

VLF Program Standards for Literacy Organizations



Operational Standards

- Board of Directors
- Executive Director
- Staff
- Accountability
- Program Operations and Community Need
- Information and Technology
- Marketing, Recruitment, and Outreach

Program Standards

- Learners
- Training
- Program Volunteers
 - Tutors
 - Other Program Volunteers
- Database

Operational Standards

Operational Standards include systems that ensure effective leadership and sound non-profit program management and procedures that support program transparency, accountability, and ethical practice. Operational Standards take into account community support and collaborations, program excellence and improvement, and resource and fund development.

1. Board of Directors:

Members of the board of directors are volunteers who represent leaders in a broad geographic and demographic sector of the community. They willingly adhere to the organization's standards for conduct, behaving in a mature and responsible manner as role models inside and outside of the organization. They treat everyone fairly regardless of age, race, or gender, and believe in and promote the organization's mission, vision, and values. They are able to commit the time and personal resources required to complete their board tenure and meet their board responsibilities.

OS 1.1 The organization has a Board of Directors that embraces its governing responsibilities, including:

- Understanding the program's history and its value to the community
- Attending scheduled meetings as established in the by-laws
- Serving on and working through standing and ad hoc committees
- Reviewing the program's mission and establishing yearly program policies
- Providing guidance in legal and financial matters
- Providing approval and oversight in major programmatic decisions

OS 1.2 The Board of Directors oversees the executive director and ultimately governs the staff, including:

- Hiring, evaluating, and dismissing the executive director (E.D.)
- Supporting the executive director (Although the board may override the E.D.s judgment, program standards dictate that they should rarely do so.)
- Working with staff to identify role(s) to achieve the mission and goals of the program

OS 1.3 The Board of Directors understands its fiduciary responsibilities, including raising agency funds by:

- Creating and following a fund development plan
- Ensuring that the organization has the resources it needs to meet its goals and objectives
- Identifying sources of funding in order to secure a diverse program funding base, including endowments
- Providing for an emergency rainy day fund
- Developing individual board member agreements that specify governing board responsibilities and expectations
- Contributing individually according to each member's means

OS 1.4 The Board of Directors acts as the agency's ambassadors in the community, including:

- Aiding in recruiting students and volunteers
- Communicating the organization's mission clearly, frequently, and by example to clients, stakeholders, and the community
- Expanding community awareness of program services through outreach efforts

OS 1.5 The Board of Directors actively participates in ongoing Board development, including:

- Ensuring that all board members are knowledgeable about VLF program standards
- Identifying and recruiting new board members in collaboration with the Board Development Committee, and in accordance with the by-laws
- Providing orientation to new board members, which includes detailed board member job descriptions, the responsibilities of a governing board, program history, and a list of board committees
- Developing a board orientation manual. (The Board Source offers a list of items to include in the manual at this link: <http://www.boardsource.org/Knowledge.asp?ID=3.390>)
- Participating in a regular self-assessment process
- Adhering to a corrective action policy administered by the Executive Committee or Board Development Committee, when necessary
- Ensuring diversified community representation on the Board through strategic planning and outreach

2. Executive Director

Effective executive directors possess the management and leadership skills required to move the organization forward, help it achieve its mission and strategic goals, and oversee its growth. Executive Directors model professional behavior, represent the organization in the community, pursue program and development opportunities, and support staff and volunteers in achieving instructional and programmatic excellence.

OS 2.1 The program has an E.D. who reports to the Board of Directors, and:

- Is hired, evaluated, and dismissed by the Board of Directors
- Attends all board and board committee meetings and provides up-to-date program, community, and donor information
- Maintains a strong working relationship with all board members

OS 2.2 The program has an E.D. who manages the organization, has a meaningful role in decision making, and delegates responsibilities to appropriate staff. The E.D.:

- Oversees staff on a day-to-day basis
- Shares decision-making with the Board or staff in some areas as designated by office procedures and policy
- Delegates responsibilities to staff as appropriate
- Oversees hiring, dismissal, retention, and promotion of staff
- Oversees the seamless transition of outgoing staff with replacement staff
- Evaluates and monitors staff performance, and initiates corrective action, when necessary

