 - Offer 7 classes: including 5 online classes.

Grants Management:

- We worked closely with grant partners throughout the year to track data and outcomes through individual meetings and calls, training for new grant partners and a meeting to start the new fiscal year, virtual check-ins, and the receiving of mid-year and final reports. We also provide networking opportunities, instructor workshops, and provider meeting trainings to program staff and instructors to support them in running effective programs that are catered to the needs of students and the community.

- Managed the grant application process for FY23; this year, 12 members of the community served on the grant panel. Similar to the previous year, the grant panel orientation, grant applicant interviews, and grant panel deliberations were all successfully carried out online utilizing Zoom.

MCAEL is committed to continuing to make our grants process accessible to community and faith-based organizations, and for the FY23 regular grant cycle added a new category, Access Small Grants, with similar requirements as the FY22 Start-up Grants.

Capacity/Quality FY22

- A significant pragmatic shift is providing Community Learning Groups. The Community Learning Groups (CLG) program piloted in FY 21 with 2 organizations, Identity and Kings & Priests' Court International Ministries (KPCIM), with a total of 12 learners enrolled in 2 classes, 10 of whom graduated and received certificates. Designed to assist learners to identify a pathway for English learning in areas not as well served by existing ESOL classes, the CLG classes are 9-week introductory classes at the end of which learners are referred on to appropriate classes offered by coalition partners through one-on-one consultations with MCAEL. In FY 22 the program has grown to work with 6 more organizations providing a total of 9 classes, including 4 in-person. We have now used the CLG model successfully to work with a variety of partners: two of our partners are employers, one a fast-food restaurant, the other a landscaping company; another was an elementary school. From the 9 classes completed in this fiscal year, there are 33 graduates with at least 5 learners continuing in other ESOL programs with referrals from MCAEL. Post-surveys revealed the following: 100% of participants responded that they were "definitely" or "somewhat" more confident when speaking English with co-workers, supervisors, friends, and family. Additionally, 100% said they were "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to take another English class. MCAEL met with all participants to advise them on types of ESOL classes in the County and the enrollment process. Further, MCAEL provided an opportunity to meet with all learners to provide individualized advising on continuing their studies. Three classes continue into the next fiscal year. When COVID conditions improved in early 2022, MCAEL began offering CLG classes in person, necessitating an adjustment in how we register and assess learners. MCAEL implemented its second training for CLG ESOL instructors, with 5 individuals completing the 5-week, 20-hour course. Facilitated by the CLG lead instructor, all graduates are expected to teach at least one CLG class under her supervision. Three of the six CLG instructors trained last year continued to teach CLGs this year.
- Technical Assistance for Start-up Grants – As part of these grants, MCAEL identified experienced ESOL program administrators from within the coalition to advise the three Start-up Grant recipients on setting up or strengthening their fledgling classes. One advisor was contracted at the outset to conduct a needs assessment for all three to identify what type of assistance was needed. This advisor provided support and advice on class structure, instructional materials and so on throughout the 6-month grant period to two of the organizations; another advisor was contracted to work with the third for the duration of the grant period.

- When Montgomery College was not able to serve students who registered for their classes in the spring/early summer, MCAEL worked with the college and coalition partner organizations to add classes to accommodate these students. A total of 43 students referred by the college attended three classes offered by Sheppard Pratt/Linkages to Learning program and Community Reach of Montgomery County.
- MCAEL piloted a blended learning class model in partnership with the Latino Childcare Association of Maryland (LCAM) for their members, who are home-based childcare business owners. The model is 60 hours in length, with 30 hours of synchronous learning with an instructor (general English; once a week for 2 hours) and 30 hours of asynchronous online “homework” (specific industry-related materials). Learners were placed into classes based on their standardized assessment test scores, and then post-tested at the end of the class. The courses addressed the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) while teaching career-specific vocabulary and related “soft skills,” such as how to communicate on the job. Piloted in Fall 2021 with two classes, two additional blended learning classes in Spring 2022 incorporated lessons learned during the pilots. A total of 35 individuals enrolled in these classes. Outcomes for the Spring 2022 classes include:
 - 91% had an increase in their post-test score.
 - 55% of students progressed to the next level.
 - 100% of students felt more confident in their ability to communicate orally at work.
 - 100% of students would like MCAEL to continue to offer classes.
 - 100% of students said their vocabulary has improved.

