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February, 2015



## **Julie Katt, New Nebraska AE Program Specialist**

In January of 2015, Julie Katt joined the Adult Education and Veterans Education teams as a Program Specialist. Julie grew up in McCook and currently resides in Omaha with her husband, Jared, and her three children: Michael (12), Orin (7), and Grace (15 months). When she isn't running her kids to swim lessons, sports, or Scouts, you can find her spending time outdoors camping, fishing, hiking, and anything that slows the pace of the week and allows focus time for family.

Prior to joining the Nebraska Department of Education, she taught mathematics at Bellevue Public Schools. She taught a mathematics intervention class and Pre-Algebra classes. One of her students wrote that they had "never seen anybody get so excited about Math," and she agrees. She also began and ran a successful math tutoring program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha Veterans Office tutoring basic and college level math courses.

Julie has numerous qualities that she brings to the Department of Education that will make her a great asset for us and you. She is an avid learner and is passionate about student success and education. Julie graduated *sum cum laude* from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a BA in Mathematics and a BS in Secondary Education and also has a few Associates degrees ranging from Accounting to General Studies. Also, Julie is a veteran of the US Army, serving one tour to Iraq during her time in service. You may contact Julie at [julie.katt@nebraska.gov](mailto:julie.katt@nebraska.gov) or by phone at 402/471-4826.

## **Training Held Recently For New Nebraska AE Directors**

Four Adult Education Directors met at the State Office Building in Lincoln for the "New Adult Education Director Orientation" on Friday, January 23, 2015.

Those in attendance included: Front row: Diane Bruha, AE Director from Crete Public Schools; Julie Katt, State Program Specialist for Adult Education and Veterans Education; and Mary Kay Versen, AE Director at Western Nebraska Community College.



Back Row: Tate Lauer, AE Director for the Southeast Community College-Beatrice campus and surrounding 14 counties; Bob Nehe, Adult Education Director at Metropolitan Community College in Omaha; Jan Drbal, Nebraska Adult Education Staff Assistant; and Vicki Bauer, State Director of Adult Education. Welcome to the new members of Nebraska's Adult Education community! We're glad you're here!



## Citizenship

*By: Emily Duncan, Northeast Community College*

Needing a great resource for teaching our ESL students about American History, American Government, and Civics? Have you visited the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service's website ([www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship))? This website has lesson plans for both beginning and intermediate students, has tips for teaching the vocabulary, and much more. Encourage students who are working towards citizenship to visit the site for additional study materials such as videos on the process and test, get the vocabulary needed on the reading and writing test, and download the 100 civic questions. They even have resources available in different languages. Check it out!

## i-Pathways

*By: Kathy Olesen-Tracey, Center for the Application of Information Technologies*

The i-Pathways project is gearing up for many exciting professional development opportunities. These opportunities range from individual webinars related to specific topics to program-led discussions and an instructors' cohort.

Topics covered in single webinars include Recruitment Strategies, Retention Ideas, Using the Features of i-Pathways, and Understanding the Role of Social Media in Adult Education. Check the link (<https://www.i-pathways.org/public/training.jsp>) to find a time and date that fits your schedule. If none of the dates work for your schedule, contact Kathy to schedule an individual call.

Beyond the specific topics, Kathy Tracey will gladly schedule individual program calls or webinars to address questions and concerns or assist programs develop specific strategies related to implementing or instructing with i-Pathways. The goal of these individually-structured webinars or conference calls is to aid struggling programs in getting i-Pathways launched successfully. If you are interested in increasing your student outcomes with i-Pathways, join any of these opportunities. Email Kathy Tracey at [ktracey@cait.org](mailto:ktracey@cait.org) for questions or registration information.

## Abbreviations, Acronyms, Arghh!

*Submitted by Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant*

Do you sometimes get overwhelmed by the multitude of abbreviations and acronyms that we, like all other professionals, use to populate our vocabulary? Has anyone come up to you and asked what an acronym means and you know it perfectly well but your mind goes blank and you look foolish? It could be worse as you could end up in a meeting with a person who speaks his own unique language of acronymia and you have the farthest seat from the door.

