



Nebraska AE News

A Newsletter for Adult Education Staff in Nebraska

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<http://www.education.ne.gov/ADED/index.html>

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March 2016

Nebraska AE Newsletter

By: Vicki Bauer, Nebraska Adult Education Director

The Nebraska AE Newsletter is back in production! And, yes, some of the articles you will be reading in this issue were written last year. But, all are very timely and appropriate in 2016! I learned so much by reading these articles and I think you will too. It's inspiring to read about the great things that are happening right here in Nebraska AE programs. You are encouraged to submit articles about what's happening in your classes so others can learn about strategies and activities that encourage student successes in the Adult Education classrooms across the state.

Following are some suggested topics for article submission. Pick a topic, then write and send us an article! Of course, pictures are welcome, too!

- The Burlington English pilot classes and how the teachers and students feel about the program.
- New partnerships you have initiated with your fellow WIOA partner programs.
- New materials you have found that you want to tell your fellow AE instructors/volunteers about.
- How you are using volunteers in your ESL/ABE/GED classrooms.
- Share your experiences with the new and improved **USALearns**. (Remember, it's free! You can use it in the classroom or as supplemental instruction for your students.)
- Strategies/ideas you use for student retention. (Ways your program is solving the problem)
- Ways you are utilizing the skills of Neil Sturomski's mentors in your program. Share what you have learned from your program's mentors.
- Things you have done in your classroom to promote College and Career Readiness (CCR) for your students. Remember that Career Pathways and Work Readiness Skills are a REQUIREMENT of WIOA. **NOTE:** We will be offering required training for all AE Directors and staff later this spring and summer so that everyone is ready to incorporate Career Pathways in all AE classes next fiscal year. Look for more information – workshops will be held all over the state. ALL paid instructors and AE directors are required to attend a workshop; volunteers are welcome as well. It is essential that we all be prepared to meet the new initiatives of WIOA, but more importantly, we will be able to assist our students in building a career pathway for themselves so they can be ready for college or employment that leads to a sustaining wage for themselves and their families.

Send the articles (and pictures) to jim.lukesh@nebraska.gov. We will be happy to share what you submit with your fellow AE Nebraska colleagues through this newsletter. Do you have any specific questions about WIOA, or anything else regarding Nebraska Adult Education? If so, send them to me at vicki.l.bauer@nebraska.gov and I will respond to your question; if applicable, I will include it in the next *Nebraska AE News*.

Attention: Adult Education Instructors – College Scholarships

By: Lisa Mueller, EducationQuest

If you would like to refer a client from Adult Basic Education for the *Reaching Your Potential Scholarship*, the referral must be received by **March 15**. Submit your referrals online in the Professionals section on www.educationquest.org. The *Reaching Your Potential Scholarship* application is now online only. All referred clients must have an email address to access the application. Within two days after clients are referred, they will receive an email from admin@communityforce.com with application login instructions. The application is due **April 1**. If you have questions, call 800-303-3745.

Always Learning to Improve Comments from an ESL Summit Attendee

By: Linda Johnston, AmeriCorps Member (Submitted by Anne Cannon, Central Community College)



As an AmeriCorps volunteer for Hastings Literacy Program, I have opportunities to attend diverse workshops and seminars and learn different methods of teaching to take back to the classroom to better help our students learn. This past June 10th and 11th was no exception as I attended the ESL Summit in Kearney Nebraska with several of my co-workers.

From this two-day workshop, I learned that we are doing a lot of things right; there are improvements to be made in all we do. From each session I attended, I learned new things that I can utilize with our students. For example, in teaching our Citizenship class, there are textbooks and websites

available I can use to teach this class and also by using visuals for conversation starters. It brings the class together and you find out that there are a lot of things our students have in common. It creates bonding and trust. One highlight was a session I attended by Miriam Burt. She emphasized how important it is for the teacher to connect with the students early on. That helps motivate the students to stay in class.

Each session was packed with new learning strategies, presenters that had a passion to share their expertise and the ability to network with a lot of different people from other walks of life. I walked away from this summit with a lot of knowledge and a lot of educational resources that will be helpful in our classrooms. I also received email addresses of presenters so we can network via technology. Thank you Nebraska Department of Education for a very informative, educational and useful seminar. I look forward to transferring this knowledge to the classroom to improve my teaching of our students.



Dropping Back In COABE Session Report

By: Ann Chambers, Director--Central Community College, Grand Island

KET, Kentucky's public television network, is a national leader in digital education resources. KET works closely with Kentucky's Adult Education department to determine current and future needs. KET recently completed "Fast Forward," a product to help adults pass the high school equivalency exam more quickly. This product sounds interesting and was the name of a COABE session; so I thought I'd learn more about it. However, the session didn't cover "Fast Forward." Instead the presenters discussed the vast array of links, digital materials and websites available through PBSLearningMedia.org.

A series of videos called, "Dropping Back In," available at PBSLearningMedia.org or droppingbackin.org, show the struggles and achievements of GED® students. This series can be valuable for advocacy work--including presenting to funding sources, advisory committee members or community organizations; they show the effects of dropping out and earning a GED® diploma.

The most interesting piece of PBSLearningMedia.org is the vast array of teacher tools. One can access the videos, tools, quizzes, etc. without having a login, but it is highly recommended to create a profile and login. Teachers can select videos that pertain to specific lessons, find activities, use online tools and create quizzes. Favorite items can be stored in folders to be used over and over without taking the time to find the materials again. Best practices or favorite activities can also be shared with coworkers and other teachers. One example shared was a math activity of reroofing a house; the site provides a fairly complex outline of a roof and an online tape measure. The student uses the online tape measure to measure each section of the roof, finally coming to the total square feet and amount of shingles needed.

In addition to resources for instructors, PBS Learning Media also provides professional development for Adult Educators at bit.ly/1araKQN. Included are: GED® Test Information: Mathematics; GED® Test Information: Reasoning Through Language Arts; Math Instructional Strategies: Number Operations; Math Instructional Strategies: Geometry; Reading Instructional Strategies: Resources for Adult Educators; Teaching Strategies: Resources for Adult Educators; GED® Geometry Professional Development Course; and most importantly:

Standards-Based Instruction In the Adult Education Classroom. The Standard's-Based Instruction collection introduces instructors to adult literacy, basic education, and GED® classes to the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). The CCRS was mentioned in every session at COABE. If we're not familiar with it, we must be and soon. For a quick overview, I suggest you go to www.PBSLearningMedia.org and click on the "? Help" button, scroll to "Teacher Tools," and see the array of tools at your disposal.

Jumping In

COABE Session Report

By: Kalua King, Adult Educator--Plattsmouth Community School District

Except for pocket change, we humans don't care for change. I personally meet change with doubt and a deep sense of unease. The cerebral me will do what is best for students, but the visceral side of this educator chokes a bit before settling into the new plan. At the Commission on Adult Basic Education 2015 Conference (COABE), I received a glimmer of many sparkling ideas. But, I think I took away the jewel or "The One True Thing" about being an adult educator. I came to the realization that continuous improvement is the job. Being a lifelong learner is not just for students, it is a fundamental principal of teaching. Continuous improvement is the job!

I have taught Adult Education for a bit more than three years. Part of that time, I taught in Southern Missouri. For the whole time, my colleagues and I have prepared for impending change or actual (and painful) change. We worked intently to change from the 2002 to the 2014 GED® Test. At about the same time, Missouri required its teachers to learn a computerized life and career skills program. Nebraska also furnished its adult educators with a workplace literacy program to learn and teach. The evolving distance learning program we use just adds to the number of changes we have already undergone.

We, in Nebraska, have at least two changes coming up. We are charged with implementing the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), and, we are awaiting the new WIOA law's influences. The CCRS is a 140-page document. After reading only a synopsis of WIOA, my fear-of-change alarms are sounding. The only way to silence those Claxton horns is to educate myself. (Read the CCR Standards at: <http://lincs.ed.gov/publications/pdf/CCRStandardsAdultEd.pdf>. Find the WIOA bill at: <http://www.doleta.gov/WIOA/>.)

At the COABE Conference, I attended the full-day pre-conference session entitled: "Implementing Change in Adult Education: Transforming a State's Adult Education System." The seminar was provided by a team of adult educators from Rhode Island and Boston, Massachusetts. Plans are coming together to fully implement the CCR Standards and a Proficiency-Based Teaching and Learning (PBTL) System there. The presenters were: Donna Chambers, Nancy LaBonte, and Barbara Bowen of Rhode Island; and Katie Ehresman of Boston, Massachusetts. Chambers, LaBonte and Bowen spoke about Rhode Island's implementation of the CCRS and PBTL. Ehresman spoke about Boston Public Schools' alternative path to a high school diploma. Donna Chambers may be reached at dchambers464@gmail.com.

All the presenters invited follow-up communication. The workshop leaders strongly recommended reading Jay McTighe's book, *Understanding by Design*, (UbD). McTighe described Proficiency Based Testing and Learning (PBTL) as a method of bringing students to a deep understanding of concepts and to the ability to transfer knowledge to challenging tasks. In UbD, lessons are created "backward" from CCR Standards, are tailored for adults, and designed to include authentic, challenging tasks. Students use many real-world strategies to master ideas and "transfer" or apply their knowledge. PBTL lessons and assessments help students develop and use the skills needed to compete for jobs in the current workplace, progress into post-secondary education, and participate as purposeful citizens. For a glimpse into McTighe's methods, please visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?y=d8F1SnWalfE>.

The presentation team asserted that Proficiency-Based Teaching and Learning, or *Understanding by Design*, is a guide for designing instruction and assessment to help students achieve a profound understanding of the content we teach. Furthermore, UbD expands on 'six facets of understanding,' which include students being able to explain, interpret, apply, have perspective, empathize, and have self-knowledge about a given topic. For example, a student may prove his proficiency or ability to transfer the knowledge by designing and completing a complex task that uses the required skill. He or she may demonstrate understanding by leading another student to proficiency. In PBTL and UbD students don't just know, they can use what they know. (For more on PBTL see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQbVgtaz4>.)

The presenters also referred us to Dylan Wiliam, a 35-year adult educator from London, England, U.K., and author of *Embedded Formative Assessment*. He stresses that continuous professional improvement is the instructor's lifestyle and work. Wiliam maintains that the job we are doing is so tough that a lifetime is not long enough to master it. Dylan believes that we must all commit to carry on improving our practice until we retire or die. For more Dylan Wiliam information, visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3HRvFsZHoo.

Before concluding the workshop, Donna Chambers asked who in the group was already writing lessons based on the CCRS. I sat on my hands and gulped. Others in the classroom raised their hands. Then Donna said, "Very good, now the rest of you get with it. Join us. Jump in." She charged us with taking one step to spread the word about CCRS. This is me, facing change, educating myself and jumping in.

Tutor Ready Reading Program

By: Mary Kay Versen, Director--Western Community College, Scottsbluff



LINCS Learner Web Portal (<https://lincs.ed.gov/learning-portal>) is a wonderful **FREE** site with many professional development literacy topics. The LINCS Learner Web offers adult educators and literacy educators "high-quality

instructional resources informed by research, especially scientifically based and other rigorous research." This article focuses on the "Tutor Ready" Reading Program.

Tutors and beginning Adult Education Instructors will benefit from the Tutor Ready program. This resource is an excellent training tool for volunteers or an instructor that teaches reading. They are short and impactful lessons to focus on methodologies for teaching phonemes, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

"Often, when we think about the term "reading," we think only about reading comprehension. While comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, it is only one component of it. The other three components are equally as important when it comes to a learner's overall ability to read."

The Tutor Ready Reading Program is a series of five, self-paced courses, available to adult educators who would like to learn more about teaching the essential components of reading. Each lesson includes writing lessons with audio support, videos, and lessons plans.

Courses include

1. Teaching Adults to Read: Alphabetics
2. Teaching Adults to Read: Fluency
3. Teaching Adults to Read: Vocabulary
4. Teaching Adults to Read: Comprehension
5. Assessment Strategies and Reading Profiles

How to Get Started

- Register for the courses at: <http://literacyworks.lincs.learnerweb.org>.
- Create an Account
- Review the Tutor Ready Learning Plan Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZKxs6tUQYo>
- Begin the lessons.

The Flipped Classroom

By: April Lawton, Adult Educator, Metro Community College, Omaha

Who hasn't heard about the flipped approach? It's everywhere! Though we hear about it often, it's important to be sure that we, as educators, know exactly what it is and how to use it effectively. Here's a basic definition: the flipped classroom is a learning strategy in which the student has direct access to information while the teacher guides the learner as the 'guide by the side.' Let's also address a few common myths about the flipped approach:

Myth	Reality
Technology is a necessary part of the flipped approach.	The flipped approach is a teaching strategy that allows the students to have direct access to information while the teacher guides the students in appropriate, often project-based, directions. Technology is not necessary for success.
The flipped approach requires an all-or-nothing mentality.	It is very possible to use the approach in specific portions of the classroom instead of the entire course. Example: For homework, send a simple PowerPoint (printed or online) with an introduction to the next class's information. At the beginning of the next class, place the students in groups to discuss the material. Then, move on to the remainder of the lesson.
There's only one way to flip a class.	Just as there are many ways to facilitate group work, there are many ways to facilitate a flipped classroom. Check out the discussion on LINCS for more ideas.
Students will not complete work outside of class.	It is our responsibility as instructors to help equip our adult students through education to be successful in and out of the classroom. We all agree that one such skill needed is self-discipline. Even providing small tasks that connect back to the classroom assist adult students in developing this skill! Don't be afraid to have high expectations for students!

