TEXAS Adult Education & Literacy QUARTERLY

Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy & Learning

Over 800 Adults Earn High School Equivalency in DFW Event Testing

From early October through early December 2013, a unique collaborative effort between the GED® Testing Service, Texas Education Agency, and Dallas-Fort Worth area literacy leaders enabled numerous adults in the D-FW Metroplex to take the paper GED® test before major changes to the test took effect on January 1, 2014. Twelve days of testing resulted in over 800 students being served with GED® paper testing opportunities in large group settings.

This large-group event testing initiative came about in response to a high demand for paper-based testing in the closing months of 2013, combined with a comparatively small number of testing centers available in the D-FW area. The events were held at Fannin Elementary School in Dallas and Tarrant County College-Trinity River Campus in Fort Worth between October 4th and December 8th.

Special thanks go to Tarrant Literacy Coalition's Executive Director Kathryn Thompson, Dallas ISD's Adult Education Director Leslie Keaton Boyd, Continuing Education staff from the Tarrant County College-Trinity River Campus, Bill J. Priest GED® Testing Center, Hill College, local community colleges and other nonprofit organizations, without whose efforts this initiative would not have been possible.

Office of Continuing Education Service, Tarrant County College – Trinity River Campus
• Margo Price, GED® Proctor
• Diana Cepeda, GED® Examiner
• Tiffany Lopez-Hamilton, Chief Examiner & Director for Continuing Education Services
(Missing from photo: DeAndra Small and Carmen Lopez, GED® Examiners)

Bill J. Priest GED® Test Center Staff
LaToya Prevost, Shahaadah Royal and Verneda McLemore

Ken Appelt Retires from TCALL Staff

GED® 2014 Test is here.

GED®

IN THIS ISSUE

Who subscribes to *Texas Adult Education & Literacy Quarterly*?

E-subscribers numbering about 4,500 include:
- adult education and family literacy program leaders, staff and teachers
- volunteer and community-based literacy leaders and tutors
- workforce literacy educators
- community college educators affiliated with adult education, Accelerate Texas, or Intensive College Readiness Programs for adult learners
- professional developers and curriculum developers/publishers
- state agency staff and policymakers
- adult education and literacy researchers and advocates in Texas and beyond

News From
Texas Workforce Commission
by Anson Green, State Director, TWC Adult Education and Literacy

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY STATE PROGRAM CONTACTS FOR 2014
With local program transition support from Texas LEARNS ending on February 28, 2014, TWC Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) staff has assumed full responsibility for all program support activities. This support includes assistance with the Texas Educating Adult Management System (TEAMS) and Adult Education Guidance Information System (AEGIS), as well as granting and maintaining access to these systems for all users.

Please consult the following contacts for assistance.

Topics	Technical Assistance	
General Program Information	adulteducation@twc.state.tx.us	Toll Free: 1-855-594-0012, Austin Area: 512-463-0540
Policy and Technical Assistance		
TEAMS Assistance	teams.technicalassistance@twc.state.tx.us	If you require phone assistance, please include that in your email.
Contract Questions	Grantees should continue to contact their designated TWC contract manager.	
Financial Reporting and Cash Draw Assistance	cashdraw.ta@twc.state.tx.us	

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY RULES ADOPTED
On February 4, 2014, TWC adopted rules governing the implementation of the Adult Education and Literacy program. New sections of Chapter 800, 802 related to the Integrity of the Texas Workforce System and new Chapter 805 relating to Adult Education and Literacy were published in the Texas Register on February 21, 2014 and took effect on February 24, 2014. The rules contain guiding governance for current programs (PY2013-2014) and new programs (PY2014-2015). After adoption, these rulemaking actions were codified into the Texas Administrative Code (TAC Title 40). To read the rules, please go to: http://www.twc.state.tx.us/twcinfo/rules/adoprules.html

FIRST MEETING OF THE ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
On January 29, 2014, the AEL Advisory Committee held its first meeting in Austin. The committee is a requirement of Senate Bill 307, passed by the 83rd Texas Legislature (40 Texas Administrative Code § 805.43).

The AEL advisory committee is required to meet quarterly and report to the TWC Commissioners at least annually, and is charged with advising the Commission on:
- the development of policies and program priorities supporting the development of an educated and skilled workforce;
- the development of statewide curriculum guidelines and standards for AEL services that

ensure a balance of education and workplace skill development;
- the development of a strategy for improving student transition to postsecondary education and career and technical education training;
- the development of a centralized system for collecting and tracking comprehensive data on adult basic education and literacy performance outcomes;
- the exploration of potential partnerships with entities in the nonprofit business communities and other entities to improve statewide literacy programs; and
- other issues the Commission considers appropriate.

Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee Members	
Geronimo Rodriguez, Jr.	Seton Healthcare Family Vice President of Diversity and Community Outreach
David Russell	Verizon Vice President, External Affairs
Allan Miller	Workforce Solutions Capital Area Executive Director
Blas Castañeda	Advocate
Tamara Clunis	Amarillo College Dean of Academic Success
Dave Lindsay	Literacy Texas Board Member
Sheri Suarez Foreman	Houston Center for Literacy President and Chief Executive Officer
Dean Ransdell	Texarkana ISD Adult Education Director
Lynda Webb	Midland College Adult and Developmental Education Director

The Advisory Committee is electing a presiding officer and determining its scope of work. Future meeting dates for the committee are:

Wednesday	January 29, 2014	2:00-4:00pm
Tuesday	May 20, 2014	1:30-3:30pm
Tuesday	September 23, 2014	1:30-3:30pm
Monday	December 8, 2014	1:30-3:30pm

Ken Appelt Retires
from TCALL Staff

by Harriet Vardiman Smith, TCALL Director

After ten years as TCALL's Program Manager specializing in professional development, Ken Appelt retired from TCALL at the end of January.

When he joined TCALL's Clearinghouse Project staff in January 2004, Ken brought experience as a teacher of at-risk teens and as a teacher trainer, including certification to train for the New Jersey Writing Project. With his graduate work in communication research and experience as an English teacher, Ken has served as a mentor to TCALL's Graduate Assistant researchers, and brought stellar writing and editorial skills to this publication. As a former professional photographer, Ken has also served as TCALL's unofficial photographer for these ten years.

Ken joined TCALL just as the Literacy Volunteer Training Initiative (VTI) was being created as an activity of the Adult & Family Literacy Clearinghouse Project. Under Ken's leadership, the VTI has promoted instructional quality in volunteer and community-based literacy service providers that do not have access to federal or state adult education funds for training of their volunteer tutors, teachers, and instructional leaders. In recent months, Ken has been working with Emily Moore, who is stepping into the VTI leadership role and will gladly answer questions about that initiative. (Email Emily at emoore@tamu.edu.)