OS 2.3 The program has an E.D. who oversees the maintenance of reports, data, and records necessary for program accountability and transparency. The E.D.:

- Prepares the annual budget and accounts for financial resources
- Maintains records of funding sources and grantors, along with funding requirements
- Maintains the archived records and files that represent the program's history, including program performance data, Board meetings, financial information, organization's descriptive facts about the program, and other important program information that should be protected for smooth transition in management changeover
- Uses internal and external data for program monitoring and planning, grant writing, fund development activities, Board meetings, and community outreach

OS 2.4 The E.D. is responsible for overseeing the development plan and:

- Develops and implements a fundraising plan with Board and staff input
- Establishes, manages, and with the Board administers the endowment fund
- Writes grant applications

- Furnishes required progress reports to granting agencies

OS 2.5 The E.D. represents the face of the organization to the community and:

- Works with community partners and develops collaborative relationships
- Attends partnership and community agency meetings, or delegates the responsibility to appropriate individuals
- Encourages the program's visibility and participation at community and partnership events

3. Staff

The program has full-time, part-time, or unpaid staff who have the belief, educational background and experience to achieve the program's mission, vision, and values. Program staff possess strong interpersonal and communication skills, organization and time management skills, and computer and digital literacy skills. They have an ability to work effectively with clients and stakeholders, and coordinate delivery of services. They are evaluated by the executive director or program staff and are willing to take corrective action when necessary.

OS 3.1 Supervisory/administrative program staff

Administrative staff follow the highest principles of professional behavior and possess sound leadership skills. They promote a reputation of a healthy learning climate and educational excellence, take on the responsibility for sound volunteer and client management, and demonstrate professional and technical competence. They:

- Oversee continuous improvement of adult education and learner literacy skills in the program
- Meet program goals and objectives
- Practice sound volunteer and office management
- Monitor integrated instructional services
- Provide accurate, thorough, and up-to-date program information
- Strengthen the program's brand in the community through strategic marketing, ethical practice, and reliable, consistent, and trustworthy service
- Ensure that all confidential information is securely protected and remains private
- Attend professional development training on a regular basis
- Lead regularly scheduled staff meetings to ensure well-coordinated and effective delivery of program services and projects

Suggested Resources:

- Strategic marketing, (See *Marketing and Communications in Nonprofit Organizations: Essays on Excellence, Lessons from the Georgetown Nonprofit Management Executive Certificate Program*, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, 2009)
- Ethical practice, (See: *Principles of Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations*, Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, Independent Sector)
- Reliable, consistent, and trustworthy service (See: *The Importance of Nonprofit Branding*, Joleen Deatherage, *Philanthropy Journal*, 2011)

OS 3.2 Support Staff

A person who works in a support staff role has the ability to oversee office operations and meetings and has excellent communication, organization, and planning skills. Support staff are able to refer clients to other programs and a variety of agencies and services. Their duties also include coordination of computer operations and day-to-day data management.

Support staff are qualified to support the program's goals and objectives. They:

- Provide a high standard of customer service
- Refer clients and stakeholders to the appropriate program or partner agencies
- Oversee data management and provide computer assistance for volunteers and students
- Support and maintain the office, typing letters and forms, entering and maintaining data, copying, filing, faxing, screening calls, and ordering office supplies
- Schedule meetings, prepare agendas, and set up meeting rooms
- Participate in ongoing professional development training
- Receive a yearly evaluation according to their job descriptions
- Protect and secure the confidentiality of all information

4. Accountability

Program accountability means that state and federal legal guidelines, ethical conduct, and accountability (including monitoring and reporting) for nonprofit organizations are followed in relation to clients, volunteers, donors, staff, and community expectations.

