



# MPAEA STRATEGIC PLAN

Developed in 1999

## Mission Statement

The mission of Mountain Plains Adult Education Association is to support and promote lifelong learning in the Mountain Plains Region. In order to achieve this mission, the association:

- Promotes and provides professional development opportunities for adult educators,
- Publishes and distributes relevant information about lifelong learning,
- Supports and strengthens member associations within the region,
- Seeks and fosters realistic and innovative approaches to lifelong learning,
- Creates and facilitates a forum for futuristic planning.

## Vision Statement

In the belief that only an informed, vigorous, and vigilant people sustain and perpetuate our democratic way of life-

In the recognition that lifelong learning is essential for the optimum development of each individual's capacity to perfect skills, to increase social understanding and effectiveness, and to enrich living, and-

In the knowledge that lifelong learning affords the means for seeking new and improved methods of achieving these ideals and objectives-

Now, therefore, we who subscribe to these concepts seek to develop improved programs of adult education through the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association.

## From the President

Strategic Planning is a process by which an organization creates a unifying vision of its purpose and establishes objectives and strategies for realizing that vision. The plan should be a living document that, once established, has the flexibility to yield to the needs and priorities of the Association. It should provide the motivation and direction to stimulate and guide the Association for years to come.

Strategic planning has been a focus of the Mountain Plains Adult Education Association for most of the last decade. The current plan presented in this document is a result of an activity conducted by the MPAEA Board during the July, 1998, board meeting. Using strategic planning material that had its beginnings during the July 1990 board meeting and follow-up documents from July 1993, this current planning document was built upon a firm foundation from these plans.

As the table of contents reflects, care has been given to ensure that the issues and activities in this plan address current, critical issues related to Adult Education throughout the MPAEA region. With a strong commitment to improved services to our membership and positive growth for the Association in general, this plan outlines a systematic process for reaching goals and ensuring a positive and productive future. It provides an organizational commitment to common purposes and vision that produces the synergy needed to embrace rather than resist change.

The Past-President's Think Tank, 1998, provided critical input and the recommendations from the Think Tank are woven throughout the plan in appropriate order. Critical issues in adult education reflect not only MPAEA regional concerns but give national and even international perspectives.

This is not a plan to be taken lightly nor should it be disregarded as the "changing of the guard" occurs annually. The challenge presented to future leadership of MPAEA is to use this plan as a living document to be implemented, improved, and updated as times and people's needs change. It should be reviewed annually and modified as needed. I believe this plan provides the foundation and direction that supports quality adult education opportunities for all people who live within the MPAEA boundaries and even beyond.

## REVIEW OF THE PRESIDENT'S THINK TANK – 1998

Beaver Creek, Colorado

Funding shortages and finding reductions have become leading issues for adult education programs throughout the eight-state region. Funding has never been extremely high and all indications are that it will not increase in the near future.

Because of the lack of funding, programs are being asked to develop cooperative working relationships with other agencies, organizations and programs, thus employing resources from all parts of the community.

An increased trend toward more accountability in program development and program spending will require more and more defensible data. “Feel-good” evaluations simply will not cut it anymore.

A successful program of the future must address the whole person concept. This is an issue which has long been talked about and discussed in theory, both for the traditional young student and the older nontraditional adult student. Programs must address learning disabilities, childcare, domestic violence, and foreign cultures.

Educational institutions must address the need for alternative delivery of educational offerings. In addition to correspondence courses, the public are now demanding televised educational courses and courses through the Internet.

More and more immigrants from more and more countries present an even greater diversity in student populations. In the United States, 32 million people speak a language other than English – a 38% increase since 1980. Programs must address student's needs to preserve their *traditional* ways while teaching *new* ways.

Welfare reform, changed immigration laws, jobs requiring high school credentials, etc. have increased pressure on students. Programs need to recreate the thrill of learning and help students overcome barriers to reach previously unattainable goals.

Programs must review the current standards and decide if local, state, and/or federal standards are helping or hindering student advancements in education.

Lack of funding will affect institutions offering adult education programs in the future. Educators need to be aware of legislation that may push adult education further and further out of the mainstream.

Adult educators should address the need for more literacy programs in correctional situations. According to the National Institute for Literacy, only approximately one-half of the inmates of correctional institutions have graduated from high school. Additionally, 70% of those inmates scored in the lowest literacy levels, and while 11% were determined to have learning disabilities, only 7-10% received literacy education.

Adult educators need to strengthen associations through better marketing, more participation, and an increase in the number of memberships.

Recommendations resulting from the Think Tank include:

- a. revision of the strategic plan,
- b. a marketing plan which would include an updated video and/or other educational tools,
- c. more collaborative efforts between adult education, other agencies and the work place,
- d. expansion of the website,
- e. creation of a certificate for conference participation.

