The material in this chapter is presented as supplementary information that might prove useful in addressing issues related to literacy information in Nevada.

MODEL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A single, most relevant document was discovered during the initial development of this publication. In 2004, Kathy Polis of Strategic Training and Resources, Inc. (11529 Southampton Court, Fredericksburg, VA 22407), through the Nevada Department of Education, published the "Nevada Needs Assessment for Adult Education and Literacy." The details of this resource are set forth under Chapter 5, Resource Sites. Several aspects of this needs assessment would be extremely helpful to anybody working on proposals for funding, presentations, or planning. The explanations and narrative approach to describing the data is well-developed and would serve as an excellent model for making a compelling case for the need for literacy improvement in Nevada.

SUPPLY / DEMAND ANALYSIS

As a word of caution for those not familiar with Nevada's population dynamics: while, ordinarily, there might be a certain theoretical merit to the idea of developing a formula such as the following to determine unserved needs, Nevada's diverse and complex demographics make that paradigm unrealistic:

+ The number of persons who need literacy education
- Minus the number of persons receiving literacy instruction
= Should equal the number of persons still needing the instruction to become literate

Such Nevada events as the following three cause sizeable and immediate increases or decreases in the population, in general, and in the non-literate population, specifically. They impact our relatively small population to such a degree that predictive models do not appear to have any longitudinal integrity or use. As examples: 1) Every new major hotel casino on the Las Vegas Strip attracts approximately 5,000 new employees, where English proficiency is not a prerequisite for most jobs. 2) Largely as a result of Nevada's tourist industry, whole new towns grow up or old town populations mushroom radically. Coyote Springs, Wendover, Mesquite, Pahrump, and Winnemucca Ranch are a few examples. 3) Rural populations, including the non-literate, fluctuate significantly in response to the price of gold or gasoline, or to State or Federal decisions to locate or remove facilities there.

For this reason, straight use of supply / demand statistics should prove more useful than attempting to manipulate them in some kind of formula designed to show empirically that a need is in the process of being met.

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