TO: ABE Directors, SABES Coordinators, WIA Administrators, Career Centers, LWIB, Teacher/All Staff  
FROM: Jolanta Conway, ABE State Director  
DATE: February 23, 2015  
RE: What's in this Mailing?  

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

- **Reminder - SAVE THE DATES:** ABE Directors’ Meeting, Wednesday, April 29 and Thursday, April 30, 2015. Westford Regency Inn & Conference Center, 219 Littleton Road, Route 110, Westford, MA 01886. Room rates – double/single $105 plus MA occupancy tax (11.7%) $117.60. To make reservations, please call 978-692-8200 and refer to ABE Directors’ Meeting/Dept of Elementary and Secondary Education no later than April 8, 2015.

- **Community Planning**
  - **2014 ACLS Community Planning Training Summary:** A summary reflecting the key elements of Community Planning Training conducted in 2014 and related materials and resources can now be accessed on the ACLS Community Planning web page: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/cp/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/cp/)
  - ACLS will be conducting a series of 4 webinars this spring on Community Planning. Stay tuned for upcoming webinar dates and registration information.

- **Curriculum Update**
  - There are a number of professional development opportunities on the SABES website for practitioners looking for resources to develop a scope and sequence for an ELA, Math, and ESOL curriculum.
    - How is the SABES Professional Development System Organized?
    - Excellent materials for Supporting, Understanding, and Using the CCR standards for Adult Education (CCRSAE)
    - Additional Professional Development Opportunity for ESOL Practitioners
    - Additional Professional Development Opportunity for English Language Arts Practitioners

- **Family Engagement**
  - How Can Busy Parents Build Literacy Activities into Their Daily routines
  - How Public Libraries Can Support Family Learning

- **HiSET**
  - New Policy for 16 or 17 Year-Old Testers
  - Selected 2014 HiSET® Statistics for Massachusetts
National Book Foundation $10,000 Award Opportunity

The National Book Foundation’s 2015 Innovations in Reading Prize will award $10,000 to an individual or institution—or partnership between the two—that has developed innovative means of creating and sustaining a lifelong love of reading. Applicants should be VITAL demonstrating Vision, Ingenuity, Transformation, Achievement and Leadership. Note: This is a prize, not a grant. The goal of the prize is to reward existing programs with evidence of success and encourage those programs to continue.

Applications are due February 28. See link for more information: http://tinyurl.com/mo6fm8l

Professional Development
ACLS and SABES Advisory Group Invitation

SMARTT Update
• Automatic Exit – new column added
• Waitlist Verification Reminder
• Data Lockout Extension – extended until February 28, 2015
• New Fund Codes in Program Planning – Class Funding Detail Screen
• NRS Cohort Follow-up
• SMARTT/Cognos Trainings and Support
There are a number of professional development opportunities on the SABES website for practitioners looking for resources to develop a scope and sequence for an ELA, Math, and ESOL curriculum:

- The SABES Office responsible for ELA Support at Quinsigamond Community College will be offering three two-day sessions on *Developing a Scope and Sequence for English Language Arts: Big Picture Planning for Quality Instruction in Massachusetts*. This training will be offered twice in March (March 5-6 in Worcester and March 23-24 in Cambridge) and once in April (April 16-17 at Bristol Community College);
- The SABES Office for Math Support at TERC is running three 5-session trainings on *Aligning Math Curriculum with the CCRSAE* in Boston, New Bedford, and Western MA (details TBA). The training in New Bedford has only just begun, so space may still be available.
- The SABES Office for ESOL Support at Holyoke Community College recently offered a full day session on *Curriculum and Instructional Design—Standard 4 of the MA Professional Standards for Teachers of Adult ESOL*. This session was popular and received well; it will be offered three more times between now and the end of June: Sat., March 28 in Quincy, Saturday, April 11 at Middlesex Community College, and Friday, May 1 at TERC in Boston. All sessions run 9:30-3:30 pm.

There are many more professional development opportunities listed on the SABES calendar. I urge you to take advantage of the professional development (PD) and/or TA opportunities available such as support in developing a scope and sequence or instructional units.