You know what's interesting? This approach has been used by English instructors for many years. Do you remember reading a book in high school, then discussing it in class? Exactly! English teachers have been successfully flipping classrooms for decades. Interested in trying this approach, but not sure about how to get started? Try this simple idea: for homework, provide the students with a simple PowerPoint or newspaper article related to the next class period's topic. At the beginning of the next class, group the students who did read and ask them to discuss. Group the students who did not read (or were absent) and provide them time to read then discuss, as time allows. This activity can take as little or as much time as you choose. It's a great way to start! Thanks to LINCS for providing a session about the flipped approach at the 2015 COABE Conference in Denver, Colorado. Check them out if you're interested in more information! <https://lincs.ed.gov/>

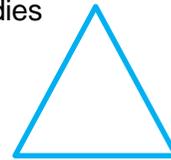
Technology Pushes Math Strategies in the Classroom

By: Emily Duncan, Adult Educator--Northeast Community College, Norfolk

During the COABE conference, I learned many new strategies that could be used in our classrooms. The major push was on the use of technology. The reason was that our students use a hand-held device of some sorts daily. One session was on different websites available for all four GED® tests. She showed us one site that allows students to do a science experiment. One session was completely on using your cellphone in the classroom. During this session, we were presented free apps that allow us to do formative assessments with students and different communication mechanisms that allow us to visit with students without them having our personal phone numbers.

The most important thing I learned was the first step with incorporating technology is setting clear expectations and guidelines for students. The presenter showed us an orientation process she does with her students about using their phones. She also showed a picture of her classroom where her students preferred to use their cellphones instead of the row of computers.

Other sessions that I attended included ESL strategies for transition, personal finance, Social Studies activities, program improvement, changing worksheets into meaningful tasks, teaching the 2014 GED® math reasoning, College and Career readiness, and student success coaches. This conference was a great opportunity to learn new skills but also to speak with colleagues in other states. Here is an example of a math activity we did.



Is the area of the triangle on the top larger or smaller than the area of the triangle on the bottom? The top triangle has sides measuring 5, 5, and 6. The bottom has sides of 8, 5, and 5. Explain your answer. Feel free to email me emily@northeast.edu for explanation or answer to this problem.



Opportunities at COABE 2015 Conference

By: Judy Bennett, ESL Instructor--Southeast Community College, Lincoln

Back in April 2015, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Conference in Denver, Colorado. From the very beginning, at the opening session, I knew that it was a good thing for me to be there. The opening session with Carrie Stack was a great kick-off to the conference. One of the things she talked about was burnout and how as educators we need to make sure that we do self-care. Too often we give and give, but don't take time to care for ourselves. We need to make sure that we make time to replenish, refuel, and refill. While I wouldn't say that I was at a burnout stage yet, I was definitely feeling dry and used up as I went into the conference.

Throughout the conference, there were many good seminars I attended on a wide variety of topics – such as technology tips in the classroom, citizenship information, the brain and learning, teaching to low level literacy students, etc. I can honestly say that I was able to take something from each seminar I attended, and several were excellent. The only drawback to the conference was that I received so much good information in a short time, that it was a bit overwhelming. So I plan on spending a good part of my summer “unpacking” all of the good ideas and information that I gleaned during the conference.

