The New Program Year Has Begun

By: Vicki Bauer, State AE Administrator

Here it is July already – where does the year go? July 1 is the beginning of our new program year 2012 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012). With it comes some notable items:

McGraw-Hill, and consequently, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education at the US Department of Education, have revised and approved the minimal requirements for TABE post testing. Please note the new requirements in the table on the following page.

The new post testing requirements are self-explanatory, but if you have any questions, please ask your local program director or you can email me at vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov with your questions. Note that the minimal classroom hours for post testing are different for those students at levels 1-4 and levels 5-6.

There is no change in the number of hours required for post testing for BEST Plus – it remains at 60 hours of instruction. The BEST Literacy pilot was conducted over the past six months and the pilot committee met in June to review their experiences with BEST Literacy.

The pilot instructors, along with a few administrative staff, all agreed that BEST Literacy is essential for assessing reading and writing skills.

While BEST Literacy is currently optional, the committee and the State Office both encourage ESL teachers to utilize it to get a more accurate look at an ESL student’s total literacy abilities. New ESL assessment policies, to include required use of the BEST Literacy assessment, will be initiated next fiscal year, in July 2012.

I am sad to report that, due to budget cuts, Omaha Public Schools will be closing their Adult Education program on June 30, 2012. They have had a program since the beginning of the federal Adult Basic Education program in the 1960’s.

The program director, Mrs. Donna Stevens, and the instructors and staff, are very devoted to the students and the program. They will continue to provide quality and comprehensive services to the OPS program students in the forthcoming year.

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Plans are continuing for the distance education program in ESL and GED prep classes.

Distance education provides an opportunity for students to supplement their learning when jobs, family obligations, lack of transportation, and other issues/commitments prevent them from coming to class on a regular basis.

A hybrid program will be used in Nebraska. This program will require a student to be enrolled in the Adult Education program for program orientation, pre and post testing, and periodic attendance at class.

Teachers will be given a list of criteria for selecting students for distance education. USA Learns, for ESL students, and GED-i, for GED prep students, will be piloted in programs starting in July and August. Training is currently being provided for the pilot instructors and their program directors/administrators.

We are eager to incorporate a new learning experience for our students to assist them in achieving their goals in a more timely fashion as well as afford them the opportunity to study at times that will be convenient for them, even if it is at 11:00 pm or 6:00 am!

At the state level, Jeanette Evans is the contact person for USA Learns and Vicki Bauer is the contact person for GED-i.

Statewide training will be made available to teachers as we prepare to go statewide with the two distance education programs at the end of this year and beginning of 2012.

I am happy to report that the state Volunteer Coordination funds were not cut for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. We are most fortunate that the Legislature did not reduce the funds – some education aid programs were not so fortunate.

The Volunteer Coordination program is an essential and very beneficial part of our Adult Education program as we strive to serve the undereducated adults in our state.

Have a great 4th of July! And, I hope our 2011-2012 Adult Education program year is our best yet and a thank you, in advance, for your devoted contributions and dedication to the program!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABE Assessment</th>
<th>Required Number of Instructional Hours Between Pre-Test and Post-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABE 9 &amp; 10 Alternate Form</td>
<td>50-60 hours of instruction is recommended when testing with alternate form (i.e. 9M to 10M) for students that pre-test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours required. For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABE 9 &amp; 10 Same Form Testing</td>
<td>120 hours of instruction is required when testing with the same form (i.e. 9M to 9M). Post-testing on the same form is not recommended. All sites should have both forms (9 and 10) of TABE available for pre and post testing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Bellevue Public Schools

Anniversary Celebration

By: Shirley Gruntorad, State GED Staff Assistant — shirley.gruntorad@nebraska.gov

Nearly twenty-five years ago, Jose and Maria Larios moved from Mexico to Los Angeles, California, to find work. After living in California for about eight years, the couple’s children convinced them to move to Bellevue.

One of their daughters told them, “Nebraska is beautiful and the people are friendly.” As a result of this recommendation, Jose and Maria moved halfway across the country to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Neither Jose nor Maria spoke English when they came to America, but both of them wanted to learn to speak, read, and write English.

As Maria said, “Everyone I knew in California spoke Spanish. I had no chance to learn English.”

Last September, Jose and Maria enrolled in the ESL Adult Education program at Bellevue Public Schools to learn and understand English. During the school year, they attend classes four times a week and two days a week during the summer.

Maria said, “I am in my seventies, and my goal is to earn my GED and make my family proud.

Jose is retired and wants to learn to speak English better so that he can communicate more effectively with their ten grandchildren who range in ages from seven months to nineteen years and do not speak Spanish.

On June 1, teachers, classmates, and friends helped Jose and Maria celebrate their 48th wedding anniversary at the Adult Learning Center.

The celebration was quite emotional as Maria’s tears testified. We all wish Jose and Maria the best!

Congratulations and best wishes for the future to a very special couple: Jose and Maria Larios!

The State AE Office of NDE has a lending library of materials for both AE and ESL. Some are for instructors and others are resources containing practical ideas and exercises to be used with students. http://www.education.ne.gov/ADED/pdfs/Nebraska_Adult_Education_Lending_Resource_Library.pdf

Many of the resources contain EXCELLENT material for students struggling in specific areas. Other materials would make WONDERFUL additions to, or a basis for, staff development sessions.

If you would like to preview or discuss any of the materials, just drop in or contact Jeanette. Materials can be checked out for 6 weeks (longer if not in demand). If you should decide you would like to peruse some, please call or e-mail Jeanette at: 402/471-4806 jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov
Many of the state AE teachers have been asking for research-based presentations. They got what they asked for at the two day ESL/EL Civics workshop held at the Holiday Inn in Kearney on June 16 & 17.

**Sowing Seeds of Success** was the theme and with all the seeds that were "sown," a huge garden of new knowledge, ideas, and methods should be growing wild very soon!!!!

Dr. Robin Lovrien Schwarz presented a fast-paced, day-long workshop entitled, *Why Adult ELLS Struggle to Learn and One Approach to Help Them*. After providing a wealth of information and background, Dr. Schwarz gave countless suggestions for assisting students who struggle as they learn to read, write and speak English.

Dr. Schwarz focused her energy on teaching by learning centers and explaining how and why the approach works for students.

She demonstrated several types of centers, explaining how to set them up, encouraging student participation and ways to set up a self-checking option so that all activities do not have to be teacher-corrected.

After dinner on Thursday evening, Robin met with a cohort group to further explore the idea of learning centers and identify assignments between now and the final meeting at the October Adult Ed Conference.

Dr. Rosemarie Park, from LINCS, presented sessions entitled, *Preparing Adult ESL Learners for Employment and the World of Work*. The participants each identified one significant challenge in their classrooms, and Dr. Park focused on her world travel and research to provide background, advice and suggestions to address the challenges.

Dr. Park’s vast experience working with ESL learners in and for the workplace created many topics for consideration and discussion. Scenarios for the participants to read, discuss and make suggestions for instruction provided lively conversation in the room.

On Thursday, Jan Sears and Ryan Hinz from Crete Public Schools, facilitated the viewing of the documentary, *When We Stop Counting* which followed several Hispanic students at Crete High School.

At registration, participants were asked to provide any “burning questions” they had regarding the teaching or working with the ESL student population. Those questions were then addressed by Robin and Rosemarie, the presenters, over lunch on Friday. Additional questions were taken from the audience.

It will be interesting to hear from the cohort group during the October annual Adult Education conference!
“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. — Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”
National Institute of Corrections
This simulation training program provides basic information about computerized employment applications, tips for completing online job applications, a printable worksheet that can be used to prepare offenders for using these systems, and a full-length interactive application with context sensitive help. At the completion of the process, the user can print out the information that was entered. [http://nicic.gov/Library/022996](http://nicic.gov/Library/022996)

CALPRO
The California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project has a Virtual Workroom on Workforce Readiness. Create a new account link in the log-in box and follow the prompts. There are a variety of classroom exercises which can be used with Beginning through Advanced ESL students. These classroom activities can be used to integrate and contextualize workforce skills into ESL instruction.

