



## SPCLC chosen as national pilot site for Learner Web

**Web and telephone applications will offer guided support to adults in programs or working independently to improve their basic skills, prepare for the GED, approach college transition, look for employment, or pursue other learning goals**

It is estimated that less **than 10 percent of adult learners** in need of further education are being served by existing classroom programs. Many adults who have never attended programs are interested in working independently to improve their basic skills. Learner Web, developed through Portland State University, is a pioneering effort to provide greater access to ABE services and content to learners throughout the country.

Jen Vanek, coordinator of Learner Web development for SPCLC, said part of the excitement behind development of the project is **“making ABE accessible to a whole new population that we have failed to engage in any substantial way.”** The traditional classroom learning environment does not fully address the needs of many adult learners, a large number of whom prefer self-directed learning using a variety of information gathering and processing methods. Learner Web will enable individuals to pursue educational goals in a self-directed manner addressing diverse needs and learning styles.



Jen Vanek, Learner Web Coordinator

**“Learner Web has the potential for great change in adult education -- changing roles, changing rules, changing relationships and changing responsibilities. Building on our existing strengths -- consortia partners, strong classes, excellent resources -- we can affect a paradigm shift so that the learner manages his/her own learning.”**

**Connie Spinner,  
Washington D.C. State Education Agency,  
ABE & Family Literacy**

Learner Web is built around carefully developed **Learner Plans**, covering such areas as basic ESL, GED preparation, transition to post-secondary, or searching for work. Each plan has multiple steps that can be completed online. Students can self-test to determine which steps they need to complete.

Students have their own online workspaces and e-portfolios and can give permission for their teachers, tutors or other helpers to view the workspace and give feedback. **This helps provide a multidimensional learning environment allowing students to manage their own learning.**

Vanek notes that **Learner Web is a “flexible, customizable, self-paced, self-directed learning program. It provides real time support for learners – either local or remote,”** utilizing trained tutors and helpers.

Benefits for teachers include facilitating cooperative curriculum development across many communities. It is compatible in blended education and distance education models. **In addition, coursework hours are reportable and can satisfy NRS guidelines.**

Initial SPCLC partners include the Hubbs Center, Minnesota Literacy Council, Lao Family Community, and Rondo Community Outreach Library. Vanek and other key staff are attending a series of national trainings for all Learner Web pilot sites, while they begin to develop learner plans. Initial local plan development is focusing on intensive Functional Work English modules and citizenship preparation. However, St. Paul students will also be able to access learner plans developed by pilot sites around the U.S.