## MPAEA STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE - 2006-2007

Submitted for review by Patricia J. Thorpe, Past President  
Reviewed, updated, and adopted by MPAEA Board, Summer Board Meeting 2006

In 1998 the MPAEA Board of Directors adopted seven categories for goal setting and planning that were recommended by the Think Tank attendees. These categories still exist and are revised each year to represent the current needs of the organization.

**Procedure:** The Past President submits the current Strategic Plan to the Board members at the annual post-conference board meeting. The Board reviews, revises, and adopts the Plan. The Strategic Planning Committee, led by the past president, takes responsibility for carrying out the plan, reviewing progress, and making suggestions for changes.

**Future:** At the 2006 Winter Board Meeting, it was determined that in 2007 an “Issues Session” should be held to review the Strategic Plan and gather information from the general membership on the direction of the organization. At the following Summer Board Meeting, the input will be used to write a new Strategic Plan.

**OBJECTIVE I:** Mountain Plains Adult Education Association will provide professional development opportunities for its members.

**Strategy:** Fiscal Responsibility

**Action Plan:** *Identify ways to reduce costs while still continuing to offer services, scholarships, and awards to the membership. Assure that annual conference financial report is presented and membership dues from the annual conference are available at the summer Board meeting following the conference. Ensure a complete financial statement and dispersal of funds is available at the pre-conference Board meeting the following year.*

**Timeline:** Fiscal year.

**Strategy:** Networking

**Action Plan:** *Continue regional divisions for professional development activities and suggest topical divisions for professional development activities. To be studied by the Professional Development Committee.*

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Quality Conferences

**Action Plan:** *Continue with the standards established. Involve State Association members to encourage new membership in MPAEA.*

**Timeline:** Implemented by Host State Conference Committee annually.

**Strategy:** Credential Review

**Action Plan:** *Continue to provide a certificate of participation for conference. Make University credit available at each conference. Implemented by the host state*

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** New Members to MPAEA

**Action Plan:** *Each year provide an informational meeting and/or activities at the annual conference to welcome new members. Implemented by Host State Conference Committee. Provide MPAEA pins to each new member at the new members' event.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Provide “New Members” tables during the luncheon at the conference. Provide scholarship applications and pins at these tables for all new members. Provide a form letter from the President to each new member.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**OBJECTIVE II:** Create an awareness of the benefits of MPAEA membership.

**Strategy:** Dues

**Action Plan:** *Establish a reasonable dues structure. Ensure brochure is updated, available on the Web, and includes current membership costs.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss dues structure at Summer Board '07.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Membership Participation

**Action Plan:** *Encourage the membership to submit articles to the newsletter and the Journal. Promote MPAEA as an organization at the annual conference at each state's association conference.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Work to make the organization Web site accessible and friendly to members and prospective members.

**Timeline:** Complete by Summer Board 2007.

**Strategy:** Membership Growth

**Action Plan:** *Each State Association should work to increase MPAEA membership.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Continue to include complimentary membership at each conference registration. Each State Association increase membership by 10%.

**Timeline:** Annually. Discuss at each Summer Board Meeting.

**Strategy:** Marketing

**Action Plan:** *The Board member from each state should promote the benefits of membership, i.e. scholarships, awards, journal, newsletter, etc. plus encourage attendance at annual conference.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Research the possibility of submitting membership and paying dues electronically. Ensure State Associations have links to MPAEA on their Web sites.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Diversity

**Action Plan:** *Encourage and seek gender, ethnic, and occupational diversity by developing a wide variety of learning opportunities at conferences and in professional development. Include ABE, GED, Higher Education, Community Education, Continuing Education, Family Literacy, Corrections, Human Resources, ESOL, LD, Labor and Human Services and students.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Membership Committee will study the methods of implementation. Continue to hold a student track at each conference.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Survey of Membership

**Action Plan:** *President-elect will develop a short survey of interests and needs to be distributed at the conference. Continue to distribute survey during luncheon event and collect it at that time.*

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**OBJECTIVE III:** MPAEA will become a visible, effective influence addressing issues related to adult and continuing education.

**Strategy:** Voice in Current Issues

**Action Plan:** *Provide information regarding adult education to legislators from each region. Legislative Committee should use Web site to inform members on issues and how to address their representatives. Continue to award the Legislator of the Year in host conference state.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Create a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) list accessible on the Web for each member state.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** **Support for State Associations**  
**Action Plan:** *List all affiliated associations on the MPAEA brochure, on the Web site, and in the newsletter. Provide leadership or mentoring opportunities to State Associations as requested.*  
**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** **Collaborations**  
**Action Plan:** *Share resources and create joint activities with other adult education and/or related groups. Offer "Best Practices" roundtable discussions at conferences. Include with critical issues forum.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Invite Secretaries from each member State Organization to attend conference. Disseminate a letter to negotiate a swap of waived conference fees between organizations (???)  
**Timeline:** Annually by membership and Host State Conference Committee.

**OBJECTIVE IV:** MPAEA will enhance and improve processes and mechanisms relative to information sharing and publications.

