

# Aspire

LEARN MORE. EARN MORE.

## Why Change ABLE to Aspire?

The Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) program has been highly successful in Ohio for more than 50 years. Nonetheless, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) believes the program needs greater outreach and a fresh appeal to adults' desires for personal and professional success.

Progress in this area is critical not only to individual success, but also to the state's economic vitality. Estimates are that 65 percent of the state's workforce will require training certifications beyond a high school diploma by 2025. Adult learners stand to benefit most from the job readiness that high school and vocational credentialing demonstrate to employers throughout the state.

In April of 2017, the ABLE name was changed to Aspire to better reflect the modern realities of educational needs today. Adult educational programs in Ohio will carry the name Aspire and accompanying tagline, "Learn more. Earn more."

## Name Change Process

Last year, ODHE worked with Miami University students to assess adult learners' perceptions and attitudes about adult education programs and efforts. A series of meetings with eight different focus groups took place, with program participants from four distinct regions of Ohio. That assessment led educational leaders to believe that many adult learners could be better reached through some subtle, but significant changes in messaging and approach.

## Miami's Student Research Determined:

- Ohio adults without a high school credential were reluctant to enroll in adult education programs, not wanting others to know they had not already received their high school diploma.
- Recent immigrants enrolled to learn English and American culture and to redefine themselves after success in their home country.
- Program participants were confused about what ABLE is, and what it can do for them.
- Finding information online is difficult; program participants are the best referral source.
- The program name did not reflect the capabilities of students, and students didn't feel pride in the ABLE program.
- The participant pool saw a lack of awareness and the name of the program as barriers to enrollment.

## Uniform Identity, Unique Development

Miami University students tested a variety of names, determined to reflect a common sense of pride among students and faculty while acknowledging the wide variety of participants' goals. The new name reflects the ambition to set a goal of high value unique to the individual. The name provides an inspiring call to action understood by the participant, and based on a time-tested roadmap to success.

Adult learners have unique aspirations that can be achieved through competencies and certifications earned at their local program site. But a simple name change is not the single solution to increased enrollment. Program sites will use the name change to spearhead outreach efforts directed at adult learners who will benefit most from the services available.



Department of  
Higher Education

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