OS 4.1 The program has legal guidelines by which it operates, including:

- Articles of nonprofit incorporation
- Federal and state tax exemption
- By-Laws
- A Board of Directors representing geographic and demographic diversity, needs, and interests of the community who are responsible for the oversight of the operation and policies of the program
- An annual independent audit or an audit review by the Board of Directors
- An annual report that is accessible and available to the public
- A document destruction/retention policy (Sarbanes-Oxley Act)

OS 4.2 The program has risk management policies in place, including:

- Liability Insurance and risk evaluations
- Guidelines for ethical practice and conflict of interest policies
- A disaster recovery plan, and guidelines describing the course of action staff and volunteers must follow in case of an emergency
- Private and secured storage area for confidential information

OS 4.3 The program has an office policy manual for staff and volunteers containing rules and policies by which the program is run, including:

- Descriptions of the organization's programs, (i.e. ESOL, Basic Literacy, Family Literacy, Pre-GED)
- Governance policies, including an executive, staff and Board evaluation plan, and a transition plan for changes in leadership of key members of the Board and staff
- A strategic/operational plan that takes into account mission, vision, and values
- Description of a program improvement evaluation process
- Job descriptions of all paid staff and volunteer positions, including the code of conduct
- Staff and volunteer responsibilities and guidelines for dismissal
- Student responsibility guidelines
- Benefit forms and policies
- A copy of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act outlining requirements for the destruction of business records and documents, including audits and tax information
- Provisions for the appointment of an Advisory Board, if appropriate, that advocates for the program in the community and with other stakeholders, and provides direction to program staff to help them achieve their goals and objectives

Suggested Resources and Links:

- VANNO: *From Principle to Practice: A Guide to Accountability for Virginia's Nonprofit Organizations*:
<http://www.arts.virginia.gov/resources/artworks/Principle%20to%20Practice%20Publication.pdf>
- *Principles for Good Governance and Ethical Practice: A Guide for Charities and Foundations*, Panel on the Nonprofit Sector, Independent Sector:
<http://fmaonline.net/media/Panel%20on%20the%20Nonprofit%20Sector%20-%20Good%20Governance%20Principles%20Summary.pdf>
- Board Source: *Building Effective Nonprofit Boards*
<http://www.boardsource.org/>

5. Program Operations:

Program operations include the day-to-day management of the organization and its programs, including human resources, volunteer management, and accounting and financial management systems that include an organization-wide budget, program budgets, and regular financial statements. The program also considers the needs of the community and the involvement of its citizens, businesses and civic organizations.

OS 5.1 The program has developed effective program services and standardized procedures, including:

- Recruiting adult learners and volunteers
- Retaining adult learners and volunteers
- Assessing learners' skills and qualifications at enrollment and at regular intervals to measure progress
- Training volunteer tutors who are able to help students achieve their literacy goals
- Assisting tutors in developing lesson plans, adapting learner-centered teaching strategies, recognizing teachable moments during instruction, and providing and acquiring tutoring/instructor materials including software and realia
- Training volunteer staff who assist in program operations, special events, fund raising, and outreach activities
- Providing necessary resources enabling paid staff to perform their duties and achieve program goals
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are knowledgeable about VLF program standards
- Offering ongoing professional development for volunteers and paid staff
- Establishing linkages and referrals with other community service providers to increase program capacity in the community, and linking learners with appropriate community resources as needed
- transitioning learners to the next educational level, educational program, or into the workplace

OS 5.2 The program has developed a strategic plan and annual working plan in order to grow, strengthen, and/or improve program operations, including:

- Ensuring that the organization operates in accordance with VLF program standards
- Examining external data and internal formative and summative data to analyze program strengths and weaknesses
- Setting realistic and attainable short- and long-term program goals
- Involving learners, tutors, business community, community leaders, educational providers, and other important stakeholders in the planning process, as appropriate
- Creating a timeline to achieve the plan's goals and objectives
- Revisiting the strategic and annual working plans periodically to make adjustments, using internal and external data and stakeholder input

OS 5.3 The program has the capacity to achieve its goals and mission through:

- Maintaining a balance between student intake, volunteer orientation, and tutor training so that tutors and students are served quickly and efficiently after initial contact
- Serving adult learners and volunteers within 14 days of initial contact, and providing sufficient support and services to help them achieve their goals
- Acquiring the funds, means, and resources to support its programs