**Strategy:** **Journal of Adult Education**  
**Action Plan:** *Assure a quality juried publication by critiquing and analyzing the Journal's policies and procedures.*  
**Timeline:** Twice yearly.

**Strategy:** **Newsletter**  
**Action Plan:** *Identify ways to maintain low cost, but with the same high quality. Encourage members to submit articles about current happenings and best practices in education. Ensure the newsletter can be used as a resource by members.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Ensure electronic version available on Web. Provide access to current issue to members only through the Web.  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Create a section of the newsletter that includes professional development activities and grant/job opportunities. To be implemented by the Professional Development Committee.  
**Timeline:** Ongoing – Review at Summer Board 2007.

**Strategy:** **Listserv**  
**Action Plan:** *Improve the accuracy and size of an unpublished Listserv, making it more viable and useful for periodic messages to the membership.*  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Keep the Listserv and use it to disseminate one idea at a time to avoid people ignoring the information.  
**Timeline:** Review again at Summer Board meeting 2007.

**Strategy:** **Web site**  
**Action Plan:** *Include by-laws, membership form, Board minutes, treasurer's report, etc. The president and/or appropriate board members may propose changes. Implemented by the Executive Board.*  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Use the Web site as a resource. Develop a bulletin board to include professional development, grant/job opportunities, and best practices. To be implemented as the Web site develops by the Professional Development Committee.  
**RECOMMENDATION:** Maintain hot links to State Associations, national organizations, NW LINCS, etc. Senior Board Members should submit updates on State Association contact changes.  
**Timeline:** Review again at Summer Board meeting 2007.

**Strategy:** **Interstate Links**  
**Action Plan:** *Exchange newsletters among states. Create workshops within the states — invite members from other states. Executive Board to attend state conferences.*  
**RECOMMENDATION:** A formal request from the President of MPAEA should go to each State Association President to request exchanged postings of newsletters.  
**Timeline:** Review at Summer Board 2007.

**OBJECTIVE V:** Enhance the image of Mountain Plains Adult Education Association.

**Strategy:** Advocate

**Action Plan:** *Take a public position on issues and/or legislation regarding adult education. Keep track of pertinent adult education issues; have a session at conference on critical issues with legislators.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Identify a legislative chair/representative from each State Association.

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Education

**Action Plan:** *MPAEA Board members will become leaders in educating the public regarding issues and be a source of information to legislators, other members, and state organizations.*

**Timeline:** Ongoing; review again in 2007.

**Strategy:** Resource

**Action Plan:** *Become a resource for problem solving and promote opportunities for networking and information exchanges through the Web site, newsletter, and small group discussions at conferences.*

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** Leadership

**Action Plan:** *Become recognized as leaders in the field of adult education. Highlight innovative programs and share best practices in the newsletter. Publish teacher successes/awards in MPAEA and State Association newsletters and/or on the Web site. Assign to senior Board members.*

**Timeline:** Ongoing by all members to make their contributions to education known.

**Strategy:** Student Achievements

**Action Plan:** *Publish student successes in the newsletter. Utilize community newspapers to publicize the success of local adult learners. Present MPAEA student of the year and NAEHS inductees at the conference annually.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Expand the number of NAEHS programs in the region. Highlight NAEHS on the Web site by including photos and bios of students inducted into NAEHS.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Bring “success story” students to conference to make presentations or to be on a panel of GED/ABE students.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Establish a committee specifically for promoting student achievement.

**Timeline:** Ongoing – Review at Summer Board 2007.

**OBJECTIVE VI:** Mountain Plains Adult Education Association will improve services to member states.

**Strategy:** Support and Stability

**Action Plan:** *Provide support to member State Associations by having a representative of the Executive Council attend conferences. Continue to provide a state professional development scholarship to individuals from each state to attend training program or conference.*

**RECOMMENDATION:** Include a one-page member’s benefit information sheet on the Web site.

**Timeline:** Ongoing – Review at Summer Board 2007.

**OBJECTIVE VII:** Mountain Plains Adult Education will take a leadership role regionally and nationally.

**Strategy:** Legislation

**Action Plan:** Educate members on the impact of current state and national legislation issues and concerns.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Continue legislative advocacy efforts at each conference. Ensure pertinent information and guest speakers who are informed on legislative issues at each conference

**Timeline:** Ongoing.

**Strategy:** MPAEA/Adult Education Connections

**Action Plan:** Formalize connections with national education associations and consider supporting attendance of the president-elect or president at selected national conferences.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss which groups MPAEA wants to support, e.g., COABE, AAACE, NAASLN, NCFL and/or others.

**Timeline:** Ongoing – Review at Summer Board 2007.

**Strategy:** Professional Development Training

**Action Plan:** Publicize professional training opportunities sponsored by the MPAEA membership states. Use e-mail to disseminate current information. Encourage members to apply for professional development scholarships to attend such training programs.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Board members to highlight upcoming training opportunities with contact information and include in newsletter reports.

**Timeline:** Ongoing – Review at Summer Board 2007.