The monthly mailing for January is now posted to our ACLS website. Please review the information and share with your staff.

- **ABE Teacher License**
  After successfully demonstrating competency of the professional standards for ABE, four teachers were awarded an ABE professional license in 2014.

- **Assessment Update**
  - BEST Plus Recertification Reminder – recertification will be due February 27
  - New for FY15: Change in Procedure for Submitting BEST Plus Recertifications
  - New for FY15: Change in Procedure for Submitting CLAS-E Writing Recertifications
  - Formative Assessment
  - BEST Plus Recertification Form

- **Education and Career Planning**
  The *Indicators of Effective Advising* and *Education and Career Planning Update – August 2014* can now be found on the Education and Career Planning page.

- **Family Engagement**
  - Help Parents Keep Their Families Healthy and Safe this Winter

- **HiSET Update**
  - Links to five content-specific archived webinars from the Educational Testing Services

- **SMARTT Update**
  - Wait List Verification Reminder – Due January 9th
  - NRS Cohort Follow-Up
  - SMARTT/Cognos Trainings and Support

- **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Apprenticeship Grant Opportunity**
  The Department of Labor has announced an apprenticeship grant opportunity to expand registered apprenticeship programs in high-skilled growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, biotechnology, health care, and information technology). Approximately 25 grants from $2.5 million to $5 million each will be awarded to public and private partnerships consisting of employers, business associations, joint-labor management organizations, labor organizations, community colleges, local and state governments, and non-profit organizations.

  Please take a minute to review this important grant opportunity!
ABE Teacher License

After successfully demonstrating competency of the professional standards for ABE, four teachers were awarded an ABE professional license in 2014. These teachers are now considered proficient in the following areas:

1. Understanding the Adult Learner
2. Diversity and Equity
3. Instructional Design and Teaching Approaches
4. Facilitating the Adult Learning Environment
5. Learner Assessment and Evaluation
6. Professionalism/Continuing Education

Congratulations to:

Craig Peterson, Lawrence Public Schools Adult Learning Center
Cathleen Moriarty, Hampden County Sheriff’s Department, Ludlow
James Sullivan, American Training, Inc/LARE, Lawrence
Michele Lapham, Massachusetts Correctional Institution, Framingham

Your commitment to serving the adult learners of Massachusetts is greatly appreciated.

There are currently 28 teachers pursuing an ABE professional license. If you would like information about the ABE Teacher License, see http://www.doe.mass.edu/educators/
Assessment Update, January 2015

BEST Plus Recertification Reminder—Recertification will be due February 27
Each year, practitioners who are certified to score the BEST Plus assessment are notified in early January by ACLS that the recertification process will begin soon, and this is your notice! At the end of January, ACLS will email directors the number of the BEST Plus Scoring Activity to complete; program directors must give the information to relevant staff as soon as it is received.

BEST Plus test administrators will have one month to score a sample set of assessments and submit them to their Program Director or ESOL Assessment Coordinator so that she/he may send them to Joan Ford, SABES director of assessment professional development. The deadline for getting the completed scoring activities to Joan is Friday, February 27.

- There are no exceptions for late submissions, and test administrators who are not recertified are not permitted to administer or score the BEST Plus.
- (Practitioners receiving their Initial Certification in the current FY15 will not have to recertify until FY16.)
- Joan will inform program directors/ESOL Assessment Coordinators of their staff’s recertification status by the end of March 2015. Recertifications submitted earlier than Feb. 27 will be processed in the order in which they are received, and thus programs will be notified sooner than the end of March.
- Those who do not pass the scoring activity will be contacted to receive remediation.
- *Note: no certificates will be given; retain your notification email from Joan about successfully passing the BEST Plus.

Check to Determine Whether High Scoring BEST Plus Test Administrators Need to Recertify
BEST Plus test administrators who have scored consistently in the “recommended” area for Listening Comprehension, Language Complexity, and Communication in the annual recertification for the past three years may recertify every third year instead of every year. Practitioners who benefit from this change must also continue to test at least 20 students each year to maintain their fidelity to the BEST Plus scoring rubric. In February, Joan will send to program directors a list of those staff that will not need to recertify until FY17.