Perhaps you need a cheat sheet to help you and your colleagues keep up with BEST Plus (Basic English Skills Test), CCR (College and Career Ready), IET (Integrated Education and Training) and WIOA (you better get this one soon.) You can find help easily enough by doing a search for acronyms in adult basic education or going to [www.literacy.kent.edu/adminmanual/abe\\_abbreviations.doc](http://www.literacy.kent.edu/adminmanual/abe_abbreviations.doc) for a list of abbreviations, acronyms and definitions. If that one doesn't suit you, there are a multitude of sites that are available. Check to see if all of your favorites are included.

## New Year, New Promotions

From January 26 – February 28, your students can take the GED Ready® practice test for \$1 and save \$10 when they schedule their first GED® test subject (first time test-takers only). Go to [www.GEDtestingservice.com/promotions](http://www.GEDtestingservice.com/promotions) to learn more. Download and use the materials in the "Just for Educators" section to spread the word to your students.



Encourage students to take the GED Ready® practice test or to schedule their first GED® test before February 28. Be sure to visit [GED.com](http://GED.com) to see the new and improved MyGED® login page. The page will have a brand new look and feature even more information to help students learn more before they set up their MyGED® account. Have questions or need information? Contact them at [communications@GEDtestingservice.com](mailto:communications@GEDtestingservice.com).

## **New Federal Legislation WIOA – Part II**

**By: Vicki Bauer, Nebraska Adult Education Director**

As we move closer to the implementation of our new federal legislation for Adult Education – WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act), it is important to know just what the requirements of the new law entail. In December's AE newsletter, there was a brief overview of the unified plan, the performance indicators, and the stronger alignment between adult education, vocational rehabilitation, workforce development, post-secondary education, and employers. This article will address the program considerations for funding and required state leadership activities.

**There will be 13 considerations for funding that will need to be addressed in a local AE plan (proposal). They include:**

- Responsive to regional needs in local plan and serving individuals most in need
- Ability to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including learning disabilities
- Past effectiveness in improving literacy skills
- Alignment between proposed activities and services with strategy and goals of local plan and services of one-stop partners
- Program is of sufficient intensity and quality, based on rigorous research, and uses instructional practices
- Provider activities are based on best practices derived from rigorous and scientifically valid research and effective educational practice
- Effective use of technology, services, and delivery systems to increase the quality of learning
- Provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, to assist in transition to and completion of postsecondary education and training, and obtaining employment
- Activities delivered by instructors who meet the minimum qualifications established by the State
- Coordination with other education, training, and social service resources in the community
- Activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with support services necessary to enable individuals to attend and complete programs
- Provider maintains a high-quality information management system to report participant outcomes and monitor program performance
- Local areas where provider is located have demonstrated need for additional English acquisition and civics education programs

**Four new required leadership activities to be supported by State Leadership funds include:**

- Activities to support alignment among the core programs to implement the State plan strategies, including the development of career pathways
- Establishment of professional development programs to improve instruction in such areas as reading, specific needs of the adult learner, instruction provided by volunteers, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices
- Technical assistance based on rigorous research
- Evaluation and dissemination of information about promising practices within the state

By April 1, 2015, the Adult Education program in each state must submit a one-year Transition Plan to the US Department of Education. This Plan must address how the State is implementing or planning to implement WIOA activities during program year 2015-2016.

### **GED® Test History - Did You Know?**



To date, there have been five generations of the GED® test: the original GED® test released in 1942, the 1978 series, the 1988 series, the 2002 series, and the current series released January 1, 2014. The GED® test can open the doors for millions of adult learners to college courses, apprenticeships and job training—the pathway adults need to gain skills and knowledge, fill jobs, and care for their families. That's why GED® Testing Service made the decision to overhaul the test and build a program specifically for adult learners. Five years and tens of millions of dollars were spent to develop the 2014 test series and provide the country with the standards-based and technology-enhanced test that adults need today.