OS 5.4 The program has addressed the need for adult literacy services in the community and surveyed existing adult education and literacy services through:

- Assessing gaps in adult literacy services throughout the community
- Identifying key constituents and stakeholders in adult literacy in the public and private sectors
- Addressing key community issues regarding adult literacy with community leaders and public and private institutions
- Working closely with partner agencies with similar missions

OS 5.5 The program meets the community's needs for its services through:

- Offering flexible times and days to accommodate the largest number of students and volunteers as possible
- Providing a number of locations for students and tutors to meet in the community through collaborations and partnerships

6. Information and Technology:

The organization's technology and information system includes oversight and maintenance of equipment and its website and social media sites, and has the ability to address technology issues within the organization.

OS 6.1: The program has met minimum technology requirements with equipment that meets current technology standards. It:

- Follows the recommended technology specifications including the following minimum hardware and software requirements:
 - Windows 2000 or XP
 - Microsoft Office 2000, XP, 2003, or 2007
 - Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari, and their latest upgrades
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.0 or higher
 - Broadband, DSL, or T1 connection
- Maintains an inventory of technology products, including:
 - Vendor/manufacture name
 - Model name
 - Type of operating system
 - Processor
 - RAM
 - Hard disk
 - Monitor
 - Network type
 - User Name
 - Date of purchase
 - Item function
- Maintains a record or a log of each piece of equipment, including where the product is located, technical support, and repair history.

OS 6.2 The program has software available as needed or requested for accessing technology into instruction, with content and language that are appropriate for adult literacy learners and actively engage students in learner-centered instruction. The program:

- Monitors student attendance and computer instructional hours
- Provides professional development opportunities for staff and volunteers so that they can integrate technology into instruction as appropriate for student success and as requested
- Has access to technology at times convenient to volunteers and students, as appropriate or requested
- Provides opportunities for students and volunteers to learn or upgrade their technology skills, as appropriate or requested

- Offers timely and immediate help for tutors who request IT support
- Schedules professional development opportunities for staff and tutors to understand how technology is integrated into lesson planning and student instruction, as appropriate or requested
- Provides learners with opportunities for active online learning, including writing online, searching online, digital storytelling, information sharing, as appropriate or requested
- Uses digital technologies in literacy and learning, as appropriate or requested

OS 6.3 The program has the ability to provide information and communicate with students, volunteers, staff, and community supporters and other stakeholders via online methods, through:

- A website that offers current information about the program, including location, staff contact, program services, schedules, and upcoming events
- Social media as needed or required
- Web communication tools such as Wikis, Instant Messages, and Emails
- Online meetings through Wimba, Skype, or similar online tools
- Online files and working documents in Google docs or similar drop boxes

7. Marketing, Outreach, and Recruitment:

The program has developed a well-defined marketing, outreach, and recruitment plan that focuses on expanding the organization's reach and impact within the community. Its communications strategy promotes the organization's brand across a variety of media outlets.

OS 7.1 The program has developed a strategic marketing, outreach, recruitment plan, including:

- Implementing a marketing plan consistent with the organization's brand (its beliefs, mission and value to the community, and its reputation of excellence and reliability) and that facilitates the growth of the organization and its services
- Identifying target markets and key market segments that will best be served by the organization
- Designing marketing and publicity materials, brochures, websites, and online content that emotionally and visually connect the audience to the organization
- Assembling an effective marketing team that develops, coordinates and distributes communications materials, literature, online resources, and programs to a variety of media outlets within the community, including
 - traditional television, radio, and print media via press releases and PSAs
 - public speaking opportunities, direct mail solicitations, and traditional advertising, including billboards, ads, and flyers
 - Web 2.0 marketing outlets such as websites, opt-in email trees, blogs, social networking sites
- Recruiting staff, volunteers and board members that reflect the demographic composition of the community
- Creating and managing an organizational master media archive and directory

OS 7.2 The program has established marketing, outreach, and recruitment procedures for learners, including:

- Establishing a clear policy regarding the adult learners the program is capable of serving
- Identifying the geographic areas in which the program can have the greatest impact on potential learners through research and demographic data collection
- Developing a marketing plan according to research findings
- Providing linkages and referrals to learners it is unable to serve

OS 7.3 The program has established marketing, outreach, and recruitment procedures for volunteers, including:

- Establishing the criteria for recruiting the volunteer staff it needs to accomplish its mission, including tutors; program volunteers, such as trainers; office volunteers; and events volunteers.
- Identifying the geographic areas in which the program can reach the greatest number of potential volunteers
- Developing a comprehensive marketing plan to recruit potential volunteers

Program Standards

A VLF-funded adult literacy program shall follow established standards and guidelines for nonprofit program management and deliver quality services and information to its stakeholders, including students, volunteers, staff, and community partners. Evaluation instruments that are nationally recognized and scientifically based are used to measure program performance to demonstrate impact and effectiveness.

1. Learners

The program shall provide adult learners with the knowledge and skills they need in order to achieve their personal literacy goals and objectives, including providing quality instruction, support services, and retention strategies that focus directly on learners' needs. In turn, learners are asked to follow the organization's standards of conduct and policies regarding student learning and attendance requirements.

PS 1.1 The program employs effective research-based practices for the recruitment and retention of adult learners, including:

- Creating recruitment policies and referral programs that follow a strategic marketing plan approved by the Board for recruiting adult learners
- Developing clear policies for serving adult learners*
- Making student admission policies explicit and clear on the agency's outreach materials, during information sessions, and on the website. (see <http://www.challengedchild.org/about/>)
- Providing an established network of referral agencies that refer learners to the program and accept referrals of appropriate learners

PS 1.2 The program has established student enrollment and intake procedures designed to help learners reach their literacy goals, including:

- Scheduling frequent student orientation/information sessions that are well advertised, and offered during the day and at night at set, well-advertised times
- Using intake forms that allow the program to help students meet their literacy goals, satisfy funder and regulatory requirements, and inform the community about student demographics
- Hiring trained staff who are able to help learners establish realistic, customized, short- and long-term learning goals, and involve them in setting those goals
- Assessing learner strengths at intake, as well as identifying areas in which they need improvement

PS 1.3 The program has policies addressing program expectations and standards of student conduct for learning, including:

- Using student agreement forms, which the student signs, and includes a student code of conduct, attendance policy, tutor contact information in case of a cancellation, clear policies for remaining with the program, number of instructional hours required for post-assessment, and any fees that might be charged
- Creating a culture that encourages learners to take responsibility for their own attendance and home study from the moment the learner contacts the agency.

PS 1.4 The program retains learners by:

- Collecting formative and summative assessments on each student that demonstrate progress towards learning goals
- Providing individualized learner-centered, multi-sensory instruction based on each learner's strengths, needs and goals
- Using relevant, learner-focused instructional strategies and materials from a variety of school-related and real life sources, including digital and web-based resources
- Re-evaluating curriculum and lesson plans by qualified staff on a yearly basis
- Maintaining a resource library with appropriate student-oriented, high interest/low level literacy materials and realia
- Evaluating student progress at regular intervals and actively involving them in their own learning
- Providing regular and ongoing feedback to learners on their progress
- Scheduling classes and lessons of sufficient intensity and duration to help learners achieve their short- and long-term literacy goals and be post-tested as per funder requirements
- Transitioning classroom learning to real world activities and settings
- Providing immediate and relevant support to learners who are failing to achieve their goals, falling behind in their lessons, or who stop attending classes or tutoring sessions
- Scheduling ongoing student retention activities, including meeting regularly with students to discuss progress, providing peer mentors, holding celebrations for achieving milestones, providing incentives for goal attainment, holding honor and graduation ceremonies, and involving students in program decisions

** Students of VLF-funded programs will meet the following criteria:*

- They are able and willing to participate in classes or tutoring sessions for two to four hours per week for one year, and willing to sign a student agreement to that effect.
- They have moderate to high level of personal motivation.
- They are able to comprehend text and concepts in literacy instruction.

**VLF-funded programs do not assist students:*

- in behavior modification, emotional regulations, or overcoming addictions.
- whose medications or medical condition significantly influence his or her memory, or who have moderate to profound mental retardation.

2. Training:

Programs provide tutor training and in-services that meet a recognized standard of quality (by ProLiteracy, the VLF, or other statewide or national organizations), and model a code of ethics for tutors and trainers to follow. After the training, committed tutors demonstrate their knowledge and understanding about adult education principles and an ability to provide individualized instruction and learning strategies that promote independent learning to people from diverse backgrounds, ages, and ethnic groups.

PS 2.1 The program has a policy regarding training which:

- Follows the principles of adult education and research-based tutor training techniques
- Adheres to the principles of adult learning of individualized learner-centered multi-sensory instruction based on a learner's strengths, needs, and goals
- Provides a minimum of 12-14 hours of training (See appendix for suggested agendas):
 - Orientation
 - Tutor Training
- Provides ongoing training, including:
 - Follow-up training
 - Just-in-time training
 - In-services and other professional development workshops
 - Online training
- Provides staff oversight of all phases of training
- Provides supervised modification of training by qualified program staff which is not implemented until modifications have been approved by the program standards committee

PS 2.2 The program has established a training schedule in which:

- training was coordinated with holidays, school schedules, and community events to reduce conflicts of interest
- the number of trained volunteers was maximized by
 - establishing flexible schedules, and allowing volunteers to choose a weekend training, night time training, day time training or online training at set times throughout the year that best suited their personal schedules
 - scheduling trainings during peak training times, such as January and early fall, or other times of the year that attract large numbers of volunteers to attend
- The community is made aware of the training schedule in a program calendar that is publicized in community bulletin boards, websites, local publications, the organization's website, program events, and volunteer orientations

PS 2.3 The program has established training sites in neutral locations that are conducive to adult learning. They

- Are near public transportation

- Offer facilities for the disabled
- Provide sufficient lighting, adult-sized furniture, and convenient restrooms
- Provide ample and convenient parking
- Provide signage to the facility and workshop room that is easy to read and follow
- Maintain training equipment in good repair

PS 2.4 The program requires trainers to be certified and well trained to teach volunteers. They

- Receive adequate technical training and material support from the program
- Pursue ongoing and continuous professional development and are current with best practices in tutor training techniques and in using training equipment
- Possess extensive experience tutoring adult literacy students
- Believe in the adult education principles of individualized, learner-centered, multi-sensory instruction based on learner strengths, needs, and goals
- Work from a job description
- Follow the guidelines set in the program's trainer manual
- Believe in the mission, vision, and values of the program
- Understand VLFs program standards

PS 2.5 The program has a training component that is of sufficient duration and intensity to teach volunteer tutors the instructional skills necessary to help adult learners reach their literacy goals, through

- Regularly scheduled and ongoing onsite or online volunteer orientations
- A 12-14 hour tutor training, which is offered onsite or in combination with online modules
 - From 10 - 25%:
 - Introduction and Overview
 - Objectives and Expectations
 - The Adult Learner
 - From 75 – 90%
 - Tutor Skills and Curriculum
 - Learning Styles, Reading/Writing techniques, LD, ESOL
 - Assessment, Goal Setting, Lesson Planning, and Program Housekeeping

PS 2.6 The program has established a protocol for training apprentice trainers. They

- Meet minimum trainer standards as outlined in the program's trainer guide
- Practice under the supervision of an experienced trainer until they are certified

PS 2.7 The program uses training materials that

- Reside in the public domain and do not infringe on copyright laws
- Contain research-based adult learner instruction and promote effective practices in adult education principles and instructional activities
- Engage adult learners, promote learning, and help them to achieve their literacy goals

Suggested Resources:

See: Volunteer Training Standards from the Minnesota Department of Education and A Manual for Volunteer Literacy Programs, Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Development

3. Program Volunteers

Volunteers willingly adhere to program guidelines and standards for conduct, behaving in a mature and responsible manner as role models inside and outside the organization. They treat everyone fairly regardless of age, race, or gender, and believe in and promote the organization's mission, vision, and values. These volunteers represent a broad sector of the community. They are able to commit the time and effort required to complete their volunteer responsibilities.