Ken will stay very busy in retirement playing guitar and singing Western Swing, Bluegrass, and other great music with multiple bands in Bryan/College Station and beyond; supporting his wife Kathi's career and travels as a renowned children's author; and visiting his two sons, who are professional musicians in southern California.

We at TCALL will miss Ken for his collegiality, his kindness, for serving as TCALL's staff meteorologist whenever interesting weather was approaching, and for his wicked proclivity for puns. He is also very tall and can reach objects on high shelves. TCALL will simply not be the same place without Ken.

The 2014 GED® Program is Here!
by Debi Faucette, GED® Testing Service

The 2014 student experience begins with MyGED™ at GED.com, a start-to-finish tool that gives your students everything they need to prepare for the test, perform well on the test, and progress to good jobs with good wages after the test.

Tell your students to get started today at GED.com to:

- Create a free MyGED™ account
- Start studying
- Take GED Ready™: The Official Practice Test
- Schedule their test
- Learn about jobs and college options

Also, be sure to get your site 2014 ready with templates and resources available at www.GEDtestingservice.com/2014ready.

Adult Learner Transitions to Work and Postsecondary Education

Taking Your Grant-Funded College Transition Project to Scale

by David Borden and Charlene Gill

At Austin Community College, we have had tremendous success with our College Transitions Program, funded through a grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The program structure is simple and follows well-established practices for success: cohort building, block scheduling, and explicit instruction in improving soft skills (Complete College America, 2013).

In just twelve weeks, these students have a higher success rate than their developmental education (DE) counterparts — who spend *two years* in the traditional DE sequence. Even with this demonstrated success, it has taken great effort simply to sustain the program and to work toward taking it to scale.

To begin the process, we used Abby Parcell's (2013) list of questions to formulate our scaling plan:
1. What is the value of the program?
2. Is scaling feasible?
3. Who makes up the core team?
4. What is our scaling goal?
5. What is the scaling plan?

VALUE
We collected and analyzed our own student success data as well as data from other programs. This data enabled us to demonstrate (a) *Our own* program's efficacy and (b) *Other programs* to illustrate the widespread success of block scheduling coupled with high intensity. We also collected student stories and testimonials to put a human face on the impact of the program.

FEASIBILITY
We looked at our data and determined that the program was not a boutique program for a select few, but could and should be expanded. Next, we identified allies inside and outside our institution, and began using our data to convince them that we had a solution to their student success challenges — our program.

We identified potential opposition and engaged in a three-year effort to win their support, both through the use of data and simple conversations to clear up misconceptions (for example, that we did not want to replace all of DE classes with our program!). Making allies within committees and organizations external to the college (such as Opportunity Youth, Jobs for the Future, and our area Workforce Board) has proven crucial as well.

CORE TEAM
The core team determines the success of the program — or lack thereof. These leaders must understand and be dedicated to the goals of the program, and possess the skills to meet these goals.

When forming your team, create a group of key allies both inside your institution and at partner agencies who will be included in the planning process, such as an academic department chair and a dean of students. Outside of the college we have developed allies at Workforce Solutions and county government. How did we achieve this feat? Not through "networking," often a crass, soulless endeavor. We joined committees, got to know people, and overall just *did good work*. A good reputation translates into meetings with decision makers, which means success for your program. For example, David joined the Achieving the Dream Student Success Committee, and in a short time became one of five committee chairs in charge of college-wide goals. This position puts him in contact with the college's President/CEO at least once a month and has proven invaluable in our efforts to scale up the Transitions Program.

SCALING GOAL(S)

Our goal was to make the program larger — to serve all the students who could benefit from its services. To do this, we explored connections with Workforce Solutions and their grant with the city, through the Aspen Institute, and even within our own college's DE Work Group. These efforts took time and diligence, and it often seemed as though this work was going nowhere. For three long years, we heard nothing except general nods of praise regarding our program's success. However, we persisted in demonstrating how and why this program would be so beneficial to students — and to the organizations that serve them.

SCALING PLAN

Ask yourself the following questions and be specific in your answers:

- How many students will we serve?
- What are our incremental goals for growth?
- What are the costs involved at each step?
- Where will the program be delivered?
- How specifically will we evaluate our success?
- What supports must be in place?

We are happy to report that our scaling efforts are finally paying off: The Vice President of Instruction has endorsed pursuing the program as a Non-Course Based-Option (NCBO) at the college's Math Emporium in fall of 2014 with DE. After this journey, we have determined that the bottom line for selling the program is being able to fill in these blanks: "Taking the project to scale allows us to _____, and this matters to the institution because _____."

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Parcell, A. (October 2013). *More to most: Scaling up effective community college practices*. *MDC*. Retrieved from http://www.achievingthedream.org/sites/default/files/resources/M2M.pdf.

About the Authors

David Borden is the Executive Director of the Adult Education Division at Austin Community College. He has taught in and managed education programs in the U.S. and abroad for the last 20 years.

Charlene Gill has been the College Transitions Program Coordinator for the Adult Education Division at Austin Community College since 2010. She holds a Master's degree in English.

Free Online Training Courses
on the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education

The National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education is an outcome-based reporting system for the state-administered, federally-funded adult education program. NRS was developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy (DAEL). The NRS project is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in Washington, D.C.

Among other services, the NRS Project provides several online training courses designed for adult education program administrators (or other interested educators) to explain NRS requirements and to improve the quality of NRS data collection. Proof of course completion is provided. Topics include:

- What Is the NRS?
- Data Quality Guide Training Courses
- NRS Data Flow
- Using NRS Data
- Scenarios (extended courses for local administrators)
- Data Use Guide Training Courses
- Learning to be a NRS Data Detective

http://www.nrsweb.org/trainings/courses.aspx

You can also find this and other virtual training sources on TCALL's Online Professional Development page. http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/onlinePDSources.htm

TCALL Hosts New Email Discussion List
for Accelerate Texas and Intensive College Readiness Programs

TCALL now hosts and moderates a new email discussion list to serve agency partners for Accelerate Texas and Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students (IPAES), along with leadership of Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and Texas Workforce Commission.

This email communication network was created to improve and integrate communication between colleges, workforce programs, and adult education and literacy providers who are coordinating or partnering with agencies funded as Innovation or Intensive College Readiness grantees by THECB. For partners in those programs, this email discussion list is an auxiliary communication tool, not a substitute for the Accelerate Texas Community of Practice (CoP) website hosted by Jobs for the Future, which is used by THECB and the Public Policy Research Institute evaluation team for important communication with grantees.

What Are Accelerate Texas and IPAES?

The Accelerate Texas programs require institutions to establish interagency partnerships in order to design and implement career pathways for lower skilled adults and youth who score at the high intermediate ESL level (literacy/reading) or low intermediate basic education level (reading/numeracy). The Accelerate Texas programs target out-of-school adults and youth without a high school diploma or GED® certificate who are interested in a career/technical education in a target or high-demand occupation in their region. The program also targets underprepared adults who may have graduated from high school three or more years prior to enrollment in the program but who test into basic skills levels (below 8.9 grade level).

Integrated or Concurrent Enrollment Program Design

Under the Accelerate Texas programs, adult education students take career/technical education (CTE) courses concurrently with adult education courses that support the content of the workforce course through a contextualized, relevant curriculum (e.g. Math for CNC machinists). The support classes are taught by ESL, adult basic education faculty, or by developmental education faculty who plan the basic skills (or contextualized GED®) instruction in collaboration with the CTE instructor. At the completion of a program, successful students may earn both a GED® certificate and a work training certificate that is of value in their regional labor market and that leads to further credentials along a specified career path or program of study.

Intensive Programs for Adult Education Students (IPAES)

IPAES project aims to determine if short-term and accelerated academic instruction and support can positively affect transition to college, college persistence, and success for students who are underrepresented in college and at-risk of dropping out of college. IPAES provides academically at-risk students opportunities to gain skills associated with college persistence and success in first and second-year college courses. Of the 81 students who THECB was able to track into higher education after completing the first pilot program in summer 2009, 53 percent entered college in fall 2009. Of these 43 students, 100 percent successfully completed their first college-level mathematics course in fall 2009, compared to 79 percent of a matched comparison group. Moreover, 95 percent of these students successfully completed their first college-level reading course in fall 2009, compared to 68 percent of a matched comparison group; and 95 percent successfully completed their first college-level writing course, compared to 70 percent of a matched comparison group. Follow up data on future cohorts who completed an intensive program in 2010-2013 are forthcoming.

For more information about Accelerate Texas or to subscribe to this discussion list, please contact Dr. Linda Muñoz, Senior Program Director for Developmental and Adult Education at Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. Linda.Munoz@THECB.state.tx.us

Look for Accelerate Texas on the home page of Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board:
http://www.thecb.state.tx.us

Ideas for Teachers of Adults

Adult Ed 101: Understanding and Applying the Principles of Andragogy

by Dr. Donald Finn

Scientist commonly assert that between 85 and 90% of an iceberg's mass lies beneath the water's surface. Similarly, much of the adult learner's makeup lies below the "surface" and is primarily unseen. While the more obvious characteristics are visible "above the waterline" such as gender, race, age, etc., there are other important characteristics that lie "just below the surface." Some of the "hidden" characteristics such as life experiences, thinking styles, learning styles, perspectives, and "educational history" may have a profound impact on the learner and the learning setting. A complicated challenge for adult educators is to get "below the surface" to help foster learning. Today, much attention is given to the need for adults to possess 21st Century Skills; these skills include effective verbal and written communication, reasoning, and teamwork. Each of these skills is essential for success, and advancement in the workplace, in educational settings, and in daily life. To help foster these skills, and bring out the best in adult learners, successful programs must consider a few general principles that form the foundation of andragogy.

Andragogy

Andragogy is a term that is commonly associated with the instruction of adults and is based upon the assumption that adults and children learn differently. The term "andragogy" literally translates into *leader of adults.* In the late 1960s, Malcolm Knowles offered a paradigm for distinguishing the art and science of teaching adults (andragogy) as being different and distinct from the art and science of teaching children (pedagogy). Understanding and incorporating andragogical approaches into the adult classroom is vital to the success of adult learners. Knowles initially offered four assumptions for teaching adults:

1. As a person matures, his or her self-concept moves from that of dependent personality toward one of a <u>self-directed</u> human being.

2. An adult accumulates a growing reservoir of <u>experience</u> which is a rich resource for learning.

3. The <u>readiness</u> of an adult to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social role.

4. There is a change in time perspective as people mature—from future application of knowledge to immediacy of application. Thus, an adult is more <u>problem centered</u> than subject centered in learning.

Later in his career, Knowles added two additional assumptions to his model:

5. The most potent <u>motivations are internal</u> rather than external, and

6. Adults need to know <u>why they need to learn</u> something.

The integration of these widely accepted assumptions is critical as programs and curricula are developed because at the center is the recognition of the learner's "adultness." For example, teachers should keep in mind that adult learners are self-directed and will enter a program, (often a courageous move in itself), to seek help in reaching their goals. These learners come "prepackaged" with experiences, both negative and positive, that have an impact on their self-concept, and on the learning environment. Past experiences, and skills, can aid the learner in understanding new concepts, so it is critical that teachers of adults become familiar with the individual learners and their experiences. Experience can have an impact on the types of learning strategies that are employed in the adult education classroom. Individual

learner's experiences may enhance instruction as learners participate in group, peer-helping, and problem-based activities.

Adults need to know why they are learning what they are learning. This puts pressure on instructors to ensure the relevance of each learning experience. Teachers should strive to be in regular communication with learners to review their individual goals. If adults do not see the relevance of lessons, or if they feel they are not making progress toward their goals, they might "vote with their feet" and leave the program, often without warning.

A key to fostering learner success is being an empathetic instructor who provides learning experiences that are not "too far out of reach;" instructors need to find the balance between learning activities that are too easy and too challenging. In the 1970s, the theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), originally developed by the Russian-born social psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), became known in Western society. In short, the ZPD is the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. Visually, the zone is a gap between the learner's current competence/ability and desired competence/ability. It is critical that the zone be appropriately challenging: Too little challenge may result in boredom while too great of a challenge might result in anxiety or frustration. Effective adult educators understand the needs of their adults and the strategies necessary to properly "pace" and support learning experiences.

Conclusion
There are many factors contributing to successful adult education programs, however, gaining an understanding of what lies beneath the surface of the "iceberg" of each adult learner is a critical first step. Understanding of the assumptions underlying andragogy, and applying appropriate instructional strategies are important for developing adult-appropriate learning experiences. There are several other factors that help adult education programs to be successful: Among these are an appropriate environment, (both physical and psychological), an understanding of various learning styles and strategies for addressing them, and the characteristics that adult learners look for in their instructors. But understanding andragogy is the "Adult 101" step in the process.