4. Conduct an Outcomes Project that measures the quality and effectiveness of ESL service delivery. Grantees/Providers receiving funds from MCAEL must submit demographic and performance data to MCAEL as a condition of their funding. MCAEL must ensure that Grantees/Providers comply with the established reporting requirements and all reporting deadlines.

MCAEL continues to collect and report on data at the learner, instructor and program level. MCAEL requests detailed learner and program improvement data from MCAEL-funded programs. All new programs are given orientation regarding data requirements. MCAEL provides output data (number of learners served) and outcomes data (what did those learners accomplish), as well as program improvement information that shows how grant partners are improving their programs in specific areas year-to-year. This year we instituted a new reporting process for tracking program improvements along TESOL standards through the use of a self-assessment tool developed by the TESOL Association and therefore are able to provide quantitative data on program improvements. (See attachment below, page 10.)

- MCAEL has developed a database for learner, instructor, and class information for the Community Learning Groups Initiative that allows us to efficiently collect and report on program and learner outcomes.
- We identified an independent contractor to assist with cleaning FY21 data and created visualizations of learner and class data, which were used to inform programming and include in the FY21 data presentation.

- MCAEL continued its partnership with Montgomery Planning to update its StoryMap presentation which provides maps and analysis of learner demographic and class data from MCAEL grant partners and other larger nonprofit adult ESOL classes, as related to the latest available Census data on the Limited English Proficient population. The FY21 data presentation can be found here: <https://mcael.org/montgomery-county-md>.

5. Offer 10 meetings per year for the 60 active ESL providers (non-profit and for-profit, large and small, secular and faith-based) already in the Coalition and others as they are identified. These meetings are required for grantees/providers receiving funds from MCAEL. Meetings will offer all MCAEL grantees/providers the opportunity to share information; work collectively on issues facing the teaching and funding of ESL; leverage their combined resources for increased funding and more effective delivery of ESL services, as well as better purchasing power.

MCAEL provides diverse professional development opportunities for program administrators and instructors. This year, MCAEL continued to provide both Topics in Program Administration (TPA) and Network meetings. TPA meetings are for program administrators and are designed to provide professional learning and discussion around key TESOL program standards. Network meetings for program administrators and instructors inform the MCAEL coalition about additional services and supports for adult ESOL learners in Montgomery County. MCAEL continued to provide workshops and meetings online for the safety and convenience of the coalition.

- Program Administrators have expressed that access to devices for online learning and reliable internet service are continued barriers for adult ESOL learners. MCAEL partnered with Montgomery Connects for a Network meeting about access to laptop giveaways and broadband internet. MCAEL will continue to partner with Montgomery Connects for laptop distribution to ensure more ESOL learners have the resources needed to fully participate in online classes.

This year MCAEL welcomed the return of the biannual professional development conference. After surveying the coalition, MCAEL provided a two-day event which included an in-person networking and appreciation event and a full day virtual conference. The conference served as the Winter / Spring instructor workshops as well as an introduction to MCAEL's racial equity programming. The conference consisted of 8 instructor workshops, a keynote address, and an adult ESOL learner panel.

- 91% of conference attendees rated the overall conference excellent or very good
- 100% of participants said they were very likely or likely to recommend the conference to a colleague
- The main takeaways for participants were 1) learned new tips for the classroom 2) learned new instructional resources and 3) learned practical skills for learner-centered instruction
- 95% attendees across all instructor workshops strongly agreed or agreed that "I learned something new I can use in the classroom"

The MCAEL Advisory Group (MAG) is a group of 12 program administrators and instructors who represent a cross section of adult ESOL programs throughout Montgomery County. The advisory group contributes ideas and input into MCAEL's programming so that professional development offerings and programs respond to current needs of ESOL programs, instructors, and learners.