New for FY15: Change in Procedure for Submitting BEST Plus Recertifications
This year, there will be a revised method for submitting BEST Plus Recertifications. We ask that Program Directors or ESOL Assessment Coordinators send BEST Plus recertification scoring activities together with a list of practitioners’ names rather than each practitioner sending their own separately. Be sure that the practitioner’s name is on every scoring activity sheet. To aid directors in this process, a BEST Plus Recertification Form has been developed for your use (see attached). Directors/ESOL Assessment Coordinators, please use this form when submitting BEST Plus recertifications.

In the past, some scoring activities were lost, and because all statewide assessment activities are now centralized with one person, we hope to avoid any problems with recertifications becoming lost or unaccounted for. All information regarding successful recertification or any need for remediation will also go to the director, who we ask to then pass on the information to his/her staff. We believe this revised system will result in clear communication between programs and the professional development assessment office, and we appreciate your cooperation.

New for FY15: Change in Procedure for Submitting CLAS-E Writing Recertifications
The CLAS-E Writing recertification process will begin on March 1, 2015, and the completed recertification packet will be due to Joan Ford on March 31, 2015.

This year, there is a revised method for submitting CLAS-E Writing Recertifications. We ask that Program Directors or ESOL Assessment Coordinators send CLAS-E Writing recertification score sheets with a list of
practitioners’ names rather than each practitioner sending their own separately. Be sure the practitioner’s name is on every score sheet. To aid directors in this process, a CLAS-E Writing Recertification Form has been developed for your use and will be sent in March.

There have been problems in the past with some scoring activities getting lost; because statewide assessment activities are now centralized with one person, we hope to avoid problems with recertifications becoming lost or unaccounted for. All information regarding successful recertification or any need for remediation will also go to the director, who we ask to then pass on the information to his/her staff. We believe this revised system will result in clear communication between programs and the professional development assessment office, and we appreciate your help in this matter.

**Formative Assessment**

We all want students to succeed but how do you know if your students achieve their goals? How do you know if the lesson you taught is successful?

One way to check is through **formative assessment** which guides student learning during instruction and informs instructional decisions. It is ongoing, contextualized, authentic, and classroom-based. Students want to know about their progress, and this is one way to provide regular feedback. Here are some resources to help:

1. **ESOL Formative assessment toolkit**: a teaching and formative assessment resource from English Language Services for Adults (ELSA), a government funded program that provides English training for adult newcomers to Canada;
2. **60 Types for Formative Assessment**: a list of techniques to check for understanding and processing activities put together by the Levy County School District, Florida;
3. **Examples of Formative Assessment**: a list of formative assessments (e.g., observations, questioning, exit/admin slips, learning logs, peer/self-assessments) from the West Virginia Department of Education;
4. **Formative Assessment Strategies**: informal assessment and engagement strategies (e.g., quick write, 12-word summary) compiled by the Boston Public Schools; and
5. **Five Key Strategies for Effective Formative Assessment**: an article on how to build a comprehensive framework for formative assessment from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

For assessment-related questions, contact Dana Varzan-Parker, Assessment Specialist, at dvarzan-parker@doe.mass.edu or (781) 338-3811.
Family Engagement January 2015

- **Family Engagement**: Help Parents Keep Their Families Healthy and Safe this Winter

The Federal Registry for Educational Excellence (FREE) website provides ideas on activities parents can enjoy with their children while learning about staying healthy during the winter. Five categories of learning include:

- Practice prevention and treatment
- Learn more about vaccines
- Learn some microbiology
- Reading
- Arts


The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website provides ideas for planning ahead to stay safe and healthy. Five suggestions to prepare for the winter include:

- Preparing your home
- Preparing your car
- Equipping for emergencies
- Taking precautions outdoors
- Planning to travel

HiSET Update

Below are links to five content-specific archived webinars from the Educational Testing Service, one for each subtest of the HiSET. Although the slides and the presentation are written in HiSET-Speak, the savvy interpreter can glean valuable information from these webinars about the content areas and item types of the five subtests, information that will be most useful in planning curriculum and instruction.