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About the Author
Dr. Don Finn is an Associate Professor of Adult Education at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. An adult education specialist for over 20 years, Don has consulted with organizations to help them better understand the unique traits of adult learners and the programs that serve them.

NATIONAL LINCS COMMUNITY UPGRADES

LINCS (Literacy Information and Communication System) is a national community of practice (COP) for adult education practitioners to help each other achieve and improve their work in the field of adult education. Several new features went live with LINCS upgrades announced on March 3, 2014.

Simplified Email Subscriptions
Group Quick Links
Polls
Updated look
Saved Posts

Learn more and join
a LINCS Community at
https://community.lincs.ed.gov/

Tarrant Literacy Coalition Develops Model for GED® Test Preparation Classes

by Jamie Limes

In 2011, leaders at the Tarrant Literacy Coalition embarked on Project **BEST** (Basic Education and Skills Tutoring): our own set of GED® preparation classes. Since inception, our students have aided us in identifying the benefits of a more innovative approach to teaching. Many of our GED® students are here because traditional school did not work for them, so why would we expect them to go back to a similarly structured classroom and have sudden success? Our system is continually evolving, but we have identified four of our *best* components to improve student retention and success.

B-Baseline Evaluation - Diagnostic exams have been invaluable in allowing us to assess and personalize instruction for every student. On the first day of class, each student completes the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Instead of exclusively inspecting their final scores, we create a diagnostic assessment of their skills based on *incorrect* answers. We then use this information to identify the specific skillsets where each of them needs improvement. In doing so, we are able to focus the student's assignments during class on specific skills needing improvement, as well as suggest effective homework.

We also find it efficacious to use these diagnostic assessments throughout the semester. Comparing previous and current scores allows us to gauge what is working for each student and to recognize areas of struggle. This allows for continual individualized adjustment, which improves each student's odds of success.

E-Educating in Small Groups - We believe baseline evaluation is so advantageous because our students are learning in an environment where they are known by their instructor and receive lots of personal attention from literacy volunteers and tutors. For our specific students, the traditional classroom model brings memories of their previous struggles in the education system; therefore, in order to provide them with the optimal chance of success, we focus on encouragement and specialization in small groups. By merely diverging from the traditional classroom format, our students feel more relaxed and dedicated to giving "school" another try.

Our typical classroom is comprised of 20 students and four to six volunteers/tutors. Using our students' diagnostic scores, we group them into clusters based on the skills needing further improvement. Each student participates in two groups of two to five students: one for Tuesday and one for Thursday. These small groupings allow us to get to know our students on a personal level; we become invested in their lives and the lives of their families. Because of this, our students know they are in an environment where people care about their success, in contrast to the more impersonal experience many of them had with public education. This also ensures our tutors know the areas where their students struggle and whether they understood the day's lesson.

This classroom environment facilitates improved retention rates and student persistence. Before instituting this classroom model in Project BEST our typical retention rate was in the 50% range. Last spring using the small group model we had an 89% retention rate. Likewise, our summer retention was at 86%. This unusually high rate is because our students try harder not to miss class, knowing they will be disappointing their tutor and the close friends in their cohort. We also take time to personally call each student the day before class to remind them about the session and verify their arrival time. This reinforces the student's understanding that we are counting on them to attend and that we value their success.

S-Specialized Test Knowledge - This small group learning environment thrives because of our tutors' familiarity with the GED® exam. Every instructor attends a training to become knowledgeable on the GED® structure and the material it covers. Teachers can therefore make instruction more specified. For instance, as we work through math skills, we know a mastery of graphing is ancillary to students' success since this makes up only a small percentage of the exam; however, an adequate command of basic functions, such as multiplication and division, is essential, so we allocate more time to ensure success on these topics.

Our focus on individualized instruction helps us ascertain why each student is pursuing his or her

GED®; therefore, if a student is aspiring to attend college, we can ensure that higher-level writing skills and college-level math skills take precedence over the skills required to pass the test. While our main goal is for a student to pass, we teach the content which will be essential to that student's future.

T-Test Simulation - Our last step in individualizing our students' education is to give them the GED® Official Practice Test (OPT) at least twice before taking the GED® exam. We think simulating the actual testing environment is essential for our students to know what to expect on test day. By doing so, we can ensure that the students are adequately prepared, and if not, we can meet with their tutors to help evaluate the areas where they still need improvement.

When Project BEST started in 2011, using more traditional models of enrollment and instruction, we experienced drop-out rates similar to those in other programs in our community – it was not uncommon for attendance to drop to 50% or less of those who

were enrolled in the program. When we changed our model and implemented the strategies, attendance increased significantly and a much greater percentage of students stayed in the program throughout the entire semester.

With these changes, we feel we have creatively changed the learning environment of our students in a way that many other literacy volunteer programs could replicate to achieve similar results. Since transforming our program from a traditional classroom to a small group, learner-centered program, we have seen a greater number of students taking and passing the GED® exam. As one student said, "I never knew I could do it. I learned what I needed to know and I'm so glad I made the decision to come. This has really changed my life."

About the Author
Jamie Limes is a writing intern at Tarrant Literacy Coalition while completing her senior year at Texas Christian University.

COMING SOON…
Findings from Adult Transitions
Longitudinal Study

The National College Transitions Network will soon publish findings from the Adult Transitions Longitudinal Study, or ATLAS, a study implemented by University of Massachusetts Amherst and World Education with funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. ATLAS followed over 200 ABE-to-College transition course participants for five years to uncover the factors that influenced them in enrolling, persisting, and succeeding in college.

Under the leadership of Dr. Cristine Smith, Associate Professor at UMass Amherst, the question driving this research was: What are the educational outcomes for adults participating in a transition- to-college course, and what are the factors individual, program, institutional that influence these outcomes? In this study, interviews were conducted with 220 adults who participated in one of 11 ABE-to-College transition programs in fall 2007 or spring 2008. The researchers followed the adults for five years, interviewing them each year, asking them about their college status and about their individual, family, and work lives, to uncover the supports and barriers to enrolling, persisting and succeeding in college.

