



Learners as Leaders for Stronger Communities

Renewing Participatory Learning, Learner Leadership, and U.S. Adult Foundational Education

A Working Paper by Paul Jurmo, Ed.D.

March 27, 2023

Contents

This new 100-page document:

- traces the history of two intertwined concepts in U.S. adult foundational education (“AFE,” aka adult literacy or basic skills programs) from the 1980s to now: participatory (aka learner-centered) education and adult learner leadership development;
- identifies potential benefits and challenges of participatory models and learner leadership activities;
- proposes actions that stakeholders (community-level AFE advocates and other supporters of AFE) can take to create more effective, community-oriented AFE systems that have participatory practices and learner leadership as key features.

Audiences and Purposes

This document is presented to AFE stakeholders (AFE practitioners, learners, and supporters) who are:

- interested in learning more about participatory (learner-centered) models of adult foundational education and adult learner leadership development; and/or
- working to create more effective, community-oriented AFE systems. Those systems would use evidence-informed strategies to expand and strengthen the purposes, content, and reach of AFE. Systems would be designed to more effectively help more learners and communities manage the opportunities and challenges they encounter in work, family, civic, and lifelong learning social contexts.

The Author

This is the latest in a series of documents written since 2017 by Paul Jurmo (<https://pauljurmo.info>) to provide resources in support of AFE systems reform. He welcomes dialogue about how this new Working Paper – and the diverse models described in it -- might be adapted and used.

To access this Working Paper, visit <http://bit.ly/3TQJEu5> .

For further information, email pjurmo@comcast.net