3.1 Tutors and teachers

The program recruits, trains, and retains quality volunteer tutors and teachers who:

PS 3.1A Meet the qualifications set in the program's handbook. They:

- Are at least 18 years old and have graduated from high school
- Have attended an onsite or online volunteer orientation
- Agree to go through volunteer screening, including criminal background checks for those who work in the learner's home or have contact with their learner's children
- Adhere to a written volunteer job description that outlines clear expectations
- Have successfully completed all sessions of tutor training before they are matched with a student
- Adhere to the principles of adult learning of individualized learner-centered multi-sensory instruction based on a learner's strengths, needs, and goals
- Follow the program's policy when they miss a training session or when they do not successfully complete a tutor training
- Agree to tutor for at least 2 hours per week for nine months - providing ample opportunity to accrue adequate instructional hours for post assessment
- Will in a timely manner and with advance notice inform the program and their student(s) about vacation plans or when they must miss a tutoring session
- Send all required reports to the program at the scheduled time (monthly or bi-monthly)
- Attend further professional development or training opportunities during their volunteer commitment
- Request staff support for just-in-time training

PS 3.1B Demonstrate tutor/instructor effectiveness through staff observations and evaluations, professional development training, and student progress. They:

- Certify tutors after they satisfactorily complete a 12-14 hour tutor training workshop
- Require tutors to keep a training log or journal to record tutor activities with students and their progress
- Establish and reinforce policies about regular staff or trainer evaluations and observations of tutor/instructor effectiveness

- Establish and reinforce policies about regularly reporting learner attendance, progress, learning plans, goal achievements, lesson plans, and assessments on a monthly or bi-monthly basis, according to organization policy
- Provide opportunities to tutors for ongoing and just-in-time training via in-services and distance learning training

PS 3.1C Develop procedures for tutor retention. They:

- Base tutor training on best practices in adult education instruction that is of sufficient intensity and duration to provide tutors with the skills they need to help their students reach their literacy goals
- Provide regular in-services and ongoing professional development training on topics that expand on tutoring techniques, knowledge of the adult learner and program needs, and that take into account volunteer requests and needs
- Provide in-services and ongoing professional development training on days and times convenient to tutors/instructors
- Offer consistent just-in-time training and timely assistance for tutors who have been matched with students and who request more training support
- Solicit regular feedback from tutors who are active and from those who have left the program, and implement changes after reflection and planning
- Provide timely support from professional staff
- Offer tutor retention activities, such as peer mentoring, ongoing and timely staff support, opportunities for networking and celebrations, and involvement in program decisions

3.2 Other Program Volunteers:

Program volunteers demonstrate the skills required to effectively meet the objectives of their volunteer duties and support staff as they are needed. Program volunteers include event planners, office volunteers, speakers, and fund developers. They:

- Follow their duties as outlined in their volunteer job descriptions
- Attend professional development workshops to improve their volunteer job performance
- Are motivated to meet and exceed program expectations
- Willingly support other volunteers and program staff in the performance of their duties

4. Database and Data Gathering:

The program uses a database that is sufficient to manage the organization's information in a reliable and retrievable format, including:

- Using the VLFs policies and procedures manual for data entry
- Maintaining the database on a secure server
- Backing up the data on a regular and consistent basis
- Training personnel who are able to enter data in a consistent and precise manner. They are trained on data entry and data management, and follow program policy manual procedures. They
 - Systematically maintain and update information on learners, volunteers, and staff
 - enter assessment information and keep track of learner progress
 - keep a regular schedule for data entry and record updates
 - cross train staff on database entry in order to ensure a smooth transition during staff turnover
- Data includes information about
 - learners
 - volunteers
 - staff
 - donors
 - defined programs – ESL, ABE, Numeracy, GED, Family Literacy, Work skills
 - marketing and outreach efforts
 - community partners
 - stakeholders
 - newsletter and mailing lists, including those for donor and fundraising solicitations
 - budgets, salary, benefits