For more information, visit the National College Transitions Network website. http://www.collegetransition.org/home.html

Assessment Field Test Opportunity: Education & Skills Online

by Ann Kennedy

Educational Testing Service (ETS) is currently coordinating the field test activities for a new product for assessing adult populations to measure literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills in technology-rich environments. The product, Education & Skills Online, is being developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in cooperation with ETS (for additional information see the brochure on the OECD's website (*http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/ENG_Brochure%20Education%20and%20Skills%20Online%20SAS_Oct%2013.pdf*). **We are currently recruiting participants from adult education programs within the United States to participate in the field test of the Spanish language version of Education & Skills Online.**

Education & Skills Online is meant to serve the adult education community**. It's important that the population of native Spanish speakers ages 18-65 is represented in this field test.** To show our appreciation, ETS will pay up to $50 per completed field trial. This means that the individual respondent responds to the full set of information (background and cognitive) to the best of his or her ability. This payment can be made in one of two ways:

1. ETS will send $50 gift cards to be distributed to each student that completes the assessment.
2. ETS will send a direct payment to the program in the amount of $50.00 per completed assessment. This second option would allow for programs to keep all of the money, or to keep a portion of the money and distribute the remainder among participating students at their discretion.

What does the assessment involve?

The Education and Skills Online field test is a one-time-only assessment that is estimated to take a person 60-90 minutes to complete. The test includes measures of reading literacy and numeracy, and also has a set of reading components that can be used to better understand the set of skills that low literate adults possess. Also included in the field test are a set of background variables and a set of non-cognitive measures that studies have shown to correlate with success in educational and workplace environments.

The assessment will be delivered on a computer over the internet. The administration is fully automated (system requirements include internet access with Firefox browser). If a program has entire classes interested in the assessment, the assessment may be taken in a computer lab or classroom environment. Alternatively, participants can be assigned a log-in authorization code and may take the assessment on a home computer. All of the information is collected automatically and will be stored in a database that is only accessible to ETS for analytical purposes.

What is the time frame involved?

The field test administration window will be open until sample size requirements are met.

What are the expectations for participating programs?

ETS will provide background information and a set of administration guidelines that will contain information about system requirements, contact information for general information or technical assistance, and instructions for accessing the administration portal. ETS will provide weekly updates during the administration for monitoring progress.

Please contact Ann Kennedy if you are interested or would like additional information.

Ann Kennedy
Research Project Manager
Educational Testing Service (ETS)
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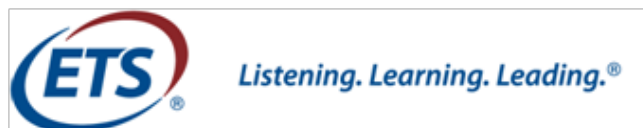
Recruitment, Retention, Motivation & Goal Setting

It's All Worth It...It Really Is!

by Dale E. Pillow

There are days, no, really, there are weeks when I wonder what I'm doing and why I'm doing what I do. Adult education wasn't my first career choice. I was a legal assistant for many, many years. Stressful, yes, but a different kind of stress!

The week of our center's graduation ceremony was just such a week. Several grants were due and had to be written. I had a board meeting that week. I had meetings every day and luncheons to attend on several days. We were holding our first joint graduation ceremony for students who completed the 100-hour computer literacy class we held in partnership with the Mexican Institute of Houston and our first graduating class from our *Roots of Success* project. I wanted everything to be just right.

Pearland Mayor Tom Reid presents Roots of Success Certificate of Completion to Jose Alfredo Trevino.

The City of Pearland was graciously allowing us to use the council chambers and the Mayor was going to speak and present the certificates to our students. Balfour Houston donated caps, gowns and tassels. H-E-B *plus!* in Pearland donated cookies and punch for our reception. Everything was ready for the graduation, but I felt like I was swimming upstream all week long. By the evening of our graduation ceremony, I was just ready for the whole thing to be over.

I plan things well in advance. I always have a script for any event. I will admit that I like order. When the graduation ceremony began, it started out well. The Mayor spoke and everyone in the room was very at-

tentive. The instructors spoke and, again, everyone was quiet and listened. But when the student's names were called to come forward to receive their certificate, the best that can be said was it became chaotic. Every parent, every child, every husband, every wife was on his or her feet, crowding the aisles to get close enough to take a picture.

Everyone wanted a picture with the Mayor, and he is so gracious, he not only posed for all pictures but also guided the students so that they would be facing the right camera!

As the person trying to run an orderly graduation, this was not the pomp and circumstance that I had envisioned! As the muscles in my neck began to tighten and I wondered if I should try to bring order to the event, I saw the huge smile on the face of the student who had just received her certificate from the Mayor, and I realized the whole ceremony was not about being orderly. The stars of that show were the students, and the proud family and friends present wanted to preserve the moment in pictures.

At one point after the ceremony, I walked up to our *Roots of Success* instructor, Alvin Le Blanc, who was speaking with a woman. When he turned toward me, I noticed the tears in his eyes. He had been talking to the girlfriend of one of the older students in his *Roots* class. She told Alvin that this was the first time this student had been recognized for anything in his life.

Another student, Adolfo, a 32-year-old father of three, graduated from the *Roots of Success* Project. The pride and glow in his eyes couldn't pass unnoticed. "This is the first time I ever graduated," said the machine operator. When asked what he learned during the course, Adolfo said "We do bad things to the planet. Sometimes we don't even know they're bad. We have to do something about it."

Alma, 51, completed the 100-hour computer literacy class. For Alma, the course was an opportunity to start taking steps toward making her dream come true – she aspires to work in an office one day. For that, Alma not only attended and completed the computer classes, she also takes English classes.

These students are "why we do what we do." They are the reason we put up with the stress of putting on a graduation ceremony. They are the reason we deal with all the issues in adult education – not enough money, not enough hours in the day! Our students are the joy, the motivation, and the reward we receive when we come to work every day. Our students are awesome!

On those days when the stress level gets a little too high, I only have to walk out of my office and talk to a student who will tell me about the visit she made to her child's class or the student who just found out he passed his GED® exams. That's when I can tell myself, "It's all worth it."

About the Author
Dale Pillow is a founding member of the Adult Reading Center in Pearland, a community-based adult literacy program established in 1987, and has served as its President & CEO since 2001. For her work in literacy, she was selected as the 2005 Citizen of the Year by the Pearland Chamber of Commerce; as the 2010 Community Builder by the Masonic Lodge of Pearland; as a 2010 Local Hero by Bank of America; and in 2011, she was selected as a Daily Point of Light Honoree by the Points of Light Institute which was established by President George H.W. Bush. She graduated from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio with a Major in English and a Minor in Psychology.

