



### What is Adult Basic Education?

Adult Basic Skills Development (ABSD) addresses the foundational education needs of learners ranging from basic literacy through preparation to complete the GED. Instruction in speaking, listening, reading, writing, math, and computer literacy is provided at multiple levels. Core skills and knowledge are taught with an emphasis on making connections to how these skills relate to responsibilities of various life roles: parent and family member, worker, and citizen. ABSD includes the following instructional programs:

- **English as a Second Language (ESL)**

ESL classes instruct students with limited English language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English with an emphasis on using these skills in the contexts of family, work, and community situations.

- **Adult Basic Education (ABE)**

Students with skills below ninth-grade level develop basic skills in reading, writing, math, and computer literacy through direct and computer-assisted instruction, as well as peer-tutoring. Instruction integrates core skills and knowledge with their application in various life contexts and roles such as worker, family member, and community member.

- **Adult Secondary Education (GED)**

Students assessed at a ninth grade level or higher enroll in GED classes to prepare for the five GED exams which include Language Arts: Writing, Language Arts: Reading, Social Studies, Science, and Math. Instruction is provided through direct classroom instruction, computer-assisted instruction and peer tutoring.

- **Basic Skills Upgrade (BSU)**

BSU is designed for persons who have a high school diploma or GED, but who need to brush up reading, math, or writing skills to qualify for a Work Based Education program.

- **Special Education**

Special Education services are provided for students with disabilities eligible under the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Persons eligible under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) also receive services.

### 1. Why should we educate inmates?

A recently passed amendment to the Oregon Constitution (Measure 17) requires that inmates, “work as hard as the taxpayers who provide for their upkeep” and “...to be fully engaged in productive activity if they are to successfully re-enter society with practical skills and viable work ethic...”.

According to a national literacy study, illiteracy among prisoners is the highest of any segment of the American population. To meet the Oregon mandate, the gap between the inmates’ education and work skills at the time of entering the correctional system and those required by the current workforce must be narrowed. Utilizing the time of incarceration to this end is a better investment of taxpayer dollar than idleness or other non-productive activity.

### 2. What percentage of inmates have educational needs?

Of all inmates entering DOC, only 25% completed a high school diploma through traditional education prior to incarceration. Of the remaining 75%, 32% had completed a GED in an alternative education program. The remaining 43% had no credential prior to entering DOC. Almost one in five cannot read at a functional level. In addition, three out of every four inmates are not functionally competent in math.

### 3. Are inmates required to go to school?

Oregon law (ORS 421.084) requires the establishment of an education program for all individuals in the custody of Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) who do not have a high school diploma or equivalency, except those who are:

- Sentenced to less than one year
- Sentenced to life
- Sentenced to death
- Developmentally disabled

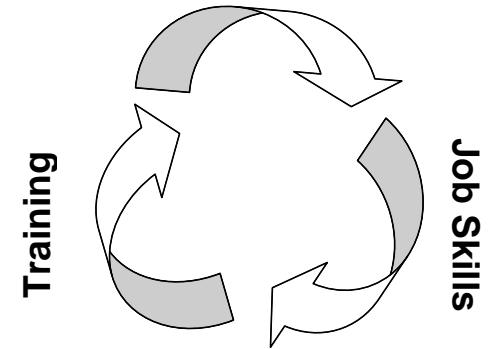
Also, inmates who score below an 8th grade equivalency in reading on standardized tests (i.e. <230 on CASAS reading) are required to participate.

*“Problems cannot be resolved at the same level of thinking that created them”.*  
– Albert Einstein

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### Education



# Workforce Development

Transitional Services Division

Practicing on the inside the  
behaviors that produce good citizens  
on the outside.