They reinforce the transferable workplace readiness "soft" skills that employers are looking for. By using the classroom as an environment in which we explicitly teach and reinforce workforce readiness "soft" skills, we help prepare students to enter and advance in the world of work. [calpro-online.org/VirtualWorkroom/default.asp](http://calpro-online.org/VirtualWorkroom/default.asp)

New English File Online
Learn more English here with interactive exercises, useful downloads, games, and weblinks. Practice your grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, and reading, and have some fun too. [oup.com/elt/global/products/englishfile/](http://oup.com/elt/global/products/englishfile/)

Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly

Bright Ideas – ESL for Elders
The Bright Ideas curriculum was designed for elderly learners participating in community-based ESL programs. The curriculum focuses on developing oral English communication skills and providing opportunities for learners to use these skills inside the classroom and outside in the community.

The units reflect the interests of the learners as they emerged from conversations with students, focus groups, and needs assessments. Each unit contains step-by-step instructions for the teacher, lessons for the students, and visual support materials to facilitate learning for students who have few literacy skills in English and in the native language. The units may be taught in any sequence. [http://www.clese.org/brightideas_eslcurric.htm](http://www.clese.org/brightideas_eslcurric.htm)

The Hotel TEACH (Teaching English and Careers in Hospitality)
A few years ago, LaGuardia Community College created curriculum to address the needs of immigrant adults employed in hotel jobs. According to data from the US Department of Labor, immigrants—many with limited proficiency in English—make up 30% of the workforce in the hotel and lodging industry. Without better knowledge of the language and the necessary customer service and soft skills needed in this service industry, workers with limited proficiency in English are stuck at the lowest rungs of the career ladder with little chance of advancement. [http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/ciet/workforce_TEACH_curriculum.aspx](http://www.lagcc.cuny.edu/ciet/workforce_TEACH_curriculum.aspx)

Learn American English Online
Check out this terrific site for online grammar lessons. [learnamericanenglishonline.com/](http://learnamericanenglishonline.com/)

Lauri’s ESL Website
This website contains a wealth of ESL resources which can be used in almost any classroom setting. This is an outstanding free resource for ESL teachers and students! Especially impressive are the listening activities. [http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~lfried/](http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~lfried/)
Collecting a Million!

Excerpted from “Changing the Way We Teach Math,” A Manual for Teaching Basic Math to Adults
By: Kate Nonesuch http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/mathman/cover.htm

Kate Nonesuch has an excellent book entitled, Changing the Way We Teach Math. The following excerpt is used with her permission. If you would like to read Ms. Nonesuch’s book in its entirety, click on the link above, or request it from your local program director.

Make a Collection
Making a collection of a million things is a very interesting procedure. Sometimes you see reports of a class collecting one million tags from packages of bread.

Collecting a million pennies would raise $10,000 for your program. In any case, making a collection of a million things usually involves publicity, since the wider community is needed to help make the collection, which means that students can talk about the process of showing what a million is. They are involved in making a system for storing, sorting, and displaying the pieces they are collecting; it takes time, so the immensity of the number has time to set in, and it provides a repetition of noticing smaller amounts—10 tens make 100 and 10 hundreds make 1000 many, many times during the process of collecting a million of anything.

There is lots of room for ratio and proportion in this project: if 100 items weight five grams, how much will 1,000 weigh? 10,000? 100,000?

If it takes three minutes to count 100 pennies and put them in the plastic case, how long will it take to deal with 1,000 pennies? How long will it take to wrap the million pennies?