Roots of Success Summer 2013 Pilot Class: (from left) Jose Alfredo Trevino, Johana Avalos, Hong Seong Be, Adolfo Paniagua, Maria Rodriguez, and Rodger Taylor. Delmy Esocobar, Pete Garza, and Henry LeBlanc were unable to attend. Instructor for the class was Alvin Le Blanc.

Computer Literacy Class graduates with instructor Martha Garza (back row, 4th from left).

Building Collaboration & Program Improvement

Building Collaboration with Workforce Partners

by Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani

Partnerships require effort. Legislation and policy changes do not always result in successful partnerships and collaboration. The "boots on the ground" play a significant role in translating state initiatives into promising local efforts that spell success for adult learners. The summary report, *Advancing Career Pathways for Adult Learners*, describes several examples of innovative twists to bringing partners together. The good news is that these can be easily replicated as adult education providers prepare for the new program year and the transition to the Texas Workforce Commission.

Advancing Career Pathways for Adult Learners includes a number of forms developed and utilized by adult education programs participating in last year's C-4 initiative, and describes promising practices that continue to pay off for local adult education programs and their workforce partners. The intent of the C-4 initiative (piloted in three regions – Alamo, Central Texas, and Coastal) was to provide intensive GED® preparation and career readiness skills that would enable adult learners to earn the GED® and simultaneously qualify for postsecondary education, training, and employment. Participating adult education providers collaborated with workforce partners to lower the risk of adult learners dropping out of the educational and workforce continuum before reaching their educational and employment goals.

With determination and hard work, local programs utilized *Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE/ESOL Classroom* to blend career awareness and career readiness skills with intensive GED® preparation, and to introduce learners to the value of using local labor market information. In addition, programs participating in the C-4 initiative developed a number of strategies that resulted in unprecedented success. Two are described here.

The establishment of a local **Workforce Literacy Resource Team (WLRT)**, which met quarterly, included local adult education providers, local workforce partners, employer representatives, and postsecondary educational institutions. Quarterly meetings allowed for regular updates, shared plans for designing the delivery of services, the articulation of roles, responsibilities, and expectations, and the identification of obstacles to successful partnering. Establishing respect for each other's roles and responsibilities became a key to better serving learners. The WLRT concept worked especially well in Central Texas.

In Central Texas, the WLRT meetings became a dynamic forum for discussion of a career pathways pipeline for adult education students. For example, prior to the C-4 initiative, there had been little collaborative thinking about how WIA Title I might serve older adult learners. The adult education student population had not historically been viewed as a desirable target for recruitment into job training initiatives. In its strategic plan, Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area set an objective to identify adult education students most appropriate for WIA intensive and/or training services, with the goal of providing these services to an increasing number of adult learners in each of the next five years.

Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area also drafted an efficient referral and screening process specifically for the adult education population. Adult education instructors, counselors, and the program director himself became critical to the referral process, corresponding directly with the Workforce WIA Program Operations Manager, who instructed a WIA career specialist to contact the individual and schedule an appointment. No more falling through the cracks! This process will ideally contribute to the achievement of performance objectives for both the adult education provider (in this case, Community Action Inc. of Central Texas) and Workforce Solutions in the coming years.

Another successful feature of the C-4 initiative was the addition of local **Transitions/Career Counselors or Coordinators** to the adult education staff. Programs committed a staff member to assist learners in making successful transitions to employment and postsecondary education and training opportunities. Counselors worked closely with individuals in developing career pathways, in making connections with local workforce partners for services, and in preparing for entry into postsecondary education and training opportunities. In the Coastal region, Education Service Center IV's transitions counselor maintained an especially strong relationship with both learners and workforce counterparts to ensure effective referrals for services. This partnership resulted in a number of workforce services being extended to adult learners:

- tours of one-stop workforce centers and introduction to services available
- assistance in signing up for the *Work in Texas* employment website
- appointments with one-stop staff

- tuition for job training
- GED® test vouchers, gas cards, and assistance with work-related tools and uniforms
- classroom space and access to copy and fax machines for student resumes
- baseline TABE testing
- computers with internet access

Additional promising practices and forms developed for use in the C-4 initiative are included in *Advancing Career Pathways for Adult Learners*. This summary report can be downloaded from the TCALL website by going to *http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/transitions.html* -- Look Under Other Texas Resources.

About the Author
Barbara Tondre-El Zorkani is an independent consultant and contractor whose focus is on the workforce literacy needs of adult learners. Btondre@earthlink.net

Texas A&M University Offers Online Master's in Adult Education

The Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development (EAHR), in the College of Education at Texas A&M University houses various programs in public school administration, human resource development, higher education administration, adult education, and student affairs administration. Graduates are found in various educational settings.

Starting in Fall 2014, the EAHR Department will offer an online Master of Science (MS) degree in educational human resource development with a specialization in adult education. Numerous students have applied for this program for the fall. **The deadlines to submit application materials are August 15, 2014 for Spring 2015 admission and December 1, 2015 for Summer/Fall 2016 admission to the program.**

The field of adult education seeks to understand how adults learn, how to facilitate that learning more effectively and how that learning can benefit both the individual learner and society at large. This degree prepares individuals to administer programs and teach adults in a variety of settings, including community centers, literacy centers, higher education, health care institutions, non-profit institutions, and the workplace.

The 37 credit hour program includes 10 required courses (28 credit hours) and 3 elective courses (9 credit hours). Part-time students can generally complete the degree in 2-3 years. Each course is 3 credit hours unless otherwise specified. Required courses include:

EHRD 616: Methods of Teaching Adults
EHRD 618: Evaluation Models in Human Resource Development
EHRD 625: Organization Development and Performance in Human Resource Development
EHRD 627: Research and Development in Human Resource Development (or Equivalent Research Course)
EHRD 630: Adult Learning
EHRD 631: Foundations of Adult Education
EHRD 642: Program Development in Adult Education
EHRD 643: Adult Education, Globalization and Social Justice
EHRD 681: Seminar (1 credit hour).
EHRD 690A: Theory of EHRD Research - Statistics I

Electives can be taken in a variety of areas including but not limited to health, literacy, human resource development, and public service administration.

Program faculty with a specialization in adult education include Dr. Mary V. Alfred, Dr. Dominique T. Chlup, and Dr. Lisa M. Baumgartner. Dr. Alfred received her Ph.D. from the University of Texas. Her research interests include women's learning and development, immigrant learners in adult and higher education, low literate adults in education and the workplace, and women of the African Diaspora. Dr. Chlup received her doctorate from Harvard University. Dr. Chlup's most recent research interests include the development of writing productivity amongst graduate students and faculty members, college access related to parental involvement, and engaging with the creative and artistic abilities of adult learners. Dr. Lisa M. Baumgartner's research agenda concerns adult learning and development, chronic disease as it relates to adult learning and development, identity development, and issues of diversity. She received her doctorate from the University of Georgia.