As educators, it is important to keep up-to-date in our fields. However, sometimes with the day-to-day busyness of lesson planning, teaching, keeping records, etc., we don't always get to do as much reading or attending seminars/webinars as we would like. In one session I attended, the acronym MALP (Mutually Adaptive Learning Paradigm) came up and I realized I was totally unfamiliar with this. In that particular session, MALP was not the main focus of the session. However, the next day I was able to attend a session where the teaching model of MALP was the main focus. The session title, “Implementing Culturally Responsive Teaching for Adults with Low Literacy” appealed to me because of the low literacy students that I teach. I often don't feel well equipped to meet their needs and so welcomed the chance to sit in on this session. The presenter, Nan Frydland, initially talked about some of the underlying cultural differences between our formal U.S. educational system and the background that many of our students come from—many with little or no formal education. Some of these differences are the use of the written word versus oral transmission, learning in a formal or informal setting, and coming from an individualistic or collective society. For many of our students, there is a dissonance between the two different paradigms of education that they are faced with. MALP is a bridge to help them transition from what they knew and were familiar with in their culture and adjust to differences found in our culture.

She gave a MALP Teacher Planning Checklist which I think will be very helpful. It consisted of three main parts: accept conditions for learning, combine process for learning, and focus on new activities for learning. Each part had two statements to check your lesson against. For example, some of the statements are: I am making this lesson/projects immediately relevant to students; I am incorporating shared responsibility and individual accountability; and I am scaffolding the written word through oral interaction. Along with further information about MALP, she shared personal experiences of using MALP with her students and the progress she saw them make.

So, I am thankful that I could learn more about MALP—not just to be up-to-date with some of the acronyms that abound in our field, but rather to feel better equipped to serve my students and teach them in a way to better meet their needs. When all is said and done, I feel that the COABE conference did replenish and refuel me as a teacher. Thank you to NDE for giving me the chance to attend!

EL/Civics Students Learn Nebraska History

By: Ryan Hinz, EL/Civics Instructor--Crete Public Schools



In June of last year, the daytime multilevel EL/Civics class in Crete studied Nebraska history. Students started with the settling of Nebraska, due in large part to the Homestead Act of 1862. They then studied the founding of Nebraska as a state, the beginnings of our state government, and the selection of Lancaster, Nebraska as the state capital (eventually renamed Lincoln). The class also took two field trips to help bring the classroom lessons to life.

First, students visited the Homestead National Monument in Beatrice, Nebraska on June 5th. While there, students learned more about the law President Lincoln signed 153 years ago that allowed many people the opportunity to apply for a land grant of 160 acres. They also got to see first-hand the impact of the Homestead Act on Nebraska and the nation, as well as the act's impact on the Native Americans that once lived on this land. In addition, students learned about the important role immigration played in the settling of Nebraska and the U.S. and also got to see some of the tools, implements, and belongings settlers had back then.

Then on June 25th the class visited the beautiful state capitol in Lincoln. Students were amazed at the architecture, murals, and the view of the city from the observation deck on the 14th floor. Students then enjoyed lunch in the capitol cafeteria.



A big thank you to all who helped make these trips possible! Want to see more pictures? Follow me on Google Plus. Also, check out the history text used for this activity- the official Nebraska history 4th grade textbook- "The Nebraska Adventure" by Jean A. Lukesh.

Effective Education Workshop

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska Adult Education Consultant

Thirty-two educators from Nebraska programs took part in a three part workshop on Effective Instruction: Guiding Instructors in Efficiently and Effectively Supporting Their Students. The workshops were presented by Neil Sturomski, a nationally known consultant and trainer and were sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education.

Neil Sturomski is the former Director of the National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center. With more than thirty-five years of experience in education, including supporting individuals with disabilities and other special learning needs, he has experience working in a variety of capacities including direct service, diagnostics, administration, curriculum design, research, information management, data collection, evaluation, and graduate-level teaching. In 1996 Mr. Sturomski formed Sturomski & Associates, a consulting firm whose primary mission is to help adult educators, literacy practitioners, employers, and job training program instructors better meet the needs of adults in adult education, adults at risk as well as those with disabilities. The project was designed to enable the instructors to become more knowledgeable in the reading process and effective reading instruction and to improve their understanding of the Language Continuum and effective writing instruction and its connection to College and Career Readiness. The goal is to support students in the development of higher-order thinking skills needed in post-secondary education, careers, and everyday life. The participating instructors met with Sturomski three times in two-day workshops and then returned to their programs to mentor other instructors.

In addition to the workshops, a Google Group was established for the participants to communicate and trade ideas and suggestions with each other. Sturomski returned to Nebraska in October to meet with the participants in the program and to present a session on Reading: Instructional Information for Adult Education at the Adult Education Fall Conference in Kearney. Future editions of the newsletter will feature stories by the participants telling how the workshop helped them and their mentoring activities.

Season of Change

By: Ryan Hinz, EL/Civics Instructor--Crete Public Schools

"Change" seems to be the catch word in adult education these days. However, as an experienced teacher recently pointed out to me... change has always been a part of adult education. That is because our field is constantly evolving, growing, and improving. We serve a diverse population with various needs, challenges, and barriers and therefore, have to constantly "change" to keep up. Change is not necessarily bad and I believe most of the change you will see and be a part of in the coming days, weeks, and months ahead will only serve to make adult education in Nebraska stronger and more effective.

I was fortunate enough to attend this year's COABE conference along with several of my Nebraska colleagues. Over the next several months we will be sharing information, strategies, and materials from the many excellent, informative sessions we attended. The theme of this year's conference was "Gaining Perspective." As we move forward, it will be important to realize that we do not necessarily need to "change" our perspective, we simply need to "gain" it. Our job is still to connect adults with quality educational services so they can become more successful in life, whether that be through a high school equivalency credential, workplace/career skills, or developing English communication skills.

However, the world is changing. Jobs are becoming more technical and require more education and skills, even for entry level positions. In addition, post-secondary education is requiring more from their students. Therefore, we must adapt in order to prepare our students for the world they face when they exit our programs. To not do so will only serve to disadvantage our students and fail them in our most basic task... the task they trust us to complete... to improve their lives. There will be a lot of knowledge, and yes, perspective to gain in the months and years ahead as we become better teachers, volunteers, staff, and administrators in order to meet this challenge.

Below I will summarize several of the key points my colleagues and I brought back from the conference. As I mentioned earlier, look in this and following newsletters for more fantastic information.

WIOA- If you haven't heard of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act yet, you will soon. WIOA is the new legislation, passed in the summer of 2014, that reauthorizes our programs under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (title II of WIOA). As some of you may remember, WIA (the Workforce Investment Act) was the previous legislation that we operated under for the past decade and a half. It was outdated and was failing our programs and our students. WIOA will help us position adult education to become more effective and efficient to meet the growing demands of the 21st century.

College and Career Readiness- This is another of the new catch phrases in adult education and it will become the foundation on which adult education is built in the era of WIOA. We are no longer just "GED® programs." We are here to build the skills necessary for students be successful at work and in postsecondary education. It seems like a tall order, but if we don't... our students will never realize their full potential. This means teaching skills and strategies that will help them succeed across all content areas. Whether it's writing, mathematics, communication skills, or technology, they all have a place in every classroom from English Language Acquisition, to Adult Basic Education, to Adult Secondary Education and beyond.

Career Pathways- There will be more emphasis on helping students identify and prepare for career pathways. This means partnering with businesses, industries, and postsecondary education/technical training programs to get students the skills they need to obtain the high-paying jobs that exist in Nebraska and all across the nation, but which employers are hard pressed to find skilled workers to fill. If you follow me on Google+, you may have noticed I have highlighted several stories in the news recently about the lack of skilled workers in Nebraska and the U.S. in general. The *Lincoln Journal Star* also recently highlighted the need in southeast Nebraska for skilled machine operators and how manufacturers are partnering with Southeast Community College to try and grow training programs to fill this need.

English Language Acquisition Programs- That's right, ESL will soon be a thing of the past. WIOA brings new terminology and a greater focus on workplace skills to English language programs. English Language Learners (ELL) will replace ESL students and ESL programs will now be called English Language Acquisition (ELA) programs. In addition to mandating that all programs incorporate career pathways instruction into ELA, WIOA also places greater emphasis on civics and citizenship instruction, as well. Though it is important to

note, current EL/Civics programs already had such a requirement in place. The summer ESL summit in Kearney (June 2015) provided much needed training and support on how to incorporate all these changes into our existing programs. Folks, exciting times are ahead for adult education and I firmly believe that we, in adult education in Nebraska, are up to the challenge. Remember... our students are counting on us and I, for one, am not going to let them down. For more information about these and other great topics of interest to adult education, please visit www.coabe.org

Gaming for Education

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska Adult Education Consultant

Source: eSchool News

Ninety seven percent of kids spend an average of ten hours a week playing video games. It's hard work, but they keep coming back. They often fail at whatever they are trying to do, but they persist until they learn the strategies, concepts, and skills to achieve their goals. Then they set new ones and come back for more. Games lend themselves easily to collaboration, and kids often compete with each other. Playing games gives them immediate and long term feedback. And the games track what they do, where they fail, where they succeed, and what they learn. (Mitch Weisburgh, *eSchool News*, August 17, 2015)

Isn't that the way we want education to work? So what is it about games that make kids try harder and learn more?

- Games are the optimal learning environment. Students that are interested and enjoying school are more likely to succeed. A game-like climate presents challenging and relevant activities that help a student feel in control and promotes concentration while involving intellect and feeling. A game requires thinking and effort but feels like play;
- Games focus on proximal development, just beyond the skills of the player who will strive to improve;
- Games make the player strive to be better and persist in spite of repeated failures as the participant has to plan and learn;
- Games encourage trial and failure;
- Games can create situations that cannot be created in the real world, or are too costly to duplicate in the classroom such as the weight of a boulder on Mars or the experience of being a government official in the state capitol or in Washington.

Weisburgh, a partner at Academic Business Advisors states: As we move from a print to a digital world, we have an unprecedented opportunity to transform education into something that works for everyone. Games need to have an integral role if we are to realize that vision.

Staying on Track and Hitting the Mark

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska Adult Education Consultant

"Staying on Track and Hitting the Mark" is the title of a webinar presented by LINCS on *Tuesdays for Teachers*. The webinar was presented by four instructors from GED[®], most of whom should be familiar to educators in our programs: Bonnie Goonan and Susan Pittman who presented a workshop in Kearney three years ago and then collaborated on the GED[®] webinars which were presented to our programs two years ago, and Debi Faucette who spoke at our Fall Conference last October and has been in Nebraska a number of times.

The webinar focused on the changes in the GED[®] which are the subject of the Rule 81 changes going before the Nebraska State Board of Education before they can be effective in Nebraska. I will touch on just a few of the points made by the presenters because LINCS archives the webinars and you can access them if you wish and most of you are aware of the changes that are being proposed already. If you are not aware, you had best check into it as your students are aware. The main point that caught everyone's attention is the adjustment to the GED[®] passing score from 150 to 145, with 165 now being considered College Ready and 175 qualifying for college credit.

GED® is making the changes retroactive to the beginning of the new GED® test on January 1, 2014 and figures that their system will make them active between March 1 and March 20, 2016, meaning now. However many states, such as Nebraska, have rules in place that must be changed before the GED® changes can be effective and that takes a certain amount of time to go through the process. Another potential point of misunderstanding is the 175 score that “qualifies” for college credit. This is at the discretion of the institution which may or may not grant the credits.

Another major change is to take the extended response out of the Social Studies portion of the test since the Social Studies response is correlated in the other GED® tests. The main point the presenters drove home again and again is that the scores and some interpretations may be changing but the rigor of the test is being maintained. The content and the teaching objectives have not been changed and students will still need higher order thinking skills and problem solving skills to successfully complete the test. The concentration is on the High Impact Indicators that allow us to focus our energy on what the students really need to succeed.

Please check out the LINCS website if you have not already. In addition to *Tuesdays for Teachers*, they have an incredible library of professional development.

Lynda.com: Learn a New Skill Online, On Your Time

By: Jim Lukesh, Nebraska Adult Education Consultant

Lynda.com is a website that is designed to help you increase your business, creative and technology skills and offers solutions for business, government, and academic areas which is where we come in. *Lynda.com* is a two-fold assistant, offering information on how to run programs as well as ideas on how to use them in the classroom.

The website offers nearly 1,000 courses in business, leadership and project management and over 1,200 courses in technology including data management, plan development, instructional technology and use of the web. If you already have a lot of great ideas to use in your classroom but want to make them really pop out at the students, *Lynda.com* offers more than 2,000 creative courses in design, photography, audio and music as well as computer-assisted design.

An example would be 3D Animation. Most of us are not born being experts in 3D Animation but it does help to make lessons seem real and interesting to students. The library of *Lynda.com* contains 13,371 (the last time I looked) tutorials on 3D Animation and that is only one of hundreds of topics. The best way to find out about *Lynda.com* is to try it. If you get to the website, the url of which I mentioned five times already, you can sign up for a free ten-day trial. Save some time to look at this as you will find a multitude of topics that pique your interest as well as help you in preparing your lessons.

Nebraska Adult Education and GED® Website

Visit the Nebraska Department of Education’s website: <http://www.education.ne.gov/ADED/Index.html>

You’ll find the most current versions of Rules 81 and 82, GED® testing requirements, forms for examinees to use when requesting Official GED® Transcripts, duplicate diplomas and much more!