**A “Buddy-Study” System -- Something To Try**

*By: John W. Miller, Director/Lead Teacher, Alliance Public Schools*

In an ever continuing effort to increase duration, persistence, and academic growth within the ABE/GED student population, a program might attempt the following plan. A “Buddy-Study” System is being tried in the Alliance ABE/GED student count. You can begin this whenever you like. Students will pair up and the “Buddy-Study” Team will assist each other:

1. To get to class on time and adhere to a daily time schedule as signed on the “Adult Education Policy Attendance Contract for Students’ Self –Improvements.”
2. To focus on both “Independent Study Plans” and “Formal Classes,” paired up “Buddy-Study” students will help one another when a concept is not understood and seek assistance from a teacher or a para-educator when neither one grasps the concept(s).
3. This plan, upon implementation, will be for a twelve (12) week period. The “study-buddies” with the “most hours” attended and the “most academic gain” made will be rewarded an incentive.

Each pair of “Buddy-Study” partners sign that they will adhere to the three items above. In addition, this formal Attendance Contract for Student’s Self-Improvement must be signed by both partners.

**ATTENDANCE CONTRACT**  
For Student Self-Improvement

\_\_\_\_\_ hereby acknowledges his/her education functional level (EFL) as \_\_\_\_\_. Both student and teacher recognize that (# of hours) \_\_\_\_\_ of class time and study is needed in order for an increase to be made in improved (EFL) Educational Functional Level. I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree with this attendance plan and I will comply with the attendance contract for the Alliance Public School’s Adult Education program.

My attendance will be:

Monday	Hours/time: _____
Tuesday	Hours/time: _____
Wednesday	Hours/time: _____
Thursday	Hours/time: _____
Friday	Hours/time: _____

This schedule shall remain in effect until completion of an EFL movement of GED® testing or approval from the Adult Education Director is made.

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Teacher or Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The incentive that will be awarded in our program will be a \$25.00 grocery coupon at our local grocery stores. Create your own “Buddy-Study” System for your Adult Education Program.



## SCC Beatrice Welcomes New Volunteer Coordinator

Please welcome Andrea Anthony, a new Volunteer Coordinator in Adult Education. Andrea started last November on the Beatrice Southeast Community College Campus and brings with her a tremendous amount of experience in working with volunteers, marketing and program promotion. The volunteer coordinator is a Nebraska Department of Education sponsored position that recruits volunteers for classroom tutoring as well as tutoring one-on-one with adult education students. Volunteers are an integral part of our success in adult education by working with students who require individual attention or who are unable to visit one of our 11 basic skills/GED/ESL classes in the 14-county area. She is a great addition to the Adult Education Team.

Andrea has always loved to work with people, coordinating mentors and volunteering so she is very excited to be able to continue with this passion as a career. She grew up in Sidney Nebraska. Her mother is a retired FCS teacher and her father is a dry land wheat farmer. As a child, she was very involved in the community, 4-H, FCCLA, and many different servant leadership roles. She's been enjoying married life with her husband, David, for the past three years and they live in Lincoln. Her educational background includes a B.S. degree from the University of Nebraska Kearney in Business with an emphasis in Marketing. For two and a half years, she worked as the Fremont County Program Coordinator ISU Extension and coordinated the county 4-H program.

## Free Science Videos

**By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant**

*Dr. David Rosen, President of Newsome Associates of Boston and a member of the editorial board of the COABE journal of research recently gave a list of five of the best science video web sites. Dr. Rosen was focusing on science videos but these sites have videos on other subjects too. Check them out for useful resources.*

**TV411** <http://www.tv411.org/science>

TV411 is a collection of free, professional quality online videos for adult learners. Among the many sections is a science section with a cooking theme which includes videos on bacteria, heat, carbohydrates, photosynthesis, salt and water. The videos are usually accompanied by print materials. TV411 is produced in a "video magazine" style designed for ABE Learners.