- For more information and to register: [http://calendar.sabes.org/calendar/month/2015-02](http://calendar.sabes.org/calendar/month/2015-02)
- To receive information about future PD offerings: [http://www.sabes.org/about-us/contact-us/](http://www.sabes.org/about-us/contact-us/)

**How is the SABES Professional Development System Organized?**

There are three Priority Instructional Areas (Math, ELA, ESOL), and five additional priority areas (Centers for Educational Leadership, Distance Learning and Technology Support, Education and Career Planning, Assessment, and Using SMARTT and Cognos).

Luanne Teller at World Education is responsible for coordinating the SABES PD system, and can be reached at lteller@worlded.org.

Education Development Center (EDC) is responsible for maintaining the SABES PD system’s communication network, including the SABES website, online calendar and registration system, promotional materials, and listservs. EDC’s Kirsten Peterson and Erin Earnst are the lead staff for this work and can be reached at kpeterson@edc.org and eearnst@edc.org, respectively.

**Excellent Materials for Supporting Understanding and Using the CCR Standards for Adult Education (CCRSAE)**

*(This is a re-post from LINCS).*

New professional development materials are now available to support your effective implementation of the CCR standards. There are eight professional development units—four for *English language arts/literacy* and four for *mathematics*.

The units revolve around the key instructional advances (also referred to as the Instructional shifts) that identify the most significant parts of the CCRSAE. These standards are so crucial to preparing adult students for postsecondary success! Materials contain a facilitator’s guide, participant materials, and an annotated PowerPoint presentation. To access these new resources visit the CCR Standards Project [page](#) or the LINCS Resource Collection. (These materials replicate key activities offered during the CCR Standards Implementation Institutes, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education nationwide in 2014.) Be sure to share these CCR standards-based resources with your adult education program staff and interested colleagues.
Additional Professional Development Opportunity for ESOL Practitioners:
Andy Nash will offer the session, *Aligning Your ESOL Lessons with the College and Career Readiness Standards.* This session will engage teachers in examining their own ESL lessons to see how the CCR standards can enrich or extend what is already taught. Participants must commit to bringing a lesson plan (3 printed copies with space for writing notes). Lessons will be discussed in terms of the content, depth, and level, ways the lesson can be improved, and ways to use the standards to guide new lessons as teachers develop them.

**Date/Time:** Friday March 13, 2015, from 9:00am-12:00 pm  
**Location:** Education Development Center, 43 Foundry Avenue, Waltham, MA  
**Registration:** [http://calendar.sabes.org/event/141](http://calendar.sabes.org/event/141)

Additional Professional Development Opportunity for English Language Arts Practitioners

**Study Circle on Writing: Understanding and Using the Writing Section of the National Academy’s Report “Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Developing Reading and Writing,” pg. 1–6 and 13–22.**
Presented by Dolores Perin and facilitated by Dianna Baycich, this three part study circle will give participants an active role in delving into and using the research on writing as reported by the National Academies of Science in their publication *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction: Developing Reading and Writing.* Participants will be engaged in reading and discussion, and will implement a new writing activity in their classroom. There will be readings to be completed between each of the sessions. By the end of the Study Circle, participants will be able to, among other skills, develop a plan to change or add to their writing instruction, implement a change or addition to their writing instruction, and reflect and report on the results of the change or addition to their writing instruction. (There is some preparation required to participate in this study circle; for more information, click on the registration link below).

**Session Topics include, among others:**
- Differentiated instruction  
- Explicit and systematic instruction  
- Principles and practices of effective writing instruction  
- Developing an action plan for instruction  
- Instruction for struggling readers and writers and English language learners  
- Instruction for English language learners

**Study Circle Dates:** Thursdays, February 26, March 5, and March 12, 2015, 3:00-4:30 PM  
**Location:** Online  
**Registration:** [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/study-circle-on-writing-registration-15553176971](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/study-circle-on-writing-registration-15553176971)  
**Questions?** Contact Kaye Beall, kaye_beall@worlded.org

Questions about the Curriculum Update? Contact Jane Schwerdtfeger at janess@doe.mass.edu.
Family Engagement

Ways Parents Can Build Literacy Activities into Their Daily Routines

Life can be very busy and parents have competing demands. Sometimes it’s hard for parents to find the time to read with their children as much as they’d like to.

Parents can play a powerful role in their child’s literacy development by engaging in a host of activities with their children. Literacy is not just reading. It can take many shapes and forms: talking, writing, singing, telling stories, working with numbers and shapes, building things, and engaging in conversations.

Instead of thinking they have to set aside a specific time to engage their children, parents can build simple literacy activities into their existing daily routines. Parents may already be doing this and not realize they are engaging their children in literacy activities. Here are some examples:

- While driving or walking talk about the signs along the way. Point out signs of streets, storefront windows, billboards, and traffic signs. Play games such as “how many signs have the letters “m”, and “a”, or have the same letters as in your first name. Count how many cars you see in your favorite color. Ask questions such as: Can you count how many cars are in line at the red light? Which color cars do you like? Use your imagination to “play” with your child.
- Engage in dialogue with your child as much as possible. Ask questions that will result in a conversation back and forth. These questions may start with “how”, “why”, “tell me” about your day, explain/describe what happened, or what you dreamt about last night. Try not to ask questions that can be answered by a “yes” or “no” which limits an ongoing conversation.
- Sing songs together including rhyming songs, songs you sang as a child, and songs your child hears on educational programs such as Sesame Street.
- Tell stories to your child – about your family, customs you grew up with, your childhood, or humorous stories. Explain any words unfamiliar to your child to help him/her build vocabulary.
- Go grocery shopping together. Make a list of items together. At the store, read labels on food or signs or have your child help you select items.
- Bring a book for your child to read while waiting in the doctor’s office, sitting in the park, or on the bus.
- Bring paper and crayons for your child to draw while waiting in the doctor’s office. Even if your young child only scribbles, it is the beginning of literacy development. Ask your child to tell you about the drawings.
- If there are older children in the family, have them read to their younger brother or sister.

See Colorin Colorado, a bilingual site for families and educator of English language learners, for additional ideas on storytelling, rhyming, singing, and playing with words:

http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/29992/

How Public Libraries Support Family Learning

We are very fortunate to have public libraries that provide a whole range of FREE materials and resources for families in addition to books!

A field trip to your community’s local library can go a long way to lessen the intimidation factor and reap the rewards for families to be frequent visitors to take advantage of all the resources that are offered.

Encourage parents to regularly visit their local library with their children to take out books for both themselves and their children. Remind parents that they are models for their children.

Make sure the parents you serve know that libraries:

- Have a special section for children.
Librarians can help them pick out books appropriate for their child(ren) and their interests. Picture books without words are available so they can make up their own stories based on the pictures. Some books may be available in other languages that the librarian may be able to order for them. The librarian can also assist them in selecting books for themselves.

Conduct storytelling hours, sing a longs and other fun activities for children of all ages. There are also activities for adults. A list of activities can be found on the Massachusetts Libraries website at http://libraries.state.ma.us/login?Submit=Submit&retry=1 and enter the name of your community or your zipcode.

Lend CDs of music for children and adults and movies on DVDs.

Some libraries provide take home kits/book bags to borrow. These usually include a book and a fun literacy related activity with materials and instructions for parents to do with their children at home.

Provide free use of computers.

Provide discount tickets for local museums and other cultural institutions. Ask your local library what they may have available. For example:
- Boston Children’s Museum offers $1 admission on Fridays from 5:00 – 9:00 PM.
- At the Museum of Science, any EBT and/or WIC cardholder can receive up to four free passes to the Museum’s Exhibit Hall. For more information see http://www.mos.org/community-access.
The 2015 HiSET®

The 2015 HiSET® is now being administered at all Massachusetts test centers. Changes have been made to the HiSET® this year so that the skills and knowledge being assessed will be more closely aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education and so that scores of 15 or higher on each subtest will be more reflective of college and career readiness. Information on many of the changes is included in the document, 2015 Test at a Glance, located on the HiSET® website. The 2014 and 2015 versions of the HiSET® are completely compatible from a scoring standpoint, which makes for uninterrupted continuity of service for examinees who started testing in 2014 but must complete testing in 2015.

If you have questions about these changes, please contact Tom Mechem, State Chief Examiner for High School Equivalency at 781-338-6621 or tmechem@doe.mass.edu.

