



ABE LICENSE UPDATE

FIRST PROFESSIONAL ABE TEACHER'S LICENSES AWARDED

In a ceremony at the State House on September 12th, Commissioner David Driscoll and Governor Jane Swift awarded Massachusetts' first Professional ABE Teacher's Licenses to Andrea O'Brien from the Lawrence Adult Education Center and Lucille Fandel from Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center.

Andrea O'Brien, of North Andover, is an ESOL teacher with over a decade of experience and currently holds the position of Staff Developer at the Lawrence Adult Learning Center. She has presented workshops for the Lawrence Public Schools, Northeast SABES, MATSOL, MCAE, and TESOL. She was a member of the Working Group that developed the Massachusetts Department of Education's Adult ESOL Curriculum Framework and worked on the revision of the Adult Health Curriculum Framework. She is the present Adult Education Representative on the MATSOL Board.

Lucille Fandel, of Cummington, is a Family Literacy instructor with the Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center located in the Springfield Public Library. She has been a family literacy instructor teaching basic reading, writing, math, and computer literacy to parents for the past 10 years. She has spent over half of her teaching career outside of the U.S. in Guatemala and southern Sudan.

Besides participating in ongoing professional development themselves, both teachers contribute significantly to the professional development of other ABE teachers by conducting workshops, au-

thoring articles for literacy publications, participating in professional organizations (MATSOL, TESOL, MCAE), and participating in the development of the ABE Curriculum Frameworks.

The ABE teacher's license is a new, voluntary license available for teachers of adult literacy, basic skills, ASE/GED, and ESOL. The Massachusetts ABE Teacher's License is the first stand-alone license (not predicated on a preK-12 license) in the nation to be recognized on two fronts: by its state's Department of Education and for its rigor and stature/equivalence to other teacher licenses. Congratulations Andrea and Lucille!



-l. to r. Governor Jane Swift; Andrea O'Brien; Commissioner of Education, David P. Driscoll



-l. to r. House Minority Leader, Representative Brian Lees; Governor Swift, Lucille Fandel, Commissioner Driscoll

The ABE Teacher's License Update is published by the MDOE (Massachusetts Department of Education) in coordination with SABES (System for Adult Basic Education Support) in an effort to keep practitioners and interested parties apprised of the status of the ABE Teacher's License. This Update, past issues, and other relevant documents are posted on the following web-sites: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abecert/> or www.sabes.org/license

Applications for the ABE teacher's license are available on the Department's web-site at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/e_license.html or by calling 781-338-3000 and requesting an application packet.

SABES SUPPORT FOR LICENSE-SEEKING

This fall, SABES will continue its field test of a support model designed to help teachers obtain the new license. Last year, thirty teachers and several SABES regional support center staff members worked together in small peer-support groups. The year-one work was focused on putting together and submitting effective application packets, which most teachers succeeded in doing by the summer hiatus. Once DOE distributes the approved guidelines in the fall, the teacher groups will start up again, this time focusing their work on preparing effective portfolios and teaching demonstrations. For helping to test and refine the model, each teacher will receive a small stipend; they will also be asked to produce a document or short set of recommendations which could be used to help other teachers in the future. The most useful aids will be included on SABES's license-support web-site at www.sabes.org/license.

SABES will also be experimenting with program-based groups of teachers, but SABES is ready and willing to help ANY teacher who wants to go after the new license.

Each regional support center has one or more staff members who have kept up with license information and requirements. Here are their names and contact information:

SABES West:

Pat Mew, 413-552-2393,
pmew@hcc.mass.edu

SABES Central:

Sue Miller,
508-854-4493,
suem@qcc.mass.edu

SABES Southeast:

Annemarie Espindola,
508-678-2811 x2782,
aespindo@bristol.mass.edu

SABES Northeast:

Janet Fischer,
978-738-7307,
jfischer@necc.mass.edu

SABES Greater Boston:

Maria E. Gonzalez,
617-782-8956 x15,
maria@alri.org

You can also call or contact Carey Reid at SABES's Central Resource Center at any time:
617-482-9485,
creid@worlded.org

"A peer-support approach is the way to go. The small group meetings have been helpful in sharing resumes, ideas, and challenges. It's great to share experiences with colleagues."

"The exchange of ideas is wonderful. It's very useful to have others look a curriculum vitae and standards and give their input."

"This approach provides the necessary support (pressure) I need to stay focused."

"Everyone has a different area of experience, and this is helpful."

SABES's LICENSURE SUPPORT WEB-SITE

SABES's licensure-support web-site has been updated and refined. Visitors will find information, links, contacts, and resource lists to help them. Recently, over a hundred new resources--books, articles, videos, and web-sites--were added to the separate resource lists for each professional standard. In the near future, SABES will be working with the support center librarians to find ways to make access to resources easier for license-seeking teachers.

www.sabes.org/license

Licensure Information Session: SABES Northeast, Friday, October 11, 2002, 1-3:30 p.m.
To register, please contact Sharon: klufts@aol.com or 978-7302

THE FIRST ABE REVIEW PANELISTS UNDERGO TRAINING

In early August, 9 ABE review panelists underwent training to evaluate performance portfolios and teaching demonstrations using the initial draft of the ABE guidelines. All participants successfully completed the training, which was conducted by contractors from the University of Pennsylvania, and are now the first to participate in a pool of review panelists. Panelists will participate in groups of 3 to evaluate and make recommendations to the Department on whether candidates should be licensed based on their meeting the professional standards for licensure.

This first pool of review panelists consists of: Bill Arcand, formerly Director of SABES West; Joan Kieran, GED LSF, Project Coordinator, and instructor at the ACCESS Program at Cape Cod Community College; Roxanne Heller, also an instructor with ACCESS Program; Kathy Radley, Director of Extended Campus Programs at Framingham State College and former ABE teacher; Cathy Snell, Lead Teacher at Visions Worcester Adult Ed; Dr. M. Olu Odusina, ABE Facilitator of Learning, Pioneer Valley Adult Education Center; Jean-Marie Aubin, Instructor, Hampshire CHOC; Jacque Davis, former ABE/ESOL instructor; Elena

Kyle, ESOL instructor at Quinsigamond Community College.

In order to be eligible to be a review panelist, participants must possess at least 5 years of ABE teaching experience; **or**, 3 years of ABE teaching experience plus 2 years of ABE supervisory experience; **or** they must possess an ABE teacher's license at the professional level.

Earlier this summer the ABE guidelines were approved for piloting and 6 candidates for the professional license undertook the challenge of developing the first performance portfolio entries and teaching demonstrations using the drafted guidelines. Review panelists then used these materials during the training. We would like to extend a special **"thank you!"** to the 6 pilot candidates who developed materials for the training. As an outcome of the training, the panelists reviewed two complete portfolios and made recommendations to the Department regarding licensure. As a result, they recommended the first two ABE teachers to receive a Professional ABE license. (See first article in this issue.)

Now that the initial group of applicants has been piloted and the first review panel training conducted, the guidelines will be amended as necessary and

submitted to the Sr. Associate Commissioner and the DOE legal department for review, and then submitted to the Commissioner for final approval. We hope to have the final version of the guidelines ready for release in time for the October ABE conferences, at which time licensure candidates may begin developing their performance portfolios.

In order to help build a credible licensure model, one of the issues addressed in the review panel training was how to reduce the effects of subjectivity and bias when assessing performance portfolios and teaching demonstrations.

During the training review panelists learned how to identify personal and professional biases. Bias may exist in the form of rating patterns (e.g., generosity, leniency, severity, or central tendency). Bias may be positive, which is called a "halo effect" and it may color the rater's initial attitude toward individuals or programs. Bias may also exist with regard to race, religion, ethnicity, age, disability, and sexual orientation. As such, review panelists are asked to sign a Non-Discrimination Statement as part of their agreement to participate. —continued p. 4

Announcements

We're on the Web!

[Http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators](http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators)
or
www.sabes.org/license

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IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS
OR COMMENTS, PLEASE
CONTACT:

Mary Jayne Fay,
ABE Licensure Coordinator,
at MJFay@doe.mass.edu

Carey Reid, SABES Staff
Development Specialist, at
617-482-9485 or
CReid@worlded.org

ELAR:

The Department has implemented a new online system for processing preK-12 applications: ELAR (Educational Licensing and Recruitment). On this system, you can apply for a preK-12 license, pay for the application, track the application, and track your licensure and recertification file. The system doesn't currently support ABE applications, but hopes to include it in the next round of updates to the ELAR system. If you already possess a preK-12 license or would like to apply for one, check out the ELAR system at:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/> Click on the "licensure profile" button in the upper right-hand corner of your screen where you will receive information on how to request a username and a password.

MTEL Test Dates:

Applicants for the Provisional ABE License:

The MTEL Test Dates for the next year are:
9/14/02, 11/23/02, 2/22/03, 5/17/03, 7/26/03. For more information on the MTEL Test, please see the Department's web-site at:
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/mtel/>

Printing License Updates:

ABE Program Directors:

Since the ACLS monthly mailing is now being sent electronically, we'd greatly appreciate it if you would download the License Updates and post them for your staff. These Updates are one of several methods that we use to keep the field apprised of the latest information regarding the ABE teacher's license. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Review Panel Training Cont'd from page 3

One obvious way to lessen the effects of bias on evaluation is to ensure that review panelists are not reviewing portfolios of people with whom they work or with whom they are personally acquainted. Review panel participants have signed a Conflict of Interest Statement as part of their agreement to participate and are asked to excuse themselves from these reviews.

Additional ways to lessen subjectivity are to evaluate portfolios based on their content and not based on what raters bring to the evaluation (e.g., prior knowledge of an individual, a program, or a learning environment); adhering to the guidelines for

evaluation; and adhering to the criteria for meeting the teacher standards.

Training review panelists on how to use the guidelines, how to evaluate the teacher standards, and how to understand bias will help to reduce the subjectivity associated with evaluating portfolios and will help to strengthen the credibility of this licensure model.

At the end of the training, panelists felt that they were much more conscious of their personal and professional biases and felt much more confident about not letting those biases interfere with their evaluation.

One of the participants, Joan

Kieran, stated: "The training addressed our need to recognize personal bias, to focus on the standards, and to fairly evaluate candidates' qualifications by addressing all areas of documentation submitted. The training exceeded my expectations. The first day I questioned how I could do this, but the training design certainly built my confidence by the time we finished. It was a wonderful professional development experience. It was a great opportunity to observe "needs" in adult education programs, but strong affirmation that adult education has dedicated, well-educated professionals in the field."