**OER Commons** <https://www.oercommons.org/courses/>

OER Commons is a huge repository of open education resources. Each is rated by teachers using the Achieve rubrics. The science section can be searched using "adult education" and many good resources will be found including material from WGBH Teachers Domain, PBS Learning Media, PBS Online, Khan Academy, and TED-Ed. Examples of the many topics are 1964 Alaska Earthquake, Physics: Introduction to Waves, Reactions in Chemistry, and How Simple Ideas Lead to Scientific Discoveries.

**CK12 Science** <http://www.ck12.org/>

The CK-12 Foundation creates and collects high quality STEM content. The web site has sections for teachers and for students. It offers videos, audio files, images, text, quizzes, and interactive learning objects in Earth Science, Life Science, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

**Khan Academy Science Videos** <https://www.khanacademy.org/#library-section>

Most adult education teachers know about the Khan Academy. If you do not, you should familiarize yourself with it. You will find an incredible amount of information. Khan Academy is known for free math videos but they also have science videos that may be useful at the ABE level.

**Netflix Academy** <http://edexcellence.net/introducing-netflix-academy-the-best-educational-videos-available-for-streaming>

Science video categories include: Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Animals; fish and Other Aquatic Animals; Insects, Frogs and Other Amphibians; Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, earthquakes and Volcanos; Outer Space; and Systems of the Human Body.

## Using Smart Phones in ELL Class

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant

Editor's Note: The following article was forwarded to me by Jan Sears, Program Director, Crete Public Schools who received the article from Patty King at Doane.

Smart phones are here to stay. For English teachers, that means we need to either ban iPhones, Androids, Blackberries and whatever next flavor arrives - or - we have to learn how to incorporate the use of smart phones into our routine. I've discovered that just ignoring their use in class doesn't help. After all, I am an English teacher trying to encourage my students to communicate in the English language. Students who sit in class and use their iPhone or Android are missing out. That's a simple fact. However, it's also true that students are going to use their smart phones if they haven't been taken away. At least that's the way it is where I teach English.

So, what's a dedicated English teacher to do? Here are ten tips on how to constructively allow the use of smart phones in class. Admittedly, some of the exercises are just variations on traditional classroom activities. However, encouraging students to use smart phones to complete these activities will help them learn to use these power-packed, hand-held computers to actively improve their English skills. Finally, it's important to insist that smart phone or tablet use is OK, but only as a tool during a specific activity. In this way, students can continue with their obsessive, addictive behavior. However, they won't be tempted to use their smart phones for other, non-English learning tasks during class.

**1. Use smart phones for vocabulary exercises with Google image search.** A picture is worth a thousand words. I like to use my smart phone, or have students use their smart phone to look up specific nouns on Google images or another search engine. You've all seen how *a visual dictionary can greatly improve vocabulary retention*. With smart phones, we have visual dictionaries on steroids.

**2. Use smart phones for translation, but only at a specific time.** I try to encourage students to read using three phases. *1) Read for gist* - no stopping! *2) Read for context* - How can the words surrounding unknown words help with understanding? *3) Read for precision* - explore new vocabulary using a smart phone or dictionary. Only in the third phase do I allow smart phone use. Students are pleased because they can look up words. However, they're developing good reading skills by not immediately translating every word they do not understand.

**3. Use smart phones for communicative activities using apps.** We all communicate with our smart phones in different ways depending on different apps. In other words, *texting with a messaging app* is bound to be different than writing an email on your computer. Take advantage of this and promote activities that are specific to a given context. One example might be to have students text each other to complete a given task.

**4. Use smart phones for help with pronunciation.** This is one of my favorite uses of smart phones in class. Model pronunciation for them. For example, focus on suggestions. Ask students to open a recording app. Read five different ways to make a suggestion aloud. Pause between each suggestion. Have students go home and practice mimicking your pronunciation in the pause between each suggestion. There are many, many variations on this theme. Another great use for pronunciation is to have students change the language to English and try to dictate an email. They'll have to work really hard at word level pronunciation in order to get the desired results.