Courtesy in the World of Technology

By: Jeanette Evans, State ABE Consultant - jeanette.evans@nebraska.gov

Technology is exploding all around us! Some of us are running to keep up, some of us are running to get away and some of us are just embracing what we can, at the moment.

While that is all going on, the “regular” parts of our daily lives continue to exist. We all have to find a way to balance that without being rude and disrespectful in the process.

There are so many opportunities for cell phone use, texting, social networking, online shopping, reading magazines and news online ……… sometimes we lose track of what needs to be done at our place of work and we forget how our technology interaction might be affecting those around us.

Many of us frown on students calling or receiving calls on their cell phones or texting during class. Sometimes what “looks like texting” is actually someone taking notes or researching to add to a discussion.

What do we do???? How do we handle it? How do we assure that students stay focused? What should be permissible and what should not? Are we being good role models of the appropriate behaviors we wish to foster?

I recently read an article in the newspaper (yes, the print copy J) by Marie McIntyre. Ms. McIntyre’s advice is to promote the idea that employees (in our case, peers and students) should be expected to avoid engaging in any personal activities that interfere with productivity.

Personal calling, texting, and social networking activities should be conducted at break and lunch time. While in class, phones should be on silent, or the very least on vibrate.

Any activity should wait till a break or, at the very least, in cases of emergency, be taken outside the room.

Perhaps the best approach is to discuss the use of electronic communication in class or at staff meetings and arrive at a brief, general policy that has everyone’s best interest in mind.

Easier said than done? Maybe, but well worth the effort to provide an atmosphere in classrooms and meeting spaces that allows for the business at hand to be conducted effectively.
I arrived in San Francisco eager to learn all about *Literacy to Work: Adult Education for a Global Economy*. This was the theme of the COABE 2011 Conference.

Wanting to do my part for the planet, I decided to take the BART transit train from the airport to my hotel, which was only 3 blocks from the station. When I emerged from the subway station with my luggage, I wandered through a crowd of individuals who needed just what COABE was all about. These were some of San Francisco’s thousands of homeless. I was told that even though some had jobs, they still could not afford housing.

I was ready to listen when keynote speaker Dr. Frank Benest talked about how everything in a global economy is connected. Job seekers are competing in a world market because labor is a global commodity.

This means increased competition for jobs. Technology is changing all work so that it is becoming more complex. According to Benest, no one accomplishes anything by themselves. He challenged adult educators to go beyond the basics and link literacy to technical training; integrating learning IT skills and communication.

He sees adult education as playing a key role in addressing three realities: the need to continually upgrade and retool skills in a global economy; the need to develop skills to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and prosperity for the whole community; and the need to participate in life-long learning. He pointed out that in today’s world, information is available to everyone, not just from the teacher or textbooks.

Therefore, Benest sees the teacher’s role as helping students to evaluate and interpret information, reflect and apply knowledge, learn how to learn, and provide helpful feedback. I wondered how those on the street outside the hotel would relate to his message.

Next I attended a session by a scholar from Texas A & M University. Federico Salas-Isnardi presented a session titled, *Adult Education in the 21st Century: Literacy Skills and Technology*. Salas-Isnardi asked COABE participants to list the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. He then asked participants to list skills necessary to succeed in college.

The lists were essentially the same and included skill in reading and writing, speaking and listening, and numeracy. He encouraged adult educators to keep instructing in those areas and to encourage students to take responsibility, work as a team, plan and manage, be innovative, adaptable, and use critical thinking skills.

These skills are important both in the workplace and in post-secondary institutions.

Salas-Isnardi challenged participants to think about different kinds of literacy needed in the 21st century: Health literacy, financial literacy, scientific literacy, and technological literacy.

Donna Price of San Diego Community College District was the presenter for *Transitioning ESL Students to the Workplace*. She gave more insight into how ESL instructors could integrate skills into their classrooms that are needed to be successful in the workplace.

Working as a team in the classroom to do projects trains students in collaboration skills. Using graphic organizers or taking notes on a listening or reading assignment requires critical thinking and organizational skills.