New Policy for 16- or 17-Year-Old Testers

As of January 1, 2015, no new HiSET® candidate 16 or 17 years of age can schedule any tests until an official Letter of Withdrawal from his/her last school attended has been approved by the Massachusetts High School Equivalency Office. Please review the updated information on this policy on the High School Equivalency Office webpage, http://www.doe.mass.edu/hse/AgeEligibility.html.

Selected 2014 HiSET® Statistics for Massachusetts

STATEWIDE
- Examinees who took one or more subtests: 5323
- Examinees who completed all five subtests: 4316
- Examinees who met the credentialing requirements: 3462
- Passing rate: 80%

EXAMINEES FROM ACLS-FUNDED ABE PROGRAMS
- Examinees who took one or more subtests: 724
- Examinees who completed all five subtests: 609
- Examinees who met the credentialing requirements: 459
- Passing rate: 75%
TO: All Massachusetts ESE-Funded ABE Program Staff  
From: ACLS and SABES  
Re: ACLS and SABES Advisory Group Invitation

ACLS and SABES convene an **Advisory Group** (AG) twice a year to help inform discussions on how to maximize the effectiveness of the SABES professional development system. At ACLS and SABES, we value the role of the AG and use its recommendations to inform our planning.

We are in the process of recruiting eight AG members. Ideally, the AG will be comprised of diverse members who can represent a range of roles, experience, and types of programs from across the state. In FY15, each AG member will be compensated a total of $275 for preparation and participation in one 2-hour online meeting via webinar ($75), and one day-long face-to-face meeting ($200). In FY16 and future years, AG members will be compensated $400 for preparation, participation, and travel for two day-long, face-to-face meetings ($200 each).

We invite interested applicants to submit a brief online application. Please keep in mind:

1. Full day face-to-face meetings are typically held in Worcester or another central MA location. Attendance at both meetings is required.
2. AG members must be from ESE-funded programs. If someone other than the director is applying, she/he must obtain the approval of the program director since AG members miss two days of work each year.
3. AG members are appointed for three years.
4. AG members are expected to do some preparation for meetings, typically some pre-reading and/or discussion of key issues with colleagues.
5. AG members are expected and encouraged to actively contribute to discussions in a positive and thoughtful way, and to listen respectfully to opposing views.

Please share this letter with your staff and colleagues. If you are interested in being part of the Advisory Group and are not a director, please discuss this option with your director and complete the brief online application. Important information for this process:

- Deadline for Application Submission: Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.
- For information about how to apply, go to [www.sabes.org](http://www.sabes.org) or email Ltell@worlded.org.
- Notification of AG Members: Friday, March 13, 2015
- First AG Meeting (online): April 6, 2015 from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.
- Second AG meeting (f2f): May 22, 2015 from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Quinsigamond Community College, 751 Grove Street, Worcester, MA

Please contact Luanne Teller at Ltell@worlded.org or (617) 385-3748 if you have any questions or if we can provide any additional information.

Thank you, in advance, for considering this important work.

Joan LeMarbre     Luanne Teller  
Professional Development Specialist   Director, SABES Coordination Center  
ACLS     World Education
SMARTT Update

1) Automatic Exit – new column added
There were 229 students who were auto exited on January 15, 2015 who had no attendance for the months of August through December. SMARTT automatically exits a student from the site when both conditions below occur:
1) No attendance (class, match, and distance learning curricula attendance) was recorded for that student during the three most recent months which have been “locked out” from data entry, (July, August, September), and
2) No attendance has yet been entered for that student during the current two month period (October and November) for which data entry is allowed.