**5. Use smart phones instead of a thesaurus.** Have students search on the phrase "words like ..." and a host of online offerings will appear. Encourage students to use their smart phones during writing class in this manner while focusing on developing a wider range of vocabulary. For example, take a simple sentence such as, "The people spoke about politics." Ask students to come up with a number of versions using their smart phones to find substitutes for the verb "speak."

**6. Use smart phones to play games.** Yes, yes, I know. This is something we shouldn't encourage in class. However, you might encourage students to write down phrases they experience while playing games to bring into class to discuss in more detail. There are also a number of word games such as Scrabble or word search puzzles that are actually instructive as well as fun. You can make room for this in your class as a "reward" for completing a task; just make sure to tie it to some sort of report back to the class.

**7. Encourage students to use smart phones to keep track of vocabulary.** There are a wide variety of MindMapping apps available, as well as a myriad of flash card apps. You can even create your own flash cards and have students download your set of cards to practice in class.

**8. Use smart phones for writing practice.** *Have students write emails* to each other in order to complete a specific task. Change up the tasks to practice different types of register. For example, one student might write a product inquiry with another student replying to the inquiry with a follow-up email. This is nothing new. However, just using their smart phones can help motivate the students to complete the task.

**9. Use smart phones to create a narration.** This is a variation on writing emails. Have students choose photos they have taken and write a short story describing the photos they have chosen. I find that by making it personal in this manner, students engage more deeply with the task.

**10. Use smart phones to keep a journal.** One more writing exercise for the smart phone. Have students keep a journal and share it with the class. Students can take photos, write descriptions in English, as well as describe their day.

## **Apps for Blended Learning**

**By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska AE Consultant**

*(The following is taken largely from an article by Rebecca Metzger of the West Virginia Adult Basic Education program and the COABE Journal of Research and Practice, Fall 2014)*

Blended learning has become more popular in adult education because hybrid classes with online and classroom-based instruction can increase student engagement and learning. Many apps are available for teachers to create screencasts and to share on learning management systems. Here are five apps to create a flipped classroom; where students can access instruction online at home, and then class time is reserved for teacher help, activities and projects.

**Educreations** [www.educreations.com](http://www.educreations.com) - Educreations permits teachers to use an iPad to record lessons and tutorials on a whiteboard at no cost. Text or images can be imported from Dropbox or Google Drive and annotated. Videos can be shared through email, Twitter, or Facebook. In addition to creating lessons for students, users can access lessons created by others in math, science, social studies, English, world languages, and the arts. Educreations can be used on a personal computer or Apple devices.

**Edmodo** [www.edmodo.com](http://www.edmodo.com) - Edmodo is a free social learning platform where teachers can create groups and subgroups to assign content, share schedules, create quizzes, and conduct polls in just a few steps. Teachers can initiate student discussions and collaborations with posts. Edmodo Snapshots allow teachers to create math or English Language Arts quizzes from a test bank of over 1,000 questions aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The Snapshots provide quick assessment data to determine student progress and links to free online resources to reteach missed material. Teachers can acknowledge achievement with custom badges. Edmodo is accessible with a personal computer and Apple, Android, and Windows devices.

**Schoology** [www.schoology.com](http://www.schoology.com) - Schoology (skoo-luh-gee) is a free learning management system that permits teachers to easily create online courses and share content between instructors. Materials can be imported from DropBox, Evernote, Khan Academy, and Google Drive. Content, quizzes, and rubrics can be aligned to CCSS. Discussions promote collaboration, and digital online badges reward academic progress and student behavior. Schoology is available on Android, Apple iPad/iPhone, Kindle Fire, and personal computers.

**Explain Everything** [www.morriscooke.com](http://www.morriscooke.com) - Explain Everything provides a white screen where lessons can be created. Active web browser windows and multiple file types can be imported into screencasts. Dropbox, Evernote, and Google Drive are a few of the many cloud storage choices for exporting and sharing videos. Project files can be compressed on a Mac with the Explain Everything Compressor, and the Explain Everything Player allows projects to be played on a Mac. The app is \$2.99 for Apple, Android, and Windows devices.