This year MAG members participated in two whole group meetings and contributed to three committees: Conference Planning Committee, Learner Leadership Strategic Planning Committee, Instructor Recruitment Strategic Planning Committee.

The Foundations for Adult ESOL Instruction course prepares instructors with basic tools and guidance in the areas of learner motivation and engagement, assessment, lesson planning and online learning and teaching. To date 73 instructors have successfully completed the course.

- In FY22, 94% of participants agreed “the course content adequately explained the knowledge, skills and concepts presented.”
- FY22 participants rated the “enjoyment” of the course 4.6 out of 5 stars.

Provider Meeting Results

Survey results (average % over five meetings)

- The objectives of the meeting were met - 92% strongly agreed or agreed
- I had an opportunity to share ideas - 92% strongly agreed or agreed
- I gained useful information from this meeting - 92% strongly agreed or agreed
- Meeting was a good use of my time - 92% strongly agreed or agreed
- I learned of at least one new resource (person, website, book, organization, etc.) - 94% strongly agreed or agreed

6. Provide information to the community and students seeking ESL and information resources through an electronically available Provider Directory listing ESL Providers in Montgomery County and their services, available on MCAEL's website. This website must also contain MCAEL's grant Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and links to other adult ESOL resources, such as advocacy, training, and other professional development and capacity building resources.

The MCAEL website remains a resource for the community and students seeking ESL and information resources. The web traffic continues to denote growth (up to 55,459 page views in FY22 from 44,290 page views in FY21).

- The Class Directory (formerly named the Provider Directory) is online and available in four languages, Programs can input their own profiles and schedules. Currently, more than 50 programs are thoroughly featured. The list of programs and the Class Directory are the two most visited MCAEL sub-pages.
- Grant information also is online and accessed year-round, with regular updates. For example, the design for the grant’s announcement was redesigned in FY22 for the first time in at least four years. The redesigned flier timed with the grant’s announcement release on June 15, 2021.

Community Resources

We continue to provide updates and information on COVID-19 resources, other county information and our trainings, programs, etc.:

- [Covid-19 Updates & Resources | Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy \(mcael.org\)](https://mcael.org/covid-19-updates-resources)
- [Online Resources | Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy \(mcael.org\)](https://mcael.org/online-resources)
- [Network Videos | Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy \(mcael.org\)](https://mcael.org/network-videos)

Professional Development

As part of MCAEL's Race Equity Strategic Plan, racial equity focused programming will continuously be provided through MCAEL professional development offerings. MCAEL staff worked with a pro bono consultant to develop a racial equity programming logic model. MCAEL began offering racial equity focused programming through the biannual professional development conference and first racial equity brown bag discussion. Racial equity discussions, workshops, and trainings will continue to be integrated into existing MCAEL professional development programming.

- 93% of participants attending racial equity focused conference workshops were “extremely interested” or “very interested” in learning more about the topic.
- 97% of participants attending racial equity focused conference workshops “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they “learned something new from the workshop that they can use in the classroom.

Supplemental Information

Events attended and network building: (sample of major and regular event attendance by MCAEL staff)

- Meetings with Office of Community Partnerships/Gilchrist Immigrant Resource Center
- Work source Montgomery Partners Meetings
- African Affairs Advisory Group Meeting
- Thriving Germantown HUB partner coordination meetings
- Coalition partner graduation ceremonies
- TESOL/MDTESOL/WATESOL Conferences
- MAACCE Conference
- COABE online workshops
- Maryland DOL, division of Workforce Dev and Adult Learning Virtual Training Institute
- Montgomery Moving Forward Leadership Group Meetings and Convenings
- Nonprofit Montgomery Covid-19 Webinars and Updates (presenter and attendee)
- Coordinated MoCo Welcoming Week Activities
- Nonprofit Montgomery Board Meetings
- Montgomery Moving Forward meetings, symposiums, and events
- Rockville Economic Development Corp and businesses

As mentioned above, in FY22 MCAEL continued to conduct workshops and meetings online for the safety and convenience of the coalition. As COVID restrictions lifted, MCAEL offered a Summer Tech Series of in

person instructor workshops to meet the digital literacy needs expressed by instructors experiencing difficulties with using technology in the online classroom. The first workshop offered focused on using Zoom effectively and efficiently for ESOL classes. MCAEL is scheduled to provide two additional workshops in this series.

Leveraged Expert Connections:

To provide expert training and information, MCAEL identifies area experts to present to or develop workshops for the coalition.

TESOL, WATESOL, MDTESOL, Montgomery College, VIT, Washington English Center, COABE (Coalition of Adult Basic Education), Intercambio, CASA, Catholic Charities, Bowie State University, WorkSource Montgomery, Community Reach of Montgomery County, Molloy College, Montgomery Connects, Frederick Community College

MCAEL's adherence to general nonprofit best practice activities and new projects:

MCAEL continues to align its work with best practice:

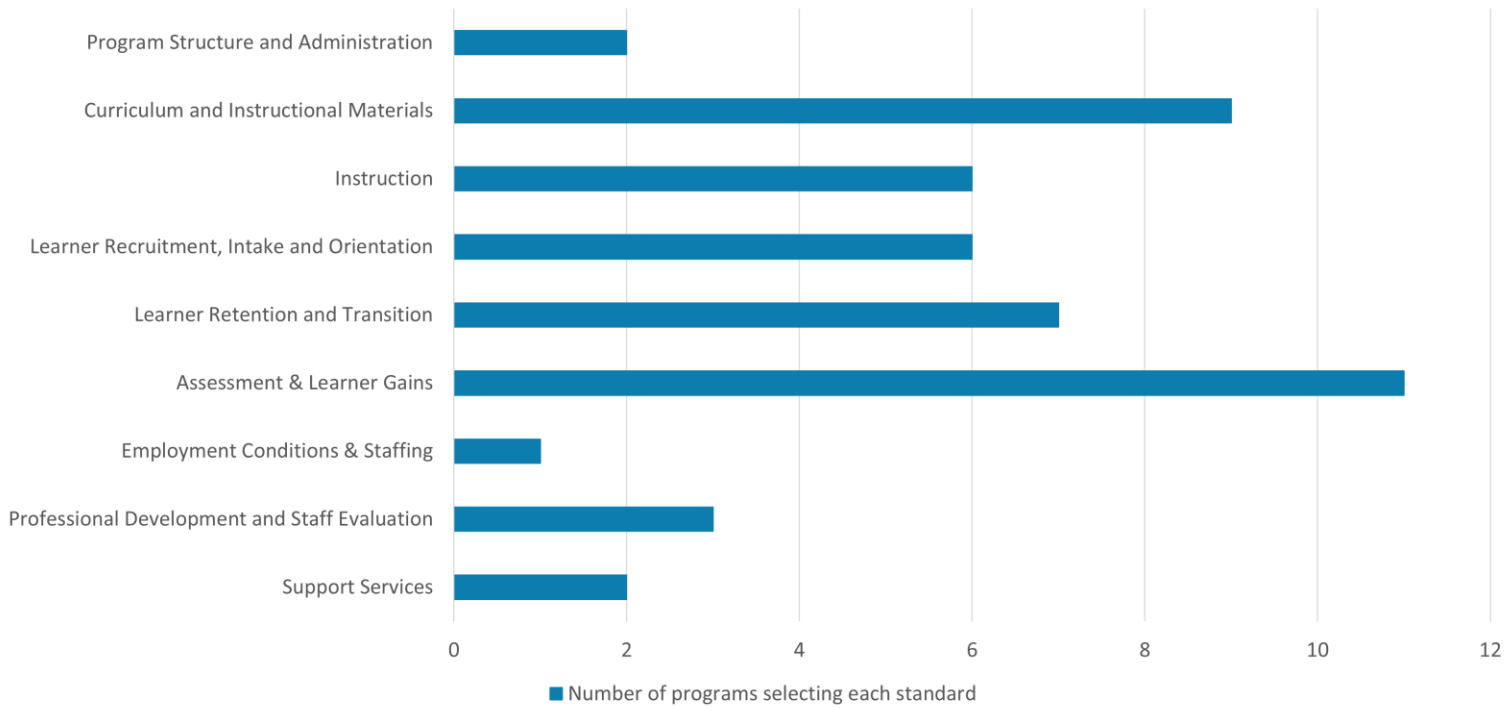
- Clean audit received for fiscal year 2021.
- Board of Directors holds regular meetings and its committees (Executive, Finance, Governance, and Resource Development) convene an act of matters in accordance with the needs of the organization and its bylaws.
- Staff regularly attend trainings provided by Nonprofit Montgomery, the Center for Nonprofit Advancement, Catalogue for Philanthropy, ESOL organizations, and others, to maintain abreast of developments in their fields.
- MCAEL gathers quality data on its programs, as referenced throughout this report. It presents salient data via its annual Outcomes Project.

MCAEL continues to implement its Racial Equity Strategic Plan across its operations, programs, and strategic objectives. Examples include:

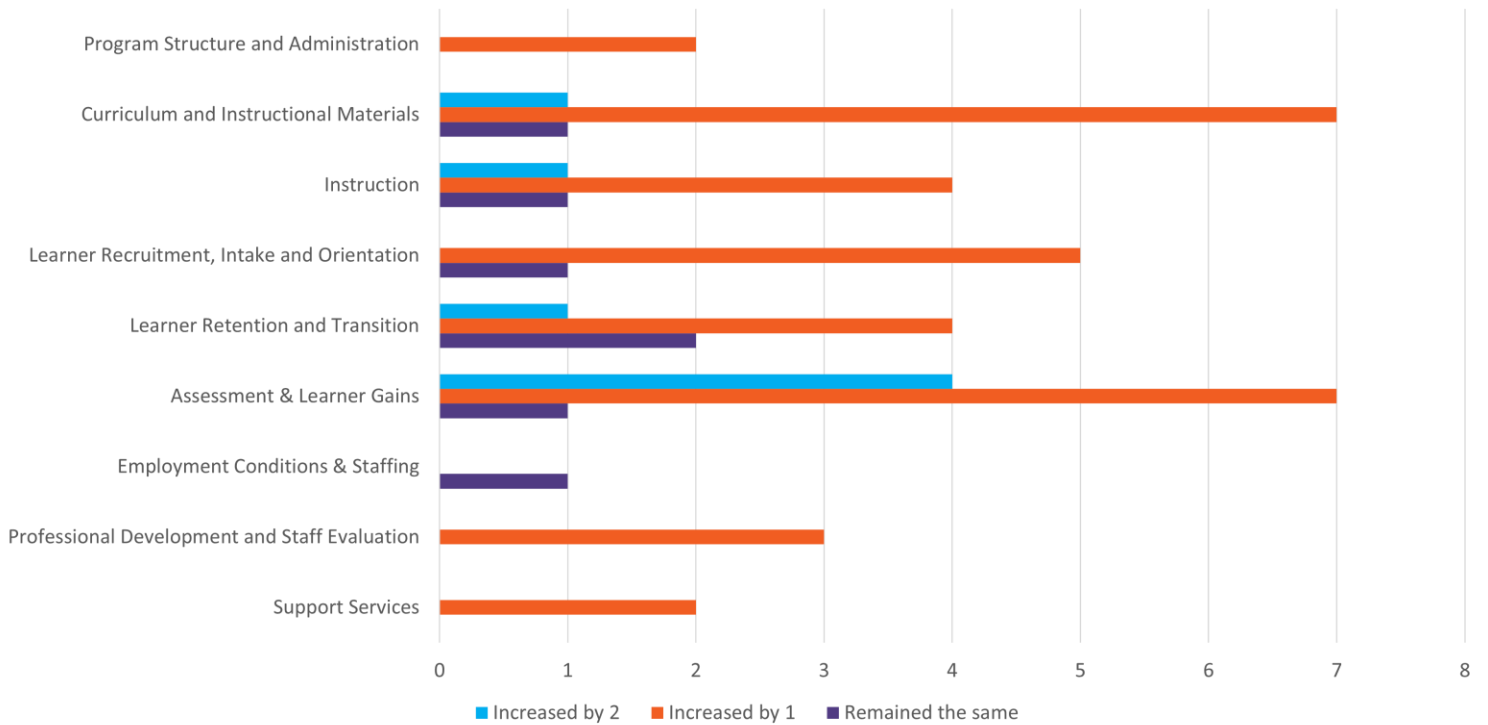
- Increasing and providing equitable access to MCAEL learning and teaching opportunities through the Community Learning Groups initiative (MCAEL recently hired a Community Learning Groups Program Coordinator to facilitate the expansion of this work);
- Planning and developing a set of activities focused on learner perspectives, including creation of a Learner Leadership Group that centers diverse learner voices in the planning and implementation of network activities;
- Analyzing and updating internal policies, such as recruitment practices for staff and board, how MCAEL evaluates relationships with vendors, and revising the language it uses in internal and external communications.

Section 4- Attachment

Number of Programs Selecting Each Standard



Program Improvement as Measured by Change in Self Assessment Scores



Section 5- Attachment -Summary of Training and Workshops

MCAEL FY22 Professional Development & Training

MCAEL provides trainings to meet the unique and varied needs of instructors in our network. Workshop topics aim to serve instructors with a range of instructional experience. Below is an overview of all of the professional development workshops offered to instructors this past year. All March 19th workshops were part of our biannual professional development conference.

| Workshops | Date of Training | Attendance |
|---|----------------------|------------|
| EdTech Tools in Distance Learning | Sep 29 th | 33 |
| Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: A Peer Conversation about Learner Retention & Attendance | Oct 27 th | 35 |
| Working Together to Learn: Vocabulary Development Through Games | Dec 15 th | 38 |
| Biannual Professional Development Conference | Mar 19th | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using Jamboard with Literacy and Beginning Level Adult English Language Learners | | 35 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enough with Tradition! Let's Teach for Freedom | | 37 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing the Maryland TESOL Handbook for Educators of English Learners for Adult ESL Literacy | | 22 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fostering Brave Spaces for More Speaking and Mutual Learning | | 41 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language is Not Neutral: Practical Considerations Making the Classroom Antiracist and Inclusive | | 18 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to Prepare Your ESL Students for Job Interviews | | 18 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicative Activities for the English Language Classroom | | 47 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disrupting Implicit Racial Bias in the Adult ESOL Classroom | | 22 |
| Racial Equity Brown Bag | Jun 22 | 10 |
| Summer Tech Series: Navigating Zoom Efficiently and Effectively | Jun 29 | 8 |
| | Total: | 364 |

Provider Meetings

This year, MCAEL continued to hold two different types of meetings. First, Topics in Program Administration (TPA) (chosen from TESOL standards topics) were facilitated discussions that enabled program administrators to share and learn from their peers. MCAEL gathered information about the

specific needs of programs around each topic area covered through brown bag, one-on-one conversations and input from MCAEL Advisory Group members. Network Meetings (Network) for both instructors and program administrators focused on how to better support learners and geared toward broader audiences.

| Name | Date of Training | Attendance |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------|
| TPA: What will the Fall Bring? | Aug 18 | 13 |
| TPA: Our Attention is on Retention | Oct 13 | 18 |
| Network Meeting: Job Skills and Employment Resources | Nov 10 | 34 |
| TPA: Assessment and Learner Gains | Dec 8 | 12 |
| Network Meeting: Highlighting Resources within our Community | Feb 9 | 30 |
| TPA: The "Topics" in Topics in Program Administration | Apr 20 | 9 |
| TPA: Online? In-Person? Blended? Hybrid? Where do we go from here? | June 9 | 14 |
| Network Meeting: Learn About Discounted Internet and Montgomery County's Free Computer Program | Jun 16 | 19 |
| | Total: | 149 |