The next auto exit will be on February 15 for students who had no attendance for September–January.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Automatic Exit Schedule</th>
<th>Month of Last Attendance</th>
<th>No Attendance in These Months</th>
<th>System Assigned Exit Date</th>
<th>Number Exited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 15th</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>July – November</td>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 15th</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>August – December</td>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15th</td>
<td>August</td>
<td>September – January</td>
<td>August 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15th</td>
<td>September</td>
<td>October – February</td>
<td>September 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15th</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>November – March</td>
<td>October 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15th</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>December – April</td>
<td>November 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15th</td>
<td>December</td>
<td>January – May</td>
<td>December 31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15th</td>
<td>January</td>
<td>February – June</td>
<td>June 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 15th</td>
<td>February</td>
<td>March – June</td>
<td>June 30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15th</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>April – June</td>
<td>June 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Waitlist Verification Reminder
The Waitlist Verification is due annually by December 1. The deadline for this year was extended to January 9, 2015; however, there are still 17 community adult learning center coordinators who need to submit their Waitlist Verification. There are currently 3,374 students waiting for ABE services and 11,739 waiting for ESOL services. Students who have been waiting for services prior to 2010 will automatically be removed from the waitlist. Please review the names on the waitlist screen, which 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 waitlist 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 waitlist 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).

3) Data Lockout Extension
Due to this year’s unexpected, severe weather and school closings, ACLS is allowing programs additional time to enter enrollment and attendance data for the month of November. Users will be able to enter new intakes and attendance for the month of November through February 28.
4) New Fund Codes in Programs Planning - Class Funding Detail Screen
ACLS added four new fund codes to the class funding detail screen which need to be used for the federal increases:

Direct:
340A Community Adult Learning Center – Federal
359A EL Civics – Federal
344 Transitions - Federal

Collaborative:
540 Adult Career Pathways – Federal

The class funding detail screen now shows these fund codes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Slots</th>
<th>Collaborative Slots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>285 Correctional Institutions</td>
<td>541 Adult Career Pathways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>340 Community Adult Learning Center – Federal</td>
<td>540 Adult Career Pathways – Federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>340A Community Adult Learning Center – Federal</strong></td>
<td>541 CALC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345 Community Adult Learning Center- State</td>
<td>CDBG/BOSTON</td>
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<tr>
<td>359 EL Civics</td>
<td>EDIC/BOSTON</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>359A EL Civics – Federal</strong></td>
<td>Learn At Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>563 Correctional Institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>668 Transitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>344 Transitions - Federal</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>669 Distance Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5) NRS Cohort Follow-Up
Please make sure that you follow up with students who are listed on the NRS Cohort screen who are exited and require follow-up. If you are following up on the employment cohorts, you need to 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 the dates are not exact. Review the charts provided in the December mailing about when to contact students.
- For enter employment, the dates must be in the quarter AFTER the student exited.
- For retained employment, the dates must be in the third quarter AFTER the student exited. You do not want to follow-up too soon for the retained employment cohort.

6) SMARTT/Cognos Trainings and Support
Check the upcoming trainings on the SABES website at [http://calendar.sabes.org](http://calendar.sabes.org). To register, click on the register icon on workshop title on the SABES calendar.

Intro to Cognos Online: March 23 – April 4, 2015
Presenter: Charlie Herbert
Participants will learn about key features and areas in Cognos, how to run essential performance data reports, create, save, and print reports and manage reports in your individual area. This is an online event. It will be delivered using the Moodle learning management system. The presenter will contact participants in the week prior to the event.

Objectives:
- Participants will login, navigate in different areas and tabs in Cognos
- Use toolbar functions to customize reports
- Run typical desk review and federal reports
- Learn how to manage reports and views
This includes creating, accessing, saving in Cognos and saving locally, exporting to Excel or PDF, and printing; it will include an introduction to working with cubes as well.
Intermediate Cognos (Online): April 3, 2015 from 10:00 – 12:00  
Presenter: Charlie Herbert

This is an online realtime event. A phone suitable for conference call and a web connected computer are required. Further contact information will be sent in the week prior to the event.

Do you want to step up your Cognos reporting skills? Do you know just the basics of Cognos but want to learn more to further explore your SMARTT data? Would you like to generate nice looking reports for meetings that will better inform your staff, your board of directors, your students, and other stakeholders? This two-hour workshop can help you be more confident using Cognos. Generate your own reports, save them to run them later; or take a previously-generated report and custom edit it for your own needs.

Objectives:
- Create, save, export, and print a customized view from the Attendance, Student by Site, and/or Goals Cube;
- Use toolbar icons and adjust settings so that the view always runs with current data; and
- Adapt a view from Favorite reports to reflect relevant site data.


Questions? Please contact Donna Cornellier at dcornellier@doe.mass.edu