These are skills that can be learned in the classroom and transferred to the workplace.

To learn more about classroom to workplace skills, The Center for Applied Linguistics has published a helpful brief for educators called *Promoting Learner Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Work: Developing Academic Readiness Skills From the Beginning*.

Included is an example for note-taking called Cornell Notes. Examples of activities that can be incorporated into ESL classes from beginning to advanced levels are outlined.

The full text of this document is available at the following website. [www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/transitions.html](http://www.cal.org/caelanetwork/resources/transitions.html)
Metropolitan Community College and Omaha Public Schools collaborated to hold a Technology in the Classroom training session for our instructional staff in April of this year. Much has been heard about federal and state mandates/requirements for providing technology education not only to the students in our classrooms, but to our instructional staff.

This event provided an opportunity for a hands-on demonstration of the new I-pads, cell phone education and digital literacy tools.

The Apple I-pad presentation seemed to be the favorite of all those who attended. This small, lightweight tool has enormous potential for opening up new windows of education for our students. The ease in which students/instructors can access on-line educational programs would be perfect for multi-level or off-site classrooms with no access to computer labs (as long as there was internet access or WI-FI).

Although most educators see cell phones as a distraction in educational environments they are in our classrooms nevertheless. We provided a session to better inform instructors about vocabulary that is applicable to cell phone technology, texting and/or sexting/cyber-bullying.

Lastly, a presenter demonstrated use of the Microsoft Office Digital Literacy program. It is free and provides entry level (digital immigrant) to advanced level (digital native) training.

At the end of the training, a student receives a completion certificate from Microsoft.

One of Metropolitan Community College’s students actually attained a new job and stated that the certificate was the reason why he got the job!

For those of us who may not be digital natives, it is a little bit scary and a little bit intimidating to think about incorporating technology into the classrooms, but we risk losing the very students who need us the most if they do not get it from us.

For information, follow this link:
http://www.microsoft.com/about/corporatecitizenship/citizenship/giving/programs/up/digitalliteracy/default.mspx

By: Debbie Flower, ABE Director, Metropolitan Community College — dsflower@mccneb.edu

ACRONYM MATCH GAME

Can you match the popular text/chat/Internet acronyms On the left with their meaning on the right?

1. J/K ___
2. L8R ___
3. NALOPKT ___
4. OIC ___
5. 143 ___
6. C-P ___
7. F2F ___
8. NMU ___
9. WYCM ___
10. LOL ___
11. ADR ___
12. 2moro ___
13. BTW ___
14. DBEYR ___
15. IMHO ___
16. WYWH ___
17. POV ___
18. RBTL ___
19. RTM ___
20. TYVM ___
21. BRB ___
22. FWIW ___
23. GR8 ___
24. TMI ___
25. HAK ___

A. Address
B. Be right back
C. By the way
D. Don’t believe everything you read
E. Face to face
F. For what it’s worth
G. Great
H. Hugs and kisses
I. In my humble opinion
J. I love you
K. Just kidding
L. Later
M. Laughing out loud
N. Not a lot of people know that
O. Not much, you?
P. Oh, I see
Q. Point of view
R. Read between the lines
S. Read the manual
T. Sleepy
U. Thank you very much
V. Tomorrow
W. Too much information
X. Will you call me?
Y. Wish you were here

For answers to the puzzle to the left and a much more extensive list of popular acronyms, contact Debbie Flower at Metropolitan Community College. dsflower@mccneb.edu

Deb has handouts to share from the Technology in the Classroom training on ways teachers can begin using cell phones for class lessons, (including Spanish vocabulary lessons).

The Mobile Phone Jargon handout provides a glossary to help you become an expert in mobile -speak in no time. Do you know what a “Dual band” is? A “Tri-band?” “Oftel?” “SIM?” “T9?” “WAP?” Contact Debbie and request a copy of the handouts on cell phone use in the classroom to learn these definitions and more!