For application information please contact Ms. Brynn Ruiz, Academic Advisor, at: 979.862. 4154 or brynnruiz@tamu.edu

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An Introduction to Distance Education: Understanding Teaching and Learning in a New Era. Cleveland-Innes, M. F. and Garrison, D. R., editors (2010). New York, NY: Routledge. Here is a comprehensive look at the field today, outlining current theories, practices and goals. The book reviews the influence of past distance education theory and practice, along with current changes. It outlines the practical skills and information that are essential to effective distance education design, delivery and navigation. Loan Item for Texas Educators ONLY.

Challenger Writing, Second Edition. McVey & Associates (2010).Syracuse, NY: New Readers Press. Challenger's eight levels guide adult learners from beginning reading through to preparing for the GED®. Challenger uses phonics, controlled vocabulary, and sequential skill development. Skills and concepts are presented in the context of diverse fiction and nonfiction passages relevant to adults. Challenger builds reading and writing skills: Word analysis skills include phonics, word families, and prefixes and suffixes; Reading Comprehension skills include main idea and detail, making inferences, cause and effect, and literary interpretation; Controlled vocabulary is developed through fiction, nonfiction, and literary reading selections based on topics and themes that interest adults; Writing mechanics and composition skills are developed in each lesson, with more practice included in the writing books. **Ask how to become a Preferred Borrower.**

English for Restaurant Workers, Second Edition. Talalla, Renee (2008). United States of America: Compass Publishing. This book is designed for trainee waiters and waitresses, and for trainers in the restaurant and catering industry. This post-elementary course has been specially developed using a novel picture based format. The book incorporates the English vocabulary needed in this field of work, illustrates important job-specific verbs and nouns, shows how restaurant tasks are done in a step-by-step picture process format. It includes common phrases, terms, and expressions that recur constantly, provides a basic reference to aspect of restaurant work such as equipment used, cooking methods, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, different meats and vegetables, etc. Audio CD includes dialogs from each chapter.

Health Literacy from A to Z: Practical Ways to Communicate Your Health Message , Second Edition. Osborne, Helen (2013). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning. This book is filled with ideas and strategies that can be used in everyday practice. It is an easy to use handbook designed for healthcare students or the busy health professional. Learn the key principles and strategies of effective health communication presented in a simple, informal manner by one of the nation's leading experts in health literacy. The Second Edition is updated and revised to reflect current health literacy research and practice with new information about timely health literacy topics.

Jump Start the Adult Learner: How to Engage and Motivate Adults Using Brain-Compatible Strategies. Materna, Laurie (2007). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. This user-friendly guide provides valuable background information about adult learning styles, memory, and how the brain learns. Engaging, interactive strategies for classrooms or workshops include graphic organizers, music energizers, exercise activities, and self-assessments, and each strategy is accompanied by a wide range of real-life examples. Ideal for staff developers, trainers, principals, teacher leaders, coaches, mentors, adult education instructors, adult learners, and consultants, this book provides everything staff developers need to successfully implement this dynamic and learner-centered approach in any adult learning environment. Loan Item for Texas Educators ONLY.

Learning for Economic Self-Sufficiency: Constructing Pedagogies of Hope Among Low-In-

come, Low-Literate Adults. Alfred, Mary V., Editor (2010). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc. This book highlights the problems and challenges that low-literate adults encounter in various environments and presents strategies for addressing the chronic illiteracy among low-income workers. Contributors describe a holistic view of the complexities of educating a population of low-literate adult learners from various life conditions. From language literacy issues in corrections, the workplace and access to higher education, and migrant workers literacy learning barriers, to technology literacies, and consumerism myths, this book explores the complex scope of issues faced by low-income, low-literate adults as they seek learning for economic self-sufficiency.

Living with Healthy Relationships. Murphy, Judy (2005). Canada: Grass Roots Press. Relationships are an important part of our lives. This book focuses on our relationship with ourselves and others. The opening chapter examines the signs of a healthy relationship. Chapter two encourages students to respond to the question "Who are you?" by completing an interactive activity called "Map Your Identity." Chapters three and four discuss how to respond to and resolve conflict. The last two chapters provide ideas for building and ending a relationship. The interactive activities throughout the book encourage critical thinking and reflection.

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. Dweck, Carol S. Ph.D. (2006). New York: Ballantine Books. The author explains why it's not just our abilities and talent that bring us success–but whether we approach them with a fixed or growth mindset. She makes clear why praising intelligence and ability doesn't foster self-esteem and lead to accomplishment, but may actually jeopardize success. With the right mindset, we can motivate our kids and help them to raise their grades, as well as reach our own goals – personal and professional. The author reveals what all great parents, teachers, CEOs, and athletes already know: how a simple idea about the brain can create a love of

learning and a resilience that is the basis of great accomplishment in every area.

The Cartoon Introduction to Statistics. Klein, Grady and Dabney, Alan (2013). New York, NY: Hill and Wang. This book (no relation to a previous book by the same title) avoids math's formulae almost entirely and explains the basics of statistical thinking in a fun, easy-going way. Its biggest contribution is to tackle the difficulties that arise from collecting data "in the wild"—in the real world and not in the laboratory. The book uses the comic-book format to lighten the subject and turn it into a series of stories. It is not perfect, but it can serve as a *useful field guide for people who know very little about statistics—and it has a high probability of being enjoyed.*

The College Transition Toolkit. Goodman, Sandy and Rao, Deepa and Spohn, Jessica and Zafft, Cynthia (2008). Boston, MA: National College Transition Network. The is a comprehensive guide to program planning and implementation that draws on the expertise of practitioners from the New England ABE-to-College Transition Project and around the country. The Toolkit CD contains detailed information to help adult educators and administrators plan for the needs of students interested in pursuing postsecondary education and training. The CD contains a flexible, navigable, HTML version of the toolkit that enables you to move between chapter topics, accompanying documents, and online resources of immediate interest to you. The chapter topics include program models, partnerships and collaborations, recruitment, assessment, counseling, curriculum and instruction, planning, and using data for program development.

Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do. Terkel, Studs (2004). New York: The New Press. The author records the voices of America. Men and women from every walk of life talk to him, telling him of their likes and dislikes, fears, problems, and happiness on the job.

Email TCALL's Library Staff (tcall@tamu.edu) to request the current web address of these online resources - or to request a free hard copy by mail.

