The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Elementary & Secondary Education

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Adult and Community Learning Services

TO: ABE Directors, SABES Coordinators, WIA Administrators, Career Centers, LWIB, Teacher/All Staff

FROM: Jolanta Conway, ABE State Director

DATE: March 18, 2015

RE: What's in this Mailing?

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

- **SAVE THE DATES**: ABE Directors’ Meeting - Leading the Way: Innovation and Opportunity, 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. Workshop descriptions and registration link will follow shortly.

- **ABE Educator Evaluation System**
  As our next step, ACLS is seeking directors and teachers to participate in a second pilot that will focus on ESOL instruction. Participants will provide critical feedback to the Department on every aspect of this system.

- **Adult Career Pathways Year-End Meeting**
  Save the Date: Adult Career Pathways Year-End Meeting: Wednesday, June 3, 2015, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm. Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway, Devens, MA. More details to follow. A survey soliciting your input for the day’s agenda will be sent in the next few weeks.

- **Adult basic Education Local Workforce Investment Board Representatives**
  ABE programs are encouraged to contact their local representatives with questions and concerns. The 2014-2015 ABE LWIB Representatives contact list is included in this mailing. Currently, all regions except for Merrimack and South Shore have appointed representatives. ACLS will inform the field when these vacancies have been filled.

- **Community Planning**
  ACLS will be conducting a series of four webinars on Community Planning based on the training that was conducted in 2014. Connections to the WIOA legislation will be shared during the webinar.

- **Family Engagement**
  -Learn about apps parents can use with their children – Renegade Buggies and Family Time with Apