



TEXAS Adult & Family Literacy QUARTERLY

Volume 14, No. 2

April 2010

GED

A Stepping Stone to Success

Beyond the GED

Transitions to Postsecondary Education & Training

by Mary Helen Martinez, Emily Miller Payne, and Lewis Madhlangobe

Preparing GED Graduates for Postsecondary Opportunities

Are your GED (General Educational Development) graduates prepared for successful transition to postsecondary education? According to the Nellie Mae Foundation, among GED graduates who do enter postsecondary education, the vast majority drop out or stop within one year, with very few attaining any sort of credential. The income differential, however, between individuals with a GED and those with an associate or bachelor's degree is significant (Nellie Mae Education Foundation, 2008). Moreover, some research shows that while postsecondary credentials are important for short-term employability, "educational programs need to provide ample support, advising, and clear career road maps to help students continue to make their way to and from and back again to educational opportunities in order to continue to advance their earnings over time" (Nellie Mae Education Foundation, 2008, p.2). In this sense, programs supporting GED students lay the framework for ways of thinking that can support students well beyond the ABE (Adult Basic Education) classroom.

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in 2008, specifically address what knowledge and skills students must possess in order to be successful in entry-level college courses, as well as in certificate programs. The Texas CCRS contains subject matter in four areas: (a) English/Language Arts, (b) Mathematics, (c) Science, and (d) Social Studies. The second section of the CCRS, the cross-disciplinary standards, helps educators demystify college academic culture by identifying those cross-cutting knowledge and skills that help students make connections between the four subjects. Therefore, the cross-disciplinary standards help teachers develop in their students the ability to apply those learning skills from CCRS across the different contents, contexts, and subject matter. The cross-disciplinary standards outline for teachers the skills and knowledge their students need to solve problems at college and in the workplace (Goodman, Rao & Spohn, 2008; THECB, 2008). The cross-disciplinary

continued on page 2



Beyond the GED, continued from page 1

standards measure two main skills in students—the cognitive and the foundational skills—and help teachers develop these skill sets, both of which cut across disciplines. The key cognitive strategies promote intellectual curiosity, reasoning, problem solving, academic behaviors, work habits, and academic integrity in the students. Foundational skills include proficiencies that students should be able to transfer and apply across disciplines. This involves reading, writing, conducting research; understanding and using data; and using technology (Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, 2008). Once fully implemented, the CCRS will allow for alignment between the public secondary and higher education curriculums thus creating a seamless transition between high school and college or the workforce. Adult education programs may use the Texas CCRS as a framework to guide instruction.

Adult Education Transitions Programs

The field of ABE has started to blend the process of transitions within individual programs. According to Joost (2007) as cited in *Literacy Links* (2007), ABE practitioners are beginning to address the transition process in local programs. Articles in *Literacy Links* (now called *Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly*) feature practitioners describing their local programs' transition activities beyond the GED. Practitioners describe challenges, rewards, and suggestions for helping ABE, ESL (English as a Second Language) and GED students make successful transitions. Some challenges include student anxiety and negative prior experiences. GED students often come from groups or cultures with historically low rates of postsecondary education. Some rewards include specific curricula and systems addressing seamless transitions. It is a given that the content knowledge and skills need to be addressed specifically by increasing the rigor in the core subject areas and by employing content experts. However, what can be integrated in our classrooms to promote successful academic behaviors and assist our students as they transition to postsecondary programs? Teachers may begin by integrating instruction in academic behaviors in the classroom.

Academic Behaviors

There are certain academic behaviors that a successful student exhibits to navigate postsecondary requirements. According to the THECB College and Career Readiness Standards, the academic behaviors that help students succeed in postsecondary education are: (a) self-monitor learning needs and seek assis-

tance when needed; (b) use study habits necessary to manage academic pursuits and requirements, (c) strive for accuracy and precision; and (d) persevere to complete and master tasks. Dembo (2005) describes successful students as those who use a variety of learning strategies for accessing and using knowledge, who can motivate themselves, and who can adjust their behaviors when learning does not occur. Successful students will self-regulate and will focus on their motivation and goals. These students recognize when they are off course, they use different strategies to acquire information, they are persistent and can manage their time, and they organize their physical and social environments to keep focused. Such successful students will adjust to different learning conditions. Additionally, students who succeed in postsecondary education:

- understand that goal setting is critical.
- are able to acquire new knowledge by using strategies in reading, writing, note taking, and studying.
- manage their time accordingly to fit their responsibilities and their commitments.
- possess the organizational skills necessary to succeed in college by using calendars and prioritizing and spending time every day studying.

Educators agree that critical thinking is essential for success in college and in life (Sellers, Dochen & Hodges, 2005). The literature reports that students who demonstrate the ability to construct logical arguments and ask probing questions can apply critical thinking (Buchard & Swerdzewski, 2009). ABE/GED educators therefore, should integrate classroom opportunities that promote critical and creative thinking. Among the numerous teaching strategies that promote critical thinking are using technology for action research; project and problem-based instruction; and writing with reflection. Adult educators must seek new ways to challenge students to solve problems; help students learn reasoning skills; and provide assistance for deeper learning so that GED students can seamlessly transition to and succeed in postsecondary education. Teachers can commit to reviewing and integrating the Texas CCRS emphasizing the cross-disciplinary standards.

Lesson planning developed on the standards (CCRS) will help teachers measure the presence or absence of the necessary skills. Teachers may also seek professional development opportunities that promote

continued on page 5

GED Success – It’s All About Transitions

by *Harriet Vardiman Smith, TCALL Director*

Earning the General Educational Development (GED) credential has long been a goal of many adult learners served in adult and family literacy programs. Even for many adults who enter your programs as beginning literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, earning the GED is a long-term goal.

But for many years, the economic benefit of the GED credential in itself has been a subject of controversy. In a national panel discussion back in October 2006, four distinguished panelists focused on that question, based on a review by John Tyler of eight research papers on the GED. Several of these papers were authored by John Tyler, Richard Murnane, and John Willett, researchers with the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), whose work has formed much of what is known about the economic benefits of the GED. For more information on that topic, see the Economic Impact of the GED page of TCALL’s website. www-tcall.tamu.edu/litresources/gedres.html

A consensus has arisen in recent years that the primary economic benefit of earning the GED credential is realized when adults use the GED as a stepping stone to postsecondary education or workforce training, rather than as an educational end in itself. That consensus is reflected in the high proportion of articles in this GED-theme issue that focus on supporting adult learners in making those transitions.

One important resource in supporting those transitions is The National College Transitions Network (NCTN - www.collegetransition.org). Since its establishment in 2001, NCTN has brought together the work of educators, professional developers, policy makers, and researchers concerned with effective transitions to postsecondary education for GED and ESL graduates and other non-traditional learners. The work of NCTN was prominently featured in the April 2007 issue of TCALL’s quarterly publication, then titled Literacy Links.

We extend our thanks to Cassandra Brown, Program Manager for Marketing and Public Relations for the GED Testing Service, who allowed us to reprint the article about their new plans for a comprehensive GED initiative, which you’ll find on page 17.

And for our readers in the world of family literacy, we are pleased to feature an article by Dr. Deborah Stedman, who writes on the final report of the National Early Literacy Panel’s (NELP) synthesis of research on early literacy development.

We hope you will find this issue of The Quarterly to be a valuable source of ideas and inspiration as you strive to better serve students preparing for the GED test – and as you help them prepare for those critical next steps beyond the GED.

In This Issue

Beyond the GED - Transitions to Postsecondary Education & Training <i>by Mary Helen Martinez, Emily Miller Payne, and Lewis Madhlangobe</i>	1	Adult Education in the 21st Century: Skills for Successful Transitions <i>by Federico Salas-Isnardi</i>	10
GED Success - It’s All About Transitions <i>by Harriet Vardiman Smith</i>	3	Transitioning + Partnerships = Success <i>by Dean Ransdell</i>	12
Teaching Math to Adults <i>by Anthony Chan</i>	4	Journey to GED and Beyond <i>by Dr. R. Shane Creel</i>	13
To Calc or Not to Calc: That is the Question <i>by Marion Moore</i>	6	GED Testing in Spanish <i>by Martha Dorina Carrillo</i>	14
GED Math Instruction: Getting it Right <i>by Barbara Beard</i>	7	Developing Early Literacy in Young Children: Parents Can Make the Difference <i>by Dr. Deborah Stedman</i>	15
Transitions to Postsecondary Education & Training <i>by Connie Seibert and Sarah Seidel</i>	8	National Needs Alter Plans for GED Test, 5th Edition	17

Teaching Math to Adults

by Anthony Chan

Teaching mathematics to adults is never an easy task. One of the first things we must keep in mind is that mathematics is the most feared subject in schools. Adult students give many common reasons for their fears:

- They are too old to learn math.
- They did not have a strong foundation at the elementary level.
- They may have to start over and relearn everything.
- Time is against them, and they don't have enough of it.
- Math is too abstract—they can't relate it to the real world.
- They are dissatisfied with being unable to grasp something quickly.
- They don't know how to study math.
- They just can't learn math. It's too hard.
- Learning math requires too many things to remember.
- They feel that they did not inherit THE math genes—only their uncle Joe did.

It might be useful to have your students spend a little time thinking about their past math experiences. A good starting point could be asking them to try to determine when they started having problems with math. Together try to pinpoint their fears. Always keep in mind that their past math burdens, created by their fears, are usually what makes learning mathematics difficult for them. Teachers are not usually fighting against teaching their students numbers but against their students' fears. And if we are aware of their fears, we can help dispel them.

After addressing our students' fears and burdens, we must now address how we teach mathematics. Teaching mathematics is basically an art of motivating and inspiring individuals, while making the complex simple to them. Every part of our lesson should be designed for their learning, so we must attempt to keep students interested using appropriate techniques throughout the entire lesson. To keep our students interested in math and motivated to learn it, we must focus on the following three areas: 1) the beginning of a lesson, 2) how relevant the lesson is to real life, and

3) how much information is given in a lesson and in what way.

Let's start by looking at how we, math teachers, begin our lessons. We may say something like, "Today I will be teaching you about exponents" or maybe, "Today you will be learning about exponents" instead of writing something like 2^5 and saying, "This little 5 is an exponent, and this is what we are going to learn about today." With most students, once they hear the word exponents without seeing it first, automatically what I call their "GREAT WALL OF MATH" shoots up. But if you can first show them what they are about to learn and then name it, then most likely their Great Wall of Math will not shoot up as high.

Math should be related to real life; it was abstracted to help come up with concepts because concepts apply to many real-life situations. For instance, we renamed objects such as pigs and years to "p" and "x" thinking, "Anybody can understand this." But just the opposite occurred: students couldn't see or understand the concept behind a p or an x. Our job as teachers is to show that mathematics derives from the relationships of things in this world—p could mean pigs and x could mean years. We must therefore introduce math at our students' level. In order to bring real-life math to our students, we must step out of the traditional teaching role and become a math facilitator. Since math was discovered—not invented—a math facilitator shows how to discover math. We as teachers of mathematics must learn to think like students. Ask yourself: How would I want to be taught? We must never think that math has to be taught one specific way.

Another area we teachers need to address is how much information we give in one lesson. For example, with the Pythagorean Theorem, there are many skills and concepts students must know in order to solve the problem: addition, subtraction, square roots, exponents, right triangles, solving quadratic equations, and more. When we teach this theorem, we generally try to mention all these facts in one lesson. Instead, we should break down the load of information into chunks, or small sub-lessons. For instance, even before mentioning the name Pythagorean Theorem, we

could first introduce right triangles. Or, if those have already been taught, we could give a quick review of them and have students recognize the sides and the hypotenuse through a few examples and exercises. And again, before mentioning the Pythagorean Theorem, you could give a quick review on solving quadratic equations. We should build up to the lesson by assuring that the students are comfortable with the prerequisites for the lesson. Keep in mind my following "Learning Equation": information overload = limited learning.

Our primary job is to bring mathematics to our students' level and not our students to our mathematics' level. Keeping math at their level means looking for ways to keep their Great Wall of Math as low as possible, and teachers can do this by introducing lectures in both interesting and unthreatening ways, by using real-life applications, and by not overloading them with information.

About the Author

Anthony Chan has been a Grant Services Manager with Texas LEARNS, a subcontractor for Texas Education Agency, since 2003. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Mathematics and a Master of Education degree in Instructional Technology. For the past twenty-seven years, he has taught mathematics from primary to tertiary levels.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

Please give us your feedback on this publication by completing an online reader survey. Visit TCALL's Website (www-tcall.tamu.edu) and look for a home page link to *The Quarterly Reader Survey*, which will be available through May 2010.

Beyond the GED, continued from page 2

critical thinking strategies and include standards. This will lead to more successful transition activities within programs.

References

- Burchard, M. S., & Swerdzewski, P. (2009). Learning effectiveness of a strategic learning course. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 40(1), 14-34.
- Dembo, M.H. & Seli, H. (2008). *Motivation and learning strategies for college success: A self-management approach* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Goodman, S., Rao, D., Spohn, J., & Zafft, C. (2008). The college transition toolkit. NCTN World Education, Inc.
- Joost D. (2007) You Can't Push a Chain: Dos and Don'ts for Successful Postsecondary Program GED Completer Transition. *Literacy Links*. (2007). 11(1). Retrieved from <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/newsletr/pub07.htm>
- Nellie Mae Education Foundation. (2008, May). Transition to college and careers pilot project. Grant publication. Retrieved from http://www.nmefdn.org/uploads/TCC_RFP/Transition%20to%20College%20and%20Careers%20RFP.pdf
- Sellers, D., Dochen, C.W., & Hodges, R. (2005). *Academic transformation: The road to college success*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education
- Texas College & Career Readiness Standards*. (2008). Austin: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (2008, September). College for all Texans; Adult basic education: Aligning adult basic education and postsecondary education. Retrieved August, 1, 2009 from <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/pdf/1628.pdf>

About the Authors

Mary Helen Martinez is Project Director for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Transition Project at Texas State University-San Marcos. She has an M.A. in Developmental and Adult Education from Texas State University.

Emily Miller Payne is Director of the Education Institute and Principal Investigator of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Transition Project at Texas State University-San Marcos. She has an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction: Reading from New Mexico State University, a M.A.T. from New Mexico State University, and a B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin.

Lewis Madhlangobe is Research Specialist for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Transition Project at Texas State University-San Marcos. He has a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Texas State University-San Marcos, an M.A. from IPN Mexico and a B.Ed. in Administration from the University of Zimbabwe.

To Calc or Not to Calc: That is the Question

by Marion Moore

Educators in math at many levels face the question of whether to let students use calculators or not. Many think “not”; they feel students must be able to do the math without calculators. Many think “use them”; they feel when teaching a new concept the teacher wants the student to focus on the new concept and not be hindered with the basics they have never mastered. This article is based on my opinion and not on research. My opinion is the latter; use them. My opinion is based on 47 years of direct experience with students from 1st grade through adult learners. These students include “regular education” students and “special needs” students.

As you know, we are always encountering students at all levels who have never mastered their multiplication facts, who also can't add or subtract with accuracy, and who cringe at the mention of fractions and algebra. What do we do with them? Do we put them in a special class and not advance them until they learn “the basics”? Or, do we move them on and deal with these gaps in their math education? I think we all know the answer to this question. In public school, the pendulum has swung yet again to integrating “special needs” students into regular education classes. In adult education classes, we have all categories of students from those who were “special needs” in school to those who have no problem learning math skills. For various reasons they just didn't finish their public school education. In adult education, we deal with these gaps in their math education. If they are held back until they learn the basics, we lose them. I have found that a big part of being a math teacher is being a good salesman. Not only do you have to teach the math skills, but you have to sell many students on their ability to do the math. Many students come to us with the idea that they can't do math. They must get past this obstacle before they can actually learn what you are trying to teach them.

I allow my adult students to use calculators. If they don't have to struggle with what eight times seven is, they can focus on a higher level concept that is being taught. I have found that they can master the higher level concepts even though they haven't mastered the basics. Once you have built up their self-confidence,

they are more open to harder concepts and do learn them. Even though they are allowed to use calculators, some students choose not to use them or they use them on a very limited basis. Some see the calculator as a security blanket; just knowing it is there lowers their level of stress. The wall they have built up against math starts to crumble. Once this wall is down or weakened considerably, learning of harder concepts can occur. You will hear them say that they didn't think they could do math, but here they are doing it. Self-confidence starts to rise and they start to succeed. No, not all at the same rate. Some pick concepts up quickly, and some need a longer time to “get it.” However, learning is happening and they are staying in the program.

Another question that has been asked concerns the GED (General Educational Development) test. Colleagues as well as students have questioned the use of calculators in class. Students can only use the calculator on part of the test. I have not yet seen a student who was allowed to use a calculator in class have problems on the GED test as a result of dependence on the calculator. Students who haven't passed the test fail because they haven't mastered the higher level concepts, not because they can't do the math without a calculator. I have seen students go into the GED test with greater confidence in their own ability, and I feel that's what gives them the edge on the test. As for those students who “think” they can't pass the test without using a calculator, I put on my salesman's hat and continue building up their self-confidence.

I think students should know how to do the math without a calculator. If given time, the students I teach can eventually figure out what eight times seven is and they can multiply three digits by two digits. However, I choose not to let this time-consuming calculation keep them from learning how to do higher level math. I want them to focus on the new skills instead of on the basic skills that are dragging them down. You must consider where these adult learners are going and how they will be using math in the real world. They will use calculators in the real world to do the math they need to do. If they are going on to college, they will use calculators in the math classes they take. As a

math teacher, I know how to multiply three digits times two digits. However, I am going to use a calculator to do it. Therefore, my opinion is to let my adult learners use a calculator in class.

About the Author

Marion Moore retired from the public school system

after 40+ years as an educator. Her experience included regular education and special education in grades first through eighth, mainly in math. Her experience in adult education came as a director of staff development in a state school facility. She is now teaching adult education, math and ESL, at The Victoria College Adult Education Program in Victoria.

GED Math Instruction: Getting it Right

by Barbara Beard

We are a nation with a numeracy problem. In *American Consumers Can't Add*, Bob Sullivan (2009) states the following: "Just as there is a hidden epidemic of people who are functionally illiterate in our country, there is a big problem (bigger, by my reckoning) with people who can't do basic math. There's no way to function in our society without understanding money, percentages, interest calculation and so on. Yet in a recent government study, less than one in seven American adults ranked 'proficient' in math."

No other subject strikes more fear in the heart of a GED student than math. Adult education students come to GED prep programs with a wide range of math skills. They have often had poor experiences in math classes in high school, middle school, and elementary school. Worse yet, they may have been in one or more other adult education programs where no one was able to "teach" them any math. Consequently, the phobia level is high, often crippling the student in terms of self-confidence and forcing the instructor to spend inordinate amounts of time simply encouraging the student to try to do the work.

To further complicate the instruction process, GED students frequently have "holes" in their math knowledge. For example, they may remember certain aspects of working with fractions, but they don't have the multiplication table memorized. We have learned to take nothing for granted in terms of our students' math knowledge, regardless of what their TABE scores indicate. All too often we've skipped basic material based on the test scores and an analysis of items missed on the TABE, only to find out the student does not remember, or was never taught, how to do long division.

Another matter that frequently rears its ugly head in GED math instruction is the matter of automaticity. In preparing a student to take a timed, standardized test like the GED, it is important to help the student develop automaticity on the basics – adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing. While a GED student may declare verbally that they have the basics down, the real question is whether the basics are "automatic" to the student. Can the student tell you in a second or less that nine times eight equals seventy-two? Can they add two three-digit numbers together in 15 seconds or less? We almost always end up starting at the beginning of our math books where those basics are reviewed and practiced. Many of our students have never had checking accounts. They do not use recipes or measuring instruments when cooking. They've never calculated the amount of interest they will pay in buying an item with credit. The opportunity to practice basic math is simply not present in their daily lives.

One of the ways a GED math instructor can be the most helpful to his/her student, is to show the student how the math can be related to and helpful in their everyday lives. This connection is critical for students to improve their standard of living, obtain better jobs, and pursue further formal education. Unfortunately, this task is often the hardest for the instructor. There is a tendency to get bogged down in the instruction, the procedures, the steps to doing a particular type of math problem, while the student wonders where in the world they will ever use that particular skill again.

The Texas Adult Education Content Standards for

continued on page 8

GED Math Instruction, continued from page 7

Math provide GED math instructors with a road map of sorts not only for preparing students for the GED math test, but also for that critical connection to the use of math in the real world. Divided into 14 strands, which are really just different math skills like “recognize and compare numbers,” the content standards state what students at various levels should be able to do and then provide real life context for the skill. In Strand 4, “Application of Mathematical Operations,” the real life context example at the high intermediate level is “estimate and determine weekly pay based on a consistent, predictable pattern, such as \$5 per hour.”

Getting a GED student through the math portion of the exam is often a daunting task complicated by many factors. Focusing solely on the academics of math in order to get the student through the test shortchanges the student and ultimately does not give the student the true picture of math usage within a real world con-

text. Using the Texas Adult Education Content Standards for Math can assist an instructor in planning lessons that help the student prepare for the GED, while improving that student’s understanding of how math can be used in everyday life.

Reference

Sullivan, B. (December 2009). *Why American Consumers Can’t Add*. The Red Tape Chronicles. <http://redtape.msnbc.com>

About the Author

Barbara Beard has been the Literacy Coordinator at the Maurine Gray Literacy Depot, a branch of Beaumont Public Library System, for the last 10 years. She has an undergraduate degree in business from Texas Woman’s University and a master’s degree in Library Science from the University of North Texas. The Literacy Depot’s staff has successfully tutored a number of students through the GED test since inception of their program in 2001.

Transitions to Postsecondary Education & Training

by Connie Seibert and Sarah Seidel

Students who complete a GED certification are generally non-traditional students who have not received the information and advising regarding college entrance that graduating high school students have. They are intimidated by the college setting. They lack information regarding financial aid. They are deterred by a lack of confidence in their abilities to navigate the process. They don’t realize there are counselors who can help them. They often are not aware of the various certificates or degrees that are available or what these types of jobs really entail, much less the outlook necessary for employment in these fields. They are unprepared for the entrance exams they may need to take to be able to enroll into college level classes, especially the math portion. And most of all, they lack the study skills necessary to succeed in college.

Adult education programs are now being asked to extend their role in educating adult students by preparing them for postsecondary education and training. This is a direct response to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Plan drafted in July 2000 in conjunction with a grant from the Council for Aid to Education/RAND Corporation with strong

support from the state’s educational, business and political communities. The plan is directed at closing educational gaps in Texas as well as between Texas and other states. It was revised in 2006 and has four goals: to close the gaps in student participation, student success, excellence and research (to find more specific information on this plan please see THECB web link <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us> and choose “Closing the Gaps”).

In response to this plan, money has been made available to adult education programs through additional federal funds in adult education. The “Closing the Gaps” includes several priorities, one of which addresses transitions to postsecondary education, and which reads as follows:

Priority 2: Postsecondary Transitions

The purpose of this priority is to assist local adult education programs in successfully transitioning adult secondary education (ASE) students into postsecondary education and job training opportunities. The goal of this priority is to design, implement and document effective strategies that help adults beyond compul-

sory education transition to postsecondary education and employment.

Overview

A high school diploma or equivalency diploma is no longer adequate for 21st century workforce demands. Some form of postsecondary education and training is critical to succeed in the new global economy. This priority supports local efforts to increase the rate at which young adults successfully transition to postsecondary education. Adult education literature indicates that programs have developed a variety of interventions designed to re-engage adults beyond compulsory education to help them obtain both a high school equivalency credential and a postsecondary certificate or degree. There is evidence that program design elements such as, scheduling, educational guidance and counseling, supportive services for students, professional development for staff, enhanced curricula, and linkages with postsecondary education programs improve the ability of adults beyond compulsory education to transition to postsecondary education (Texas Education Agency eGrants).

The State of Texas is also offering a grant to promote transitioning adult education students to higher education and training:

Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students 20010-2011 (IP-AES) will promote successful transition and college success for General Education Development (GED) graduates and re-entering adult learners. Successful IP-AESs will provide academically at-risk students with opportunities to gain skills associated with persistence and success in college (THECB website <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us>, Research and Project Grants).

Austin Learning Academy (ALA) received additional adult education federal funding in December and began a transitions class this January focusing on transitioning adult education students to community college. Students who have completed their GED or who are in the process of testing are offered a three-hour class twice a week and will follow the curriculum below:

Orientation

- Introduction - Class Goals and Materials
- Introduction to ACC (Austin Community College) Website
- Goals and Career Interests - DISCOVER program (on computer)

Financial Aid

- Introduction
- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

Website: Forms and PIN (Personal Identification Number)

- Additional scholarships and resources

ACC 101 – Complete tutorial on computer

Application and Additional Forms

- Fill out Application
- Complete Residency Form
- Copies of GED Certificates

Advising

- ACC Campus Visit
- Scheduling advising session at campuses

Assessment

- Introduction and Test Information
- Test Prep and Practice Tests

Post-Advising

- Secure ACC ID and Email
- Registration for classes
- Orientation (on campus)
- Introduction to Blackboard

Study Skills

- The College Transition
- Time Management

ALA recruited from its current 09-10 students as well as from the 08-09 GED completers. Students maintain a folder with a checklist of the activities to be accomplished. They work individually and in groups on the eight steps and visit ACC campuses once a month. To maintain record keeping, a class site was set up in TEAMS (Texas Educating Adults Management System, the state student data system for adult education) to record contact hours for those students in the system for the current year; those students from previous years are recorded through sign-in sheets and student folders. At the end of the fiscal year, a list of all transition class students, as well as all GED completers will be checked through our collaborating partner at ACC, for status in enrollment and registration.

If you would like more information on ALA's transitions class, please email: ConnieSeibert-connielove_78704@yahoo.com OR [Sarah Seidel-seseidel@aol.com](mailto:SarahSeidel-seseidel@aol.com)

About the Authors

Connie Seibert is the Adult Education Coordinator at Austin Learning Academy.

Sarah Seidel is a GED instructor and conducts the Transitions class at Austin Learning Academy.

Adult Education in the 21st Century: Skills for Successful Transitions

by Federico Salas-Isnardi, TCALL Adult Literacy Specialist

When considering next steps for our GED students, adult educators would do well to understand that no matter how well designed our transitional programs are and how strong the support mechanisms in place, what determines if our students are going to be prepared for the transition is the skills they can take with them to their next step. Whether they come to the adult education class to gain new skills or to enhance the skills they have, and whether their objective is to move on to higher education or to improve their success in the job market, students need from us a strong curriculum which responds to the question, “What are the skills required for success in the 21st century?”

Skills to Succeed in the Workplace of the 21st Century

According to the Executive Summary to the *Reach Higher America* report of the National Commission on Adult Literacy, the United States is the only nation among the 30 industrialized nations of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), where the younger generations are less educated than the generation before (Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy, 2008). As emergent markets develop a highly sophisticated and educated pool of talent, the United States does not have a monopoly on a highly educated workforce. Jobs available to unskilled workers are being lost to the economic crisis and a majority of the new jobs require more education. To succeed in the workplace, a worker in the 21st century needs a command of the basic skills such as reading, writing with proper grammar, and basic math, of course; but basic skills are not enough. Workers today need to exhibit an ability to prioritize their tasks, plan their day, and manage their time and resources; in addition workers must be able to solve problems with creativity and show that they are able to innovate. Employers appreciate teamwork and collaboration and need workers who can make effective use of the tools they are given. In July 2009, The Council of Economic Advisers to the President of the United States issued a report titled “*Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow*.” In it, researchers indicate that employers value workers who can think critically

and solve problems. The report states that a strong concern of the government is the fact that those jobs that are projected to grow in the near future and that pay high wages enabling workers to access the middle class “disproportionately employ workers with education and training beyond the high school level.” (Executive Office of the President, 2009).

Skills to Succeed in Postsecondary Education in the 21st Century

In 2008, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in collaboration with the Texas Education Agency issued a report the “*Texas College and Career Readiness Standards*” detailing the skills needed to succeed in college, identifying standards and performance benchmarks for success. The standards specify the knowledge and skills students must have to succeed in entry (freshman) level courses in postsecondary institutions (THECB, 2008). The report identifies standards to succeed in the same four areas (English, Social Sciences, College Math, and Sciences) that are required in the workplace. These reports and other college readiness standards coincide on the skills students must have to succeed in college: strong English language and grammar skills; an ability to read, write and do research across the curriculum; math skills; and science skills. In addition, students must exhibit higher order thinking skills, an ability to solve problems, construct well-reasoned arguments, take risks, and possess intellectual curiosity or life-long learning skills.

What becomes apparent as one considers the skills needed to succeed in the workplace of the 21st century is that, to a great extent, the skills are the same as those required to succeed in college. As the nation’s competitiveness becomes more dependent on an educated workforce and more jobs require some level of postsecondary education, being prepared for college means being prepared for the workplace and vice versa. To adult education programs concerned about transitioning students to the next level, this means that any transition program helping students prepare for postsecondary training or academic careers is at the same time helping students transition into the

workplace of the 21st century, as long as their curriculum includes 21st century skills.

21st Century Skills

Quite simply, 21st century skills are the combination of skills and knowledge needed to succeed in a variety of settings in the new century, including the workplace and the postsecondary institution. The 21st century skills include a host of new and important literacies as well as cross-disciplinary abilities, soft skills, and life-long learning skills.

Technological Literacy

The ability to understand appropriate technologies, and select the technology appropriate for the task.

Multicultural Literacy

The ability to understand different ways of “seeing the world” across different cultures and to integrate and promote understanding of different groups.

Scientific Literacy

The ability to understand and describe natural phenomena or science issues affecting the community/nation and to read with understanding articles about science in popular media.

Health Literacy

The ability to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Information Literacy

The ability to recognize the need for information and the skills needed to locate, evaluate, and apply it to one’s environment, employment, or learning task.

Economic and Financial Literacy

The ability to make financial decisions appropriate for one’s family and personal situation in different stages of life. The ability to understand how financial decisions can impact the individual or the community.

Visual Literacy

The ability to interpret, evaluate, and convey information made available through images.

If one considers these diverse literacies, it becomes apparent that, at a minimum, literacy in the 21st century is the result of a “well-rounded education” encompassing a lot more than English and math skills. Adult educators must respond to this repeated call to action. It is incumbent upon us to help our students transi-

tion to workplaces and postsecondary programs, but to do that responsibly it is important that we prepare our students with the skills that will make them successful. Some students have a goal to attain a higher education degree; they need the skills to succeed in college; that is, 21st century skills. If students have a goal to transition to employment, today’s economy demands a highly educated workforce and many jobs require some level of postsecondary education. As the Workforce Readiness Initiative report (2007) states, “Competency is no longer the ticket to success in the workforce; it is the price of admission” (p. 5). Our students need those 21st century skills to have a chance to come through the employment front door.

It is time for adult education programs to align our curriculum standards to the standards for college readiness because those standards are standards for admission into the workforce. It is time for adult education programs to teach 21st century skills from the lowest levels of ABE and ESL to prepare students for the future today.

References

- 21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs*. A Report of the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Labor, National Institute of Literacy, and the Small Business Administration. Retrieved from www.21stcenturyskills.org
- Executive Office of the President – Council of Economic Advisers (2009). *Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow*. Retrieved from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/cea/Jobs-of-the-Future/>
- National Alliance of Business (2000). *A Nation of Opportunity: Building America’s 21st Century Workforce*. Washington DC: Department of Labor. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>
- National Commission on Adult Literacy (2008). *Reach higher, America: Overcoming crisis in the U.S. Workforce*. Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy. Retrieved November 30, 2009 from <http://www.nationalcommissiononadulthoodliteracy.org/report.html>
- The Higher Education Coordinating Board and Texas Education Agency (2008). *Texas College and Career Readiness Standards*. Retrieved from www.theccb.state.tx.us (P-16 Initiatives to College Readiness Initiatives)

Transitioning + Partnerships = Success

by Dean Ransdell

Transitioning our adult education students to realms beyond our traditional confines has become a major emphasis in our educational approach. No longer can we be satisfied with high TABE scores and GEDs, but we must push our students beyond that point.

We were able to witness moving beyond that point through the Summer Intensive Program with Texarkana College. Our students attended, they studied, they went to the study labs, and they were thrilled to receive the cash incentives. Above all, 74% enrolled in college.

As I look back at why these students fared so well, I realized that it was the high expectations, structure, and professionalism of the college setting. The students had a timeframe, a calendar for each day's events, mentors, college success support, and a wonderful reward with the cash incentives.

First, having high expectations certainly is not a new concept. However, the end results of college, vocational/certificate training, and/or workforce are critical pieces in our approach. We cannot remain satisfied that a student makes a gain on the TABE or even receives a GED. When we first encounter them, we must welcome them into a community of learners who learn how to believe in themselves.

Second, let us consider structure. Granted, one could quickly argue that all programs have structure. Yes, they do, but are they tailored to meet the needs of the students or the program? In the past, we felt that students succeeded with a program that was open-ended as to better meet their changing needs. We were here for them when they needed us. In many of our satellite and/or rural sites, we may still operate under this premise because of many factors. However, we have invoked managed enrollment in all our classes based on the 60-hour rule. We have the same enrollment date, the second Tuesday of each month, in all of our day and evening classes. We have an opportunity for makeup hours and a set rule for re-entering if students do not make the 60 hours.

In the Summer Intensive Program, a planning calendar kept them on track. Study lab scheduling followed

classes because of transportation concerns. Structure was considered at every point.

Third, the professionalism that students encounter at the college level or on the job must be a part of what we do each day in our adult education classes. Students know what is expected of them and that nothing less is acceptable. There is a wealth of information on college success for the non-traditional student. Incorporating some of these ideas is crucial. Our class environment should mirror the highest level possible: professionalism, respect, and success.

Having the opportunity to partner with postsecondary education is a win-win situation. Having the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board supporting adult education through grants to advance our students is even better. We have a great opening to move forward.

About the Author

Dean Ransdell is Director of the Bowie-Cass Adult Education Cooperative at the Texarkana Independent School District.

**Don't miss the
LIBRARY
resources
beginning on
page 19
and FREE
resources
that begin on
page 22!**

Journey to GED and Beyond

by Dr. R. Shane Creel

For many who have just earned their GED, the certificate represents a significant milestone along their educational journey. Although, their journey may have encountered some roadblocks along the way such as “poor performance in school, lack of discipline or effort, undiagnosed learning disabilities, a dislike for their educational environment, boredom with traditional learning models, teen pregnancy, lack of parental support, or drug and alcohol addictions” (Beltran, 2002), their ability to identify and overcome their individual pitfalls afford them the many educational opportunities enjoyed by their high school graduating class such as military education programs, vocational training, and postsecondary education.

A high school diploma or GED certificate is required by all branches of the United States military to enlist. The percentages of GED recipients vary by service branch from as low a 1% up to 10% (Thornburgh, 2006). The Department of Defense predicates these low percentages on the possible recurrence of the aforementioned roadblocks. “Their studies show that half of all alternative credential holders, typically GED holders or correspondence course graduates, quit or are expelled from the Armed Forces before the end of their first tour of duty. At an estimated \$40,000 to replace each enlistee, recruiting a GED holder is an expensive gamble” (Thornburgh, 2006). Therefore, for those of us fortunate enough to enlist, continuing our education and vocational training is part of our duty.

Vocational training can be obtained through various educational venues such as community or junior colleges, vocational technical schools, and within the United States military. The GED certificate is required for admission to community or junior colleges, vocational technical schools and, as previously established, the United States military. Within the colleges and schools, students can choose which occupational field they wish to study by completing an interest inventory to match skill with interest are simply based on desire to work in the trade. As part of the enlistment process, prospective military recruits must complete the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. This series of tests matches the recruits skills, abilities, and interests with various occupational specialties within each branch of the United States armed forces. Those of us who successfully complete our military vocational training are also awarded upper and lower level college credits pertaining to our specialty.

The GED certificate is required for transition into postsec-

ondary education. However, statistics suggest that only “15% of GED recipients who go to college earn a degree” (Beltran, 2002). Students are provided with several avenues, along their educational journey capable of arriving at the same destination, college graduation. Some of these avenues are vocational and military credit, basic education remediation, or the College Level Examination Program (CLEP). Colleges and universities will accept, as transfer credits, specific vocational and military credits as recommended by the American Council on Education for credits pertaining to specific degree plans. Basic education remediation is by far the most important. Even though we now have our GED certificate, this just proves we have a general knowledge of English, reading, writing, math, and social science. Now it is up to us as learners to pave the way of our educational journey. How do we do this? We enroll in remedial courses at our community or junior college. These remedial courses provide the bedrock from which our journey begins. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to complete the basic and intermediate English and math courses even if some of the material was just a review. Finally, credit can be earned for the course challenge exams such as those offered through CLEP. Credit will be awarded based on the student obtaining a minimum standard score. However, the college or university reserves the right to accept or deny the credit based on specific criteria as set forth by the institution.

The GED recipient is afforded the same educational opportunities as their high school graduate peer group. Earning a college degree can be achieved by different means such as military education programs, vocational training, and postsecondary education or a combination thereof. Regardless of the means or method, I am a firm advocate of “whatever the mind can conceive the will can achieve” (Roderick, 2009).

About the Author

Dr. R. Shane Creel is a '85 GED recipient. Dr. Creel enlisted in the United States Navy as a 9th grade dropout with a GED and retired 22 years later as a successful Naval Officer. While on active duty, Dr. Creel completed his Associates Degree with Park University, his Bachelors Degree with Regents College, his Masters Degree with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, and his Doctor of Philosophy with Capella University. Dr. Creel is currently the Director of Risk Management at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

GED Testing in Spanish

by Martha Dorina Carrillo

In recent years, specifically since I started working in the area of adult education, I have focused on using, in my class, all the stories, anecdotes and details that may motivate my students to continue with their set goal, the one of obtaining their GED Diploma. One of the stories that I have found very useful, is the following:

One time, a young eleventh-grade student argued heatedly with her teacher about how unfair it was for her to have to undertake so many difficult subjects in school, especially since many of these subjects would serve no purpose for her future professional life and she was not even sure what she was going to study in college ... The patient teacher let her vent, and after a while he explained his point of view, by saying:

You must take all of those subjects as hard as they may seem, but after taking them and passing them, without realizing it, they will give you a higher level of knowledge. Your perception and analytical skills will be higher and your response speed will increase significantly. However, the most important thing will be that you will acquire and develop skills that you never had before, and if it were not for those classes, your brain would never be exposed to those types of challenges.

I present this same argument to my students whenever they get discouraged, at times to the point that they want to abandon their goal. This often happens when they encounter certain math problems and other difficult subjects.

I therefore believe that it does not matter “when” you acquire that higher level of knowledge, as long as you are determined to reach it, you will receive that GED diploma.

It does not matter if you are a 24-year old, who for very personal reasons had to quit school or because of some missing credits could not graduate. It doesn't matter if you are a 36-year old housewife, mother of three children with little time on your hands, or a 42-year old construction worker who works long hours during the day. Any adult, of any age, regardless of their social stratum, or first language can obtain their high school equivalency diploma. All you need is enough information about the program and the drive to resume your studies.

However, in the case of any immigrant community, one of the biggest obstacles to joining American society and

culture is the language difference. Therefore many immigrants think that they should not worry so much about getting their GED, because learning English is a priority. But even English language study requires a certain academic level, and this is when the GED becomes a handy tool for any learning process.

In other words, reaching a higher academic goal does not always require learning the new language of residence but learning a foreign language often does require a certain academic level.

When a member of the Hispanic community takes their GED test in their first language and receives their diploma, they demonstrate to themselves and others their potential to reach this initial academic objective. With this diploma they may conquer new goals, whether it is to learn English or just perfect their skills, apply for a more rewarding job or the most ambitious goal they can set, to continue their higher education at a community college.

Some sectors of society unfortunately see the Latino community as a community with little interest in being educated; however, I beg to differ. The Latino community looks for success through education and a way to support them in achieving this goal is to provide them with adequate information, and offer them a broader range of educational opportunities by allowing them to take their GED examinations in Spanish.

Having the opportunity to demonstrate their academic level in their first language neither hinders their development, nor does it stop it; it, in fact, allows the student to reach a high level of self-confidence in order to chart new goals that will lead to success in this country.

About the author

Martha Dorina Carrillo, was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and graduated from the University of Guadalajara with a Bachelor's degree in Accounting. In 1992 she began working in the field of education. From 1992 to 2000 she worked as a principal's assistant, and later as an elementary and middle school teacher at a private school in Mexico. From 2001-2002 she was a volunteer at the Mexican consulate of Houston; where she helped with the literacy classes and with the open middle school for adults program for the Mexican community in the area. Since 2002 she has been a Spanish GED instructor at AAMA Adelante in Houston.

Developing Early Literacy in Young Children: Parents Can Make the Difference

by Dr. Deborah Stedman

In January 2009 the National Institute for Literacy released the final report of the National Early Literacy Panel's (NELP) synthesis of research on early literacy development. The report, *Developing Early Literacy in Young Children*, is significant as it includes implications for family literacy instructional programs so that young children develop the emergent literacy skills they need to develop into good readers. Family literacy educators can use the research findings to assist parents in supporting their children's literacy development and improve parents' language and reading as well.

Do Emergent Literacy Skills Predict Conventional Literacy Skills?

The NELP wanted to distinguish which emergent literacy skills accurately predict conventional literacy skills in order to assist programs and parents with making teaching decisions. Six emergent literacy skills exhibited moderate to strong relationships with conventional literacy skills. They are alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid naming of letters and digits, rapid naming of objects and colors, writing or writing name, and phonological short-term memory. A second group of five emergent literacy skills, concepts about print, print knowledge, reading readiness, oral language, and visual processing were moderately related to at least one conventional literacy skill. These findings emerged from an examination of a large number of research studies with a large number of children and are statistically reliable.

What Interventions did the National Early Literacy Panel find Effective in Encouraging Emergent Literacy and Later Reading?

The NELP panel also examined program interventions that research studies indicated were effective in encouraging early literacy and conventional literacy outcomes. The researchers identified five categories of interventions that facilitated young children's literacy and language outcomes: 1) code-focused interventions (alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness and early decoding); 2) shared reading (a.k.a., dialogic reading); 3) home and parent programs; 4) language enhancement programs; and 5) preschool and

kindergarten programs.

The NELP research found that code-focused interventions accounted for statistically significant moderate to large effects on a host of early literacy and conventional literacy outcomes. Book sharing generated significant moderate effects on print knowledge and oral language. Home and parent programs produced significant moderate to large effects on oral language skills and cognitive outcomes. Language enhancement programs had a significant large impact on increased children's oral language skills. And preschool and kindergarten programs produced significant moderate to large effects on spelling and reading readiness.

How can Family Literacy use the NELP Research to Improve Programs?

Family literacy programs hold much promise for positively impacting the early literacy development of the children. Given that family literacy program components include early childhood education, parent education, adult education, interactive literacy activities (ILA) and home visits, Texas programs can use the results of the NELP research to prioritize instruction. All of the program's NELP-based strategies are planned together by the family literacy team.

Early Childhood: The family literacy early childhood education program implements NELP findings as it emphasizes alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness in the classroom. Texas Even Start programs have the advantage of the PALS-PreK assessment as a measure of their four-year-olds' success with alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness and early decoding as well as name writing. Texas LEARNS strongly encourages Texas Even Start Projects to administer the entire PALS-PreK assessment in order to obtain a complete picture of each child's emergent literacy skills in order to meet each child's needs before s/he enters kindergarten. By appropriately integrating alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness into each early childhood classroom, Texas family literacy programs can assure children's

continued on page 16

Developing Early Literacy..., continued from page 15
eventual success with conventional literacy outcomes.

Parent Education, ILA and Home Visits: But family literacy early childhood programs don't stand alone; rather, they are integrated with the other components. As early childhood educators introduce the alphabet to two- and three-year olds, parents are learning how to talk to their young children about letters as they drive home from school, as they do the grocery shopping and run errands in their neighborhoods. Parent educators coach parents to make the sounds of the letters and point out the letters to the children in books and around the home and community so there is continuity and consistency across program components.

Parents spend time in the parent education classroom learning and practicing how to use shared reading strategies. They practice with each other under the watchful eye of the parent educator and the ILA educator as they put their learning into practice with their child. Parents demonstrate shared reading with their young children at home for the home visitor who, in turn, shares the parent's progress with her parent and ILA educator colleagues.

Adult Education: Adult educators, as part of the family literacy team, spend time with parents on the NELP research results. The GED teacher discusses the research with her students, parents read about the

research's scientific aspects and write responses to prompts about the findings. ESL teachers work with their parents on alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness so that the parents can, in turn, work with their young children.

Space precludes me from providing more examples of how family literacy programs can implement NELP findings. I haven't even begun to discuss rapid naming of letters and numbers, concepts about print or oral language development. But you, as a family literacy educator, have the picture. You already do much of what I've talked about. The challenge is to use the integration of family literacy components to address the findings of this important research to be sure that your program and parents have the maximum impact on the children's eventual school success. And you will, because Family Literacy Works!

Reference

National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). *Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.

About the Author

Deborah Stedman is the former Director of the Texas Family Literacy Resource Center at Texas State University. She retired in January of 2009.

The GED Testing Service publishes a monthly e-newsletter for adult educators, teachers, policy makers and anyone else interested in GED testing - called *The Community*.

**You can join *The Community* and receive updates as the new GED testing initiative is rolled out. Subscriptions to *The Community* are free at this site.
www.GEDtest.org/TheCommunity**

Also look for the GED Testing Service on Facebook!

National Needs Alter Plans for GED Test, 5th Edition

GED Testing Service® Frequently Asked Questions, Version 10.21.2009

With the announcement of altered plans for a 5th Edition GED Test release, will the current 2002 test series continue beyond January 1, 2012?

- Yes, the current test series will continue.
- The release of a new GED Test will be built upon the college- and career-ready content benchmarks of GED 20/20, which will be aligned with the emerging Common Core national content standards introduced by the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers— the organization representing the chief education officers in each U.S. state.

What should I tell the public, the adult educators and testing professionals in my jurisdictions about changes to the GED testing program and changes in the 5th Edition release?

- Over the past several months the movement towards more rigorous national standards for high school education has gained momentum.
 - Economic challenges currently facing the U.S. have contributed to renewed thinking about GED testing and its impact on the larger picture of our nation's educational and economic systems.
 - President Obama recently asserted the need to graduate more high school students and to support their transition to postsecondary education or career training programs. "By 2020, America will once again have the world's highest proportion of college graduates in the world." (Address to Joint Session of Congress, February 24, 2009)
 - To meet President Obama's goal, the U.S. will need to produce an additional 1 million college graduates each year until 2020.
 - All educational organizations and providers, including the GED testing program, must enhance the way they do business in order to meet the President's ambitious goals.
 - Currently there are 39 million U.S. adults without a high school diploma – or 18 percent of the adult population¹.
 - There are an estimated 1.3 million students who drop out of high school every year².
- The conversation was furthered with the introduction of Common Core standards supported by the governors of 48 states and three territories through the National Governors Association, alongside the Council of Chief State School Officers – the organization representing the chief education officers in each U.S. state.
- This changing national conversation on what it means to be a high school graduate and what is needed to be college- and career-ready, has a direct impact on the GED Test.
- GED Testing Service® must introduce changes and improvements to the GED Test that are aligned with this new direction, and this includes the planned GED Test 5th Edition slated to be released in 2012.
- As a result, GED Testing Service will not introduce the GED Test, 5th Edition, on January 1, 2012.
- Because of the changing national landscape, the program will transition directly from the current test series to a new, more comprehensive assessment program.
- This new program, GED 20/20, will dramatically increase the number of test-takers and GED credential recipients who are prepared to pursue postsecondary education opportunities.
- Elements of the new program will introduced as early as 2010.

What elements of the GED 20/20 Initiative will begin in 2010?

- ACE has appointed Nicole M. Chestang to the position of vice president and executive director of GED Testing Service. Chestang is the former chief operation officer of the Graduate Management Admissions Council, sponsor of the General Management Admission Test (GMAT). Additionally, Martin Kehe has been promoted to deputy executive director, GED Testing Service. More information can be found in the official announcement on the ACE website: http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Press_Releases2&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=34354
- A computer-based testing (CBT) pilot will begin in 2010. The pilot will include a study to determine equivalency of CBT to paper-based versions of the tests, and assist in understanding a variety of issues related to CBT delivery.
- GED Testing Service has begun steps in commissioning alignment studies to look at test specifications set for the previous 5th Edition GED Test and the Common Core standards. These studies, being completed by Achieve, will clearly identify the gaps between the content on which we have based test development to date and the more rigorous college- and career-ready content expectations in the Common Core.
- In late 2010 GEDTS will begin field testing new types of items aligned with the emerging national standards.

Footnotes

- 1 2000 U.S. census data. *Adult population is defined as those age 16 or older.
- 2 Editorial Projects in Education (EPE). Diplomas count 2009: Broader Horizons: The Challenge of College Readiness for all Students. Education Week, special issue, 28(34).

continued on page 18

FAQs, continued from page 17

- GEDTS is engaged in work with the Bridgespan Consulting Group, a respected nonprofit consulting organization. This work will assist in the planning process for GED 20/20. Key elements of the work will emphasize; academic preparation, the revised and more rigorous GED test, and a springboard of connections to postsecondary education and expanded career opportunities.

Will test-takers be able to combine test scores past January 1, 2012?

- Currently, GEDTS guidance is that test scores may be combined as long as they are within the same test series.
- We will continue conversations with GED Administrators to determine if an allowable timeframe should be placed upon allowable score combining (e.g. should scores only be combined if all tests were taken within five years, etc.).
- Any changes to the policy of combining scores would likely require a year or more of advance notice to test-takers and adult educators.

When will a new GED Test replace current test series?

- There is no planned release date at this point. The alignment studies must be completed and some agreement on common national standards must solidify first.
- Preliminary analysis indicates that much of the content and items developed for the 5th Edition will be applicable to the new college- and career-ready GED Test.
- GED Testing Service realizes that developing a more rigorous test, to prepare credential recipients for postsecondary education and careers that provide a sustainable living wage, will require investment in academic preparation programs and post-credential transition programs. Accordingly until support systems pre and post test are improved, GEDTS will not launch a more rigorous test.

How far in advance will jurisdictions be notified of a new test series release?

- Due to the amount of advance notice required, GEDTS plans to keep GED Administrators and the field informed as planning for a new GED Test advances.
- GEDTS also understands the advance notice required by states that operate on a biannual budget cycle, and will make every effort to provide notice several years in advance of a release date.

How will the Computer-Based Testing (CBT) pilot jurisdictions be selected?

- GEDTS will work with psychometric and other internal units, as well as the CBT vendor, to determine 3-4 states that would be ideal to participate in the pilot.
- Some of the characteristics that are desired may include:
 - Size
 - Wait times for testing
 - Scoring site vendor
 - Coverage of pilot CBT testing location, compared to eligible test-takers
 - Diverse population of test takers to ensure representation in the study of key subgroups
- We will have conversations with a number of jurisdictions that fit most of the desired characteristics, and determine with them the final pilot partners.

What are the goals of the CBT pilot?

- The primary goal of the CBT pilot is to determine equivalency of CBT and paper-based testing scores.
- GEDTS will also begin to understand how test-takers respond to technology in real time; how the process of registration can be made easier for test-takers; and how quicker access to reliable data and reporting can benefit the jurisdictions, the test-taker, and GEDTS.
- The pilot will be a partnership between GEDTS and each participating jurisdiction. This partnership, working through details of state-specific policies, scoring site processes, and other issues will help determine how CBT could eventually be expanded to work within the complex system of state-specific policies in other jurisdictions.

How will jurisdictions not participating in the pilot be involved or informed of the details?

- GEDTS will confirm participating jurisdictions as soon as the list is finalized.
- GED Administrators not participating in the pilot will receive details of the study design as the discussion progresses, as well as regular updates as the pilot enters into implementation.

Further Questions

Additional questions and answers will be added to this document as they are submitted and answers are available.

GED, and the GED Testing Service, are registered trademarks of the American Council on Education, and may not be used or reproduced without the express written permission of the American Council on Education.

Welcome to Our Library. . .

TCALL Student Worker Ashley Matus, Librarian Susan Morris, and Student Worker Emily Webb (not pictured) are ready to fill your order for Clearinghouse Library resources. Call them at 800-441-READ (7323) or email tcall@tamu.edu to request materials by mail or information on the Library's services.



GED PREPARATION: INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking, Sixth Edition. Browne, M. Neil and Keeley, Stuart (2001). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. From the Preface: "This text develops an integrated series of question-asking skills that can be applied widely ... to a general audience ... We provide many opportunities for readers to apply their skills and to receive immediate feedback following the practice application. The book is replete with examples of writing devoted to controversial contemporary topics ... Critical thinking questions are discussed sequentially as the reader progresses from understanding to evaluating." Given the reading level of the selections, this book would be most appropriate for higher-level GED students or as a resource for teachers.

Becoming a Critical Thinker: A User Friendly Manual, Third Edition. Diestler, Sherry (2001). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. From the publisher's summary of the book: "This text trains students to distinguish high-quality, well-supported arguments from arguments with little or no evidence to support them. It develops the skills required to effectively evaluate the many claims facing them as citizens, learners, consumers, and human beings, and also to be effective advocates for their beliefs." Due to the reading level, the book would be appropriate only for higher-level GED students or as a resource for teachers. Companion website (<http://www.prenhall.com/diestler>) offers additional resources for students and teachers.

Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary. Cambridge University Press (2009). New York, NY: University Press. The Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary defines the vocabulary students need to succeed in high school and beyond. Its entries include more than 2,000 key vocabulary items from the content areas of math, the arts, chemistry, earth science, physics, American and world history, social studies, language arts, and other disciplines, as well as the more general vocabulary used in academic writing and speech, such as "analyze," "derive," and "subsequent." The dictionary also provides full coverage of the everyday words and phrases students need to know. The dictionary is written for intermediate to high intermediate level in ESL classes but can also be used in GED classes. Set of book and CD-ROM is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Complete GED Preparation, Large Print. Steck-Vaughn (2002). Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company. The Complete GED Preparation is a comprehensive guide covering all GED testing areas, with step-by-step instructions, practice tests and answers, test-taking strategies, and more. This large print version is a copy of the original with the same page formatting and pagination. The calendar format allows for extra large type 18 point font while keeping the closed book size near to that of the original. The durable lay-open-flat binding can be folded back on itself. Seven-volume set is available on loan to Preferred Borrowers only. (Ask TCALL how to become a Preferred Borrower.)

Cracking the GED 2002 Edition. Martz, Geoff (2001). New York: Random House, Inc. Updated for changes to the GED effective in 2002, this single-volume GED preparation text includes: drill questions in writing and math; study materials for social studies, science, and literature sections; tips on finding spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors; two full-length simulated GED exams; and tips on how to avoid "traps and pitfalls" that cost points on the test.

Critical Thinking: Tools for Taking Charge of Your Learning and Your Life. Paul, Richard and Elder, Linda (2001). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall. The authors approach critical thinking as "a process for taking charge of and responsibility for one's thinking. Designed to foster the development of critical thinking skills and abilities, fairmindedness, intellectual humility, and intellectual integrity, the approach ... [offers] meaningful, yet common examples coupled with related activities to allow the reader to examine and chronicle his/her own understanding and growth ... for the lifelong

application of critical thinking skills." Given the reading level of the book, it would be most appropriate for higher-level GED students or as a resource for teachers.

GED Basics, 2nd Edition. Lawrence, Nancy (2002). Lawrenceville, NJ: Arco/Thompson Learning. Updated for the new GED 2002, this book includes complete subject review for each of the five subject exams. Included are: practice exercises and mini-tests in each subject; essay-writing techniques; study tips designed for adult test takers; and an introduction to the format of the new GED.

GED Connection. PBS LiteracyLink and Kentucky Educational Television (2001). Lexington, KY: The Kentucky Network Enterprise Division. This series of half-hour video programs includes 39 episodes that use a documentary style to introduce content in the five major subject areas of the GED exam as revised in January 2002. GED Connection is a flexible multimedia instructional series featuring the skills and knowledge needed to prepare for the newly revised GED exam. The series combines video programs, three student workbooks, and free Internet learning activities, quizzes, and practice tests. (The workbooks, including a Pre-GED level series, are available through KET at the GED Connection website - not through the Clearinghouse Library. Ask for the Texas discount when ordering.) These components can be used together or apart by learners preparing for the GED either at home or in an adult education program. A Clearinghouse Library loan set of all episodes including the Orientation video may be checked out in either DVD or VHS version by Texas educational programs who are Preferred Borrowers only. (Ask TCALL how to become a Preferred Borrower.) Texas Education Agency negotiated an educational use rights license with KET for this series, which means that any educational program in Texas has permission to duplicate the video programs for the duration of that license, through November 1, 2011. The GED Connection website (<http://litlink.ket.org/wesged.aspx>) offers web-based activities to accompany the video and workbook components. Learners can register on the site for a free portfolio that contains GED practice tests and quizzes with automatic scoring and feedback, plus extensive learning modules for each of the five GED subject areas. Online teachers from several states are available to coach adult learners working online.

GED Scoreboost Series. GED Scoreboost Team (2002). Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. The six books in this series include the following:

GED Mathematics: Scientific Calculator, Grid, and Problem-Solving Strategies (three books); GED Writing: Essay and Multiple-Choice Strategies (two books); and GED Thinking Skills: Strategies Across the Content Areas (two books).

Each workbook is focused on the actual criteria used on the GED and includes a short practice GED test. Set of six books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

GED Scoreboost Workbooks: Mathematics, Writing, and Thinking Skills. Kaplan, Elizabeth, Editor (2002). Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. Written at reading grade level 8 - 10, these seven workbooks cover three critical areas for success on the 2002 Series Tests. Three mathematics workbooks (Whole Numbers, Decimals, Fractions, and Percents; Measurement and Data Analysis; and Algebra and Geometry) include practice with the Casio fx-260 Solar Scientific Calculator. Two writing workbooks base effective essay writing on the actual GED Essay Scoring Guide, and focus on the exact organization, sentence structure, usage and mechanics skills tested on the multiple-choice section of the test. Two Thinking Skills workbooks target the higher-order thinking skills needed to pass the GED, and develop critical-thinking strategies with application to the Reading, Social Studies and Science Tests. Set of seven books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

continued on page 20

HOW DOES THIS MAIL ORDER LENDING LIBRARY WORK?

Books and other resources described in the Library section may be requested for a 30-day loan. We will mail each borrower up to five loan items at a time (just two for first-time borrowers), and even include a postage-paid return address sticker for mailing them back to us! Borrowers must be affiliated with a non-profit program providing adult or family literacy services. Annotated bibliographies of our entire library of resources are available in hard copy by request, and the library can also be searched in 'real time' on our website (www-tcall.tamu.edu). Call 800-441-7323 or email tcall@tamu.edu to check out materials described here or to request hard copy listings of even more resources.

Welcome to Our Library, continued from page 19

GED Success, 2002 Edition. Elowitz, Larry, et al (2002). Lawrenceville, NJ: Peterson's/Thompson Learning. Incorporating changes to the GED effective in 2002, this book includes: a look at the GED's new format; subject reviews for each of the five subject exams; step-by-step instructions for developing and writing essays; tips on using the calculator more efficiently; test-taking strategies; and three full-length practice tests with detailed answer explanations.

Keys to GED Success. Steck-Vaughn (2009). Orlando, FL: Steck-Vaughn. Keys to GED Success is a five-book series created through combining actual GED 2007 test data from the GED Testing Service with Steck-Vaughn's GED test preparation materials. Each book contains a 20 question pre-test to identify what skills the student needs to focus, instructs through step-by-step examples in key skill areas and full explanations of all answers, focuses through concentration on higher order thinking skills, and includes the Official GED Practice Test Form PA bound into the back of the book as a post-test to determine GED readiness. Each book contains a 'Teaching Tips' section to address specific key problem areas that emerged from the GED Testing Services' research. The publisher states that Keys to GED Success is aligned to the Texas Content Standards and is written on a 9th grade to adult reading level.

Official GED Practice Tests Form U.S. PA, Large Print Edition. GED Testing Service (2001). Austin, TX: Steck Vaughn. This set of six booklets comprise a large print version of the practice GED assessments, developed and normed side by side with the GED 2002 Series Tests.

Official GED Practice Tests Form U.S. PA: Audiocassette Edition. GED Testing Service (2001). Austin, TX: Steck Vaughn. These tapes are an audio version of the practice GED assessments, developed and normed side by side with the GED 2002 Series Tests. The set of seven audiocassettes is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Steck-Vaughn GED Series. Northcutt, Ellen, Editor (2002). Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company. Updated for changes to the GED that took effect in 2002, each content area loan set is available on loan to Texas educators only. Each text features lessons that focus on the most difficult types of GED test questions and includes two simulated GED tests. Exercise books feature practice exercises designed to mirror actual GED testing materials, answers with full explanations, and a performance chart with which learners can actively monitor their own progress.

Steck-Vaughn GED Language Arts, Reading. Text covers interpreting fiction, understanding nonfiction, understanding poetry, and understanding drama.

Steck-Vaughn GED Language Arts, Writing. Text covers sentence structure, organization, usage, and mechanics. This loan set also includes The GED Essay, with units on planning, organizing, writing, evaluating, revising, varying prewriting techniques, and tips for raising your score.

Steck-Vaughn GED Mathematics. Text covers numbers and operations, measurement and data analysis, algebra, and geometry.

Steck-Vaughn GED Science. Text covers life science, earth and space science, and physical science.

Steck-Vaughn GED Skill Book: Mathematics Calculator. This book is a guide to using the CASIO fx-260 solar calculator, the official calculator for the GED Mathematics test. Book includes an introduction to the calculator and 20 lessons on using the calculator to solve specific types of problems. Finally, a GED review gives practice using all the

calculator skills to work problems like those on the GED test.

Steck-Vaughn GED Social Studies. Text covers United States history, world history, civics and government, economics, and geography.

GED PREPARATION: MATH-SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Everyday Number Sense: Mental Math and Visual Functions. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha (2006). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students solve problems with whole numbers using mental math strategies with benchmarks of 1, 10, 100, and 1000 to compute. Number lines, arrays, and diagrams support their conceptual understanding of number relationships and the four operations. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Keeping Things in Proportion: Reasoning with Ratios. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha and Curry, Donna (2005). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students use various tools—objects, diagrams, tables, graphs, and equations—to understand proportional and non-proportional relationships. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Many Points Make a Point: Data and Graphs. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha (2005). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students collect, organize, and represent data using

frequency, bar, and circle graphs. They use line graphs to describe change over time. They use benchmark fractions and the three measures of central tendency—mode, median, and mean—to describe sets of data. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Operation Sense: Even More Fractions, Decimals, and Percents. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam (2007). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students extend their understanding of the four operations with whole numbers as they puzzle over such questions as, "How is it possible that two fractions multiplied might yield a smaller amount?" and "What does it mean to divide one-half by six?" Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Over, Around, and Within: Geometry and Measurement. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha (2005). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students explore the features and measures of basic shapes. Perimeter and area of two-dimensional shapes and volume of rectangular solids provide the focus. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Real World Algebra: Understanding the Power of Mathematics. Zaccaro, Edward (2001). Bellevue, IA: Hickory Grove Press. From editorial description: "Algebra is often taught in an abstract manner with little or no emphasis on what algebra is or how it can be used to solve real problems. Just as English can be translated into other languages, word problems can be 'translated' into the math language of algebra and easily solved. [This book] explains this process in an easy to understand format using cartoons and drawings." Each chapter is broken down into three levels of difficulty, from basic to very challenging.

Seeking Patterns, Building Rules: Algebraic Thinking. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha (2005). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) students use a variety of representational tools—diagrams, words, tables, graphs, and equations—to understand linear patterns and functions. They connect the rate of change with the slope of a line and compare linear with non-linear relationships. They gain facility with and comprehension of basic algebraic notations. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Split It Up: More Fractions, Decimals, and Percents. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Stein-

back, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha and Kliman, Marlene (2005). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. EMPower combines insights from educational research and classroom practice. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight non-sequential units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book) building upon their command of common benchmark fractions, students add $\frac{1}{3}$'s, $\frac{1}{8}$'s, and $\frac{1}{100}$'s, and their decimal and percent equivalents, to their repertoire of part-whole relationships. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

Using Benchmarks: Fractions, Decimals, and Percents. Schmitt, Mary Jane and Steinback, Myriam and Donovan, Tricia and Merson, Martha and Kliman, Marlene (2006). Cambridge, MA: Key Curriculum Press. EMPower is designed to give adult learners and out-of-school youth mathematics skills for daily life. This comprehensive curriculum works in adult and workplace education, alternative high schools, correctional settings, and GED/high school equivalency programs. Students who need help transitioning to college also benefit from EMPower's dynamic approach. Rather than focusing on memorizing formulas, students develop useful mathematics skills through engaging exercises that relate to their lives. They investigate concepts, work collaboratively, share ideas orally and in writing, and discover multiple ways to solve problems. The full curriculum comprises eight units emphasizing whole numbers, fractions, decimals, percents, proportions, geometry and measurement, algebra, and data and graphs. In this set (teacher book and student book), students use the fractions $\frac{1}{10}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, and $\frac{3}{4}$; the decimals 0.1, 0.5, 0.25, and 0.75; and the percents 50%, 25%, 75%, 100%, and the multiples of 10% as benchmarks with which to describe and compare all part-whole relationships. Set of two books is available on loan to Texas educators only.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR GED INSTRUCTORS

GED 2002 Seminar. Central Illinois Adult Education Service Center (2002). Macomb, IL: CIAESC-Western Illinois University. Manual contains resources to facilitate a two-day teacher training workshop on the GED 2002. Institute outlined in the manual includes an overview of the GED 2002 including special accommodations and suggestions for the preparation of adult learners. Sections include: critical reading and thinking skills, language arts-reading, language arts-writing, social studies, math, and science. Training agenda and a variety of activities are also provided.

GED 2002 Training Series. Adult Basic Skills Professional Development Project (2002). Boone, NC: North Carolina Community College System (NCCS). Complete series of GED 2002 training materials developed for use in the NCCS to improve the effectiveness and quality of GED instruction through focused professional development. Three volume GED 2002 Instructor Training Manual provides information and instructional strategies that can be incorporated into professional development training. Videos focus on content that applies to the latest version of the GED 2002 test in: Language Arts – Reading and Writing; Social Studies and Science; and Mathematics. "How to Use the Scientific Calculator" CD-ROM is designed to train instructors in using the calculator with Level I Basic Skills through Adult High School Math students. Set available on loan to Preferred Borrowers only. (Ask TCALL how to become a Preferred Borrower.)

Official GED Practice Tests Administrator's Manual, 2002 Edition. GED Testing Service (2002). Washington, DC: American Council on Education. Designed to evaluate a candidate's readiness to take the full-length GED tests, the "Official GED Practice Tests" include half of the number of questions found on the actual tests. Along with Administrator's Manual, this binder includes sample test booklets of all three forms (PA, PB and PC) of the five subject area practice tests. (In form PB, mathematics is broken down into parts I and II, so there are six form PB test booklets.) To actually administer the "Official GED Practice Tests", programs must purchase the tests and answer sheets from Steck-Vaughn, distributor for the GED Testing Service. Binder including Manual and 16 Test Booklets is available on loan to Texas educators only.



"It is so helpful to get materials through your office with just a simple email. I always appreciate your quick responses. Your help is so much better than trying to track things down from large websites or calling numbers that do not know what we are asking for, wrong departments, or worse yet, no responses at all. I never take the Clearinghouse for granted."

Donna Byrum, Director
Grayson County College
Adult Education Centers
Denison, TX

Free Things to Send For . . .

GED PREPARATION

Adult Learning in Focus. Council for Adult & Experiential Learning and National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (2008). Chicago, IL: Council for Adult & Experiential Learning. The report, "Adult Learning in Focus," has compiled a wealth of national and state-by-state data about how states serve their adult learners. Produced by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning and the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, the report draws on data from various sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the GED Testing Service. It also provides state-by-state profiles of how adult learners fare in individual states. In addition to online availability at www.cael.org, the Clearinghouse Library disseminates free copies of this print resource to Texas literacy educators only.