Content Webinars

ETS HiSET Writing  
https://hiset.webex.com/hiset/ldr.php?RCID=0956052d3a5d898e7cfff134f933096f

ETS HiSET Social Studies  
https://hiset.webex.com/hiset/ldr.php?RCID=45ba146737bf307820c5afc56f3bbaee

ETS HiSET Reading  
https://hiset.webex.com/hiset/ldr.php?RCID=594028fba8cd5896bf0a3f409ed7fca

ETS HiSET Science  
https://hiset.webex.com/hiset/ldr.php?RCID=3c80ee85fdce78a8e4a154f0c13e53a4

ETS HiSET Math  
https://hiset.webex.com/hiset/ldr.php?RCID=ceb19b3a3ebee48dba801e01c38d1eeb
SMARTT Update, January 2015

1) **Wait List Verification Reminder - Due January 9th**

   The Waitlist Verification is due annually by December 1. The deadline for this year was extended to January 9. Please make sure that you review the names on the waitlist screen. The screen can be accessed by clicking on “Waitlist” on the left menu and then on “Waitlist Verification.” The screen lists a checkbox to verify that you have reviewed the wait list data by length of time:
   
   * less than 1 year  
   * 1- 2 years  
   * 2 - 3 years  
   * more than 3 years

   The signature verification box is similar to the site rollover request indicating that the program coordinator assures that the information is accurate. When you check the box you are indicating that:  
   **“The wait list information contained within this report is true and accurate and does not need to be updated or corrected.”**

   The Waitlist search screen provides the capability to search students by Site, Period on Waitlist (less than 1 year, 1-2 years, 2-3 years, more than 3 years), Last Name, Status, (current, all, removed, intaken) and type (ABE or ESOL).

   Please review the Wait List policy which can be found in the **FY13 ABE Guidelines** on page 43 at [http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeprogram/GuidelinesCI.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/abeprogram/GuidelinesCI.pdf).

   The ABE Directory displays these counts of students who are on the waitlist:
   
   **ABE:** 3,709  
   **ESOL:** 12,557  
   **TOTAL:** 16,266

   We reviewed the waitlist data and found that there are 2,497 students waiting for services prior to 2010. We will be removing these students from all waitlists **at the end of January** once all waitlist verifications have been submitted.

2) **NRS Cohort Follow-Up**

   Please continue to follow-up with students who are listed on the NRS Cohort screen who have exited and require follow-up. This fiscal year is half over, so please follow-up quarterly with your students who appear on the NRS Cohort screen. If you are following up on the employment cohorts, ask the student when he/she became employed after leaving the program. Note that data matching uses the middle date of the middle quarter month, so we don’t expect the dates to be exact. Review the charts on the ACLS website: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smartt/NRS-CohortTips.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smartt/NRS-CohortTips.html)

   - **For entered employment**, the dates must be in the quarter AFTER the student exited.  
     If the student exited during October – December 2014, you should follow-up during January – March 2015.
   - **For retained employment**, the dates must be in the third quarter AFTER the student exited.  
     If the student exited during April – June 2014, you should follow-up during January – March 2015.

   You do not want to follow-up too soon for the retained employment cohort.
3) **SMARTT/Cognos Trainings and Support**

Check the upcoming trainings on the SABES website, [http://calendar.sabes.org](http://calendar.sabes.org). To register, click on the register icon on workshop title on the SABES calendar.

- **January 16** from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm
- **January 30** from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- **February 11** from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm

**DL: SMARTT Update: Reviewing Midyear Data (online)**

The presenter, Charlie Herbert, will review midyear data, updates from ACLS, SMARTT assessment reports, and the NRS Cohort screen. This two-hour session will be conducted online using a combination of independent study, web-conferencing, and phone conferencing. The independent study portion will be reviewing tutorials and links sent in the week leading up to the live event. Participants are required to view these tutorials prior to the second portion, a live one-hour web/phone conference. For the second portion, participants will need simultaneous access to a phone and a web-connected computer.


**Questions?** Please contact Donna Cornellier at [dcornellier@doe.mass.edu](mailto:dcornellier@doe.mass.edu)