Read it Online or Free by Mail

ADULT SECONDARY EDUCATION

2014 GED® Test Curriculum Blueprint from GED® Academy: An Educator's Guide to Being GED® Test-Ready. Essential Education (2013). Corvallis, OR: Essential Education Corporation. This document describes what will change on the 2014 GED® Test, gives curriculum and lesson resources, and discusses test targets, standards, and alignments.

Bridging the Digital Divide: Preparing for GED® 2014, Vol. 17 No. 3. Rose, Dr. Glenda (August/September 2013). College Station, TX: Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning. In this article written for Texas Adult and Family Literacy Quarterly, the author discusses the upcoming changes to the 2014 GED® and the emphasis on computer use. She discusses three areas of concern that have been identified: availability of technology, frequency of use, and purpose of employing technological resources.

Extended Response and Short Answer Resource Guides for Adult Educators. GED® Testing Service (2013). Bloomington, MN: GED® Testing Service. This GED® website provides information on how the extended response and short answer items on the 2014 GED® test will be scored. The different sections can be downloaded and there is a link for a practice test.

GED® Testing Service: A Teacher's Guide: Getting Acquainted with the 2014 GED® Test: The Eight-Week Program. GED® Testing Service (2013). Bloomington, MN: GED® Testing Service. GED® Testing Service has created an eight-week program to help adult educators become better acquainted with the 2014 GED® test.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Creating a Sense of Community for Distance Learners: Examples from the Field, Vol. 17 No. 3. Molinari, AnneMarie (August/September 2013). College Station, TX: Texas Center for the Advancement of

Literacy and Learning. In this article written for Texas Adult and Family Literacy Quarterly, the author discusses distance learning and some of the challenges of creating a sense of community when not having the students physically in a class. Four teachers give scenarios of ways they have coped with this situation.

FAMILY LITERACY & ESL

The Family Literacy Handbook for the Oxford Picture Dictionaries (online). Adelson-Goldstein, Jayme and Shapiro, Norma and Thompson, Elizabeth Breaux (2009). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. Handbook is an online resource for family literacy programs using any of the Oxford Picture Dictionary programs for English language learning in the adult education, childhood education, parent education, or interactive literacy components of their program. Reproducible readings and worksheets are designed for students at high-beginning and low-intermediate levels, and provide an integrated approach to those components of family literacy.

HEALTH LITERACY

Health Literacy. Glassman, Penny (2013). Bethesda, MD: National Network of Libraries of Medicine. This 13-page resource has a wide range of useful health literacy links, and sections on such topics as health literacy in a cultural context, low-health literacy, economic impacts of low health literacy, and health literacy research.

Virginia Adult ESOL Health Literacy Toolkit. Singleton, Kate (2013). Richmond, VA: Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center. The Toolkit draws on adult ESOL and healthcare social work knowledge and perspectives. This comprehensive resource for adult ESOL educators and others interested in health care communication with English language learners contains reproducible lesson plans and teaching materials on high-interest, hard-to-teach health topics; easy-to-read resources on using US health care for English language learners; explanations of health literacy terms,

concepts, and issues as they relate to English language learners; resources for understanding and explaining US health care to English language learners; and examples for engaging in interdisciplinary health literacy projects.

TRANSITIONS

Breaking Through Contextualization Toolkit: A Tool for Helping Low-Skilled Adults Gain Postsecondary Certificates and Degrees. Arnold, Rebecca (Spring 2010). Washington, DC: Jobs for the Future. Developed as part of the Breaking Through initiative, this toolkit is designed to help community colleges and other educators serve low-skilled adults through the use of contextualized instruction. The toolkit describes how to integrate career subject matter with precollege skills development, allowing adult learners to get started more quickly on their chosen career path. The kit features examples of contextualized instruction, strategies for student engagement, and suggestions for sustaining a contextualized course or program.

Project Rise: Taking Lessons Learned to Improve Services for Disconnected Youth. Bangser, Michael (October 2013). New York, NY: Office of Vocational and Adult Education.The brief examines Project Rise, a program that is part of the federal Social Innovation Fund, and describes the plight of the some 1.6 million young adults ages 18–24 years of age in the United States who are both out of school and out of work, and discusses the early lessons from the project as it works to reconnect them.

WORKFORCE

Bridges to Better Jobs: How Texas Can Equip Texas Adults For Good Careers. Helmcamp, Leslie and Garza, Roxanne (March 2013). Austin, TX: Center for Public Policy Priorities. This paper provides an overview of the adult basic education and literacy system in Texas and makes recommendations for strengthening the ABE and literacy framework to reach more students and improve outcomes for adult learners.

Using Data to Improve the Performance of Workforce Training. Jacobson, Louis S. and LaLonde, Robert J. (April 2013). New York, NY: America Achieves Results for America. This report proposes solutions for each state to improve the training choices of its workers so that they have a better chance of completing their training and increase their earning potential. The goal of the report is to provide better data and measures for developing information systems that have the potential to improve training outcomes for workers with various academic preparations, abilities to use data, workplace skills, and interests. As reinforced in the report, the earnings gap between skilled and unskilled workers stands at a historic high. Training programs are, therefore, key to providing low-income individuals with the opportunities they need to qualify for jobs. Although some training programs provide opportunities for low-income individuals, millions of workers pursue career and technical training programs that do not fit their needs. The authors propose establishing a state-based solution to increase the return on training investments by developing the data and measures necessary to provide the information prospective trainees need to make better training choices.

OTHER

Quality Matters: Improving the Status of Literacy Teaching Personnel. UNESCO (2013). Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. To raise awareness of policy makers on key issues on lifelong learning, adult education and literacy, UIL has started developing a series of policy briefs. In this brief it is argued that to harness the potential of the world's illiterates, policy-makers and practitioners need to focus their attention on improving the status of literacy facilitators, because teaching personnel are vital to ensure quality in education. Based on the experience from various countries, it suggests possible elements for reflection and action. Online availability: http://uil.unesco.org/home/news-target/uil-policy-brief-no-1/407160b2b15a49945e61a458ad16a5ab/

Youth Matters: Equipping Vulnerable Young People with Literacy and Life Skills. UNESCO (2013). Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning. To raise awareness of policy makers on key issues on lifelong learning, adult education and literacy, UIL has started developing a series of policy briefs. This document highlights the right to education for young people and adults as well as the importance of harnessing the power and potential of youth learning for the peaceful and sustainable development of their societies. Online availability: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002230/223022e.pdf.