Beyond the GED: Making Conscious Choices About the GED and Your Future: Lesson Plans and Materials for the GED Classroom. Fass, Sandra and Garner, Barbara (2006 Update). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Revised by Eileen Barry in 2006 from the original 2000 guide to include new data and information on the internet, this guide for GED instructors offers lesson plans and helps teachers develop as professionals. GED instructors are often working with people who are interested in getting their GED because they hope or believe it will be the key to their economic futures. This set of classroom materials is designed to provide GED preparation learners with practice in graph and chart reading, calculation, analyzing information, and writing, while they examine the labor market, the role of higher education, and the economic impact of the GED. The intent is to prepare learners to make wise decisions about their work lives as well as being better prepared to pass the GED. It also gives adult learners an opportunity to practice writing, use graphs, read charts, and analyze research findings on the economic impact of the GED. In addition to online availability at www.ncsall.net, the Clearinghouse Library disseminates free copies of this print resource to Texas literacy educators only. Also available is the related resource, *Using Beyond the GED*, materials for a 4-hour seminar introducing teachers and tutors to *Beyond the GED*.

The Economic Benefits of the GED: A Research Synthesis. Tyler, John H. (2002). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. As more states use test results as a determinant for high school graduation, many analysts predict higher dropout rates and the growth of the GED as an important educational credential. But does a GED provide economic benefits to a high school dropout? In this NCSALL Research Brief, Tyler reviews the findings on this question from four published papers and four unpublished working papers.

Economic Outcomes of High School Completers and Noncompleters 8 Years Later. Kienzl, Gregory and Kena, Grace (October 2006). Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics. This Issue Brief uses data from the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) to compare the economic outcomes of high school completers at three different points in time with the outcomes of individuals who did not complete high school. Differences by sex and the type of credential earned are also examined. The findings suggest that individuals who completed high school within 6 years generally had more favorable economic outcomes than their counterparts who completed high school later or not at all. Conversely, few differences in economic outcomes were found between high school diploma and alternative credential holders at both the 4- and 6-year and later completion points. Differences in economic outcomes, however, were most prominent between males and females even after controlling for the timing and type of high school credential earned.

ESL GED Civics Curriculum CD, Version 2.0. Simmons, Jane (February 2008). Tyler, TX: Literacy Council of Tyler, Inc. This curriculum promotes civic responsibility while also integrating other instruction for the typical ESL student. Some examples of these skills are sentence structure, parts of speech, and vocabulary building. The GED lessons also cover other instruction needed by the typical GED student. Some examples of these skills are reading comprehension, essay writing, and mathematical analysis. As the curriculum is distributed and used in the field, it will continue to be revised and other lessons added. The CD (available free on request) contains both PDF and Publisher files. The PDF files duplicate the best but cannot be changed; however, the Publisher files allow you to change the names of elected officials to reflect the people serving in your local area. The print version of these files (with a copy of the CD) is available as a loan item.

Focus on Basics, February 2004, Volume 6, Issue D. NCSALL/World Education (February 2004). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Focus on Basics is a quarterly published by National Center for Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. This issue's theme is "Transitions". Featured articles are: "Relationships Count: Transitioning ESOL Students into Community College Takes Collaboration and Personalized Services"; "Some Findings on the Academic Vocabulary Skills of Language-Minority Community College Students"; "The Open Door Policy: Hidden Barriers to Postsecondary Education for Nontraditional Adult Learners"; "ODWIN: A Program Rooted in History"; "Why Go Beyond the GED?"; "EdCAP: A Transition Program in Transition"; "Building the Desire: Building the Ability"; "Approaches to ABE Transition to Postsecondary Education"; "Pathways to College for Academically Under-prepared Students"; and "Transitions and Math." In addition to online availability at www.ncsall.net.

net, the Clearinghouse Library disseminates free copies of this print resource to Texas literacy educators only.

Focus on Basics, November 2006, Volume 8, Issue C. NCSALL/World Education (November 2006). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Focus on Basics is a quarterly published by National Center for Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Themes of this final issue are Self-Study, Health, GED to Postsecondary, and Disseminating Research. Articles include: "More Curriculum Structure: A Response to 'Turbulence'"; "Self-Study: Broadening the Concepts of Participation and Program Support"; "Distance Learning as a Backup"; "The GED Via TV"; "Is the GED an Effective Route to Postsecondary Education?"; "Navigating Healthcare"; and "Effective Research, Dissemination: Lessons from NCSALL". In addition to online availability at www.ncsall.net, the Clearinghouse Library disseminates free copies of this print resource to Texas literacy educators only.

The Influences of Social Capital on Lifelong Learning Among Adults Who Did Not Finish High School. Strawn, Clare L. (May 2003). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. Lifelong learning has become a key concept in planning for economic and social development. The public discussion on lifelong learning is very broad, encompassing continuing education for seniors in an aging but capable population and often oriented to preparing adults for transitions through multiple careers in their lifetime. Previous surveys indicate that people with more education are more likely to access continuing education for personal and professional development. In contrast, this study focuses on issues of lifelong learning for those adults who did not complete high school. In addition to online availability at www.ncsall.net, the Clearinghouse Library disseminates free copies of this print resource to Texas literacy educators only.

Is the GED Valuable to Those Who Pass it? Cain, Alice Johnson (April 2003). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. This article was featured in the first and only issue of "Focus on Policy", a NCSALL publication intended to translate research findings into implications for policy. Research consistently shows that high school graduates do better in the labor market than do holders of the General Educational Development (GED) credential. But do high school dropouts who get the GED fare better economically than dropouts who don't get their GED? According to NCSALL research conducted by Brown University's John Tyler, acquisition of a GED can have a substantial impact on earnings for some school dropouts. This article summarizes three specific research findings to that effect.

A Model for Adult Education-to-Postsecondary Transition Programs. Cain, Alice Johnson (April 2003). Cambridge, MA: National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy. This article was featured in the first and only issue of "Focus on Policy", a NCSALL publication intended to translate research findings into implications for policy. This article describes a program designed to help adult education students and GED graduates prepare to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Beginning in 2000, the New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC) assisted adult education program graduates to prepare for, enter, and succeed in postsecondary educa-

tion. The NELRC project consists of 25 transition programs in the six New England states, serving more than 700 students in community-based organizations, public schools, community colleges, and prisons. The project is aimed at GED graduates and high school graduates who have been out of school for several years. Free instruction is provided in pre-college reading, writing, and math skills as well as computer and internet skills. Students also receive educational and career counseling, and learn college survival and study skills. Each program collaborates with one or more local postsecondary institutions to provide mentoring and other assistance that helps non-traditional adult learners succeed.

FAMILY LITERACY

Early Beginnings: Early Literacy Knowledge and Instruction: A Guide for Early Childhood Administrators and Professional Development Providers. Goodson, Barbara and Layzer, Carolyn and Simon, Peggy and Dwyer, Chris (January 2009). Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy. The National Early Literacy Panel convened in 2002 to conduct a synthesis of the scientific research available on the development of early literacy skills in children from birth to age 5. This report provides detailed information about the panel, its charge, the methodology and analytical approach used to conduct the synthesis, and the research findings and implications for improving early education. The report is intended as a guide to help early childhood administrators, supervisors, and professional development staff provide teachers with the support and training needed to increase their knowledge base and refine current literacy practice.

For the Child: Information on Mental Health and Advocacy for Resource Parents. I Am Your Child Foundation (formerly The Reiner Foundation) (2007). Beverly Hills, CA: Parents' Action for Children. For the Child: Information on Mental Health and Advocacy for Resource Parents, hosted by Morgan Freeman, will help foster parents and kinship care providers understand the most common children's mental health problems; navigate the local mental health service delivery system; develop alliances with birth parents, school systems, mental health providers & caseworkers; feel increased comfort with seeking mental health services; recognize the rights and responsibilities of foster children, birth parents, kinship providers, foster parents and caseworkers; identify who to call, what to say, and where to go to obtain the right services; and be an effective advocate for the children in your care. The Clearinghouse Library makes this DVD available free to Texas literacy educators only.

The Pre-K Promise. I Am Your Child Foundation (formerly The Reiner Foundation) (2006). Beverly Hills, CA: Parents' Action for Children. Quality preschool (or pre-k) programs for 3 and 4 year olds are one of the surest routes to success in school and beyond, according to various studies, but finding a high-quality pre-k program at an affordable price can be challenging. This video, featuring well-known experts on early care and education, provides guidance to help parents understand how preschool programs can benefit young children; what a quality preschool program looks like; what questions to ask when evaluating a preschool; and how to help make quality, affordable preschool programs more widely available. The Clearinghouse Library makes this DVD available free to Texas literacy educators only.

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

College of Education & Human Development
Department of EAHR
Texas A&M University
4477 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4477

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
COLLEGE STATION
TEXAS
77843
PERMIT NO. 215

Change service requested

Texas Adult & Family Literacy Quarterly is the publication of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning (TCALL), made available free to adult educators, literacy providers, and others interested in adult and family literacy. **The Quarterly** is dedicated to advancing knowledge in the field by addressing topics of concern to adult and family literacy practitioners, adult learners, and scholars. The audience includes teachers, students, administrators, program coordinators, researchers, literacy volunteers, and in general individuals interested in the fields of adult and family literacy.

Editor: Peggy Sue Durbin

Editorial Board: Harriet Vardiman Smith, Ken Appelt and Federico Salas-Isnardi

Organizational Sponsorship

The Quarterly is published by TCALL as an activity of The Texas Adult & Family Literacy Clearinghouse Project, a state leadership project in adult education funded through Texas Education Agency and supported by Texas LEARNS. TCALL is a University Center at Texas A&M University, College of Education and Human Development, Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development.

The contents of **The Quarterly** do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning, Texas A&M University, Texas Education Agency, nor Harris County Department of Education.

Subscriptions and Correspondence

All editorial correspondence and submissions should be sent to the attention of Editor Peggy Sue Durbin at the return address below, or send an email to pdurbin@tamu.edu. Please see the TCALL website for specific submission guidelines regarding criteria and article format. Send requests for FREE subscriptions to the Center Email address below.

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

800-441-READ (7323) 979-845-6615 979-845-0952 fax

Center Email: tcall@tamu.edu

Website: www-tcall.tamu.edu

Harriet Vardiman Smith

TCALL Director
hsmith@tamu.edu

Dr. Mary Alfred

TCALL Principal Investigator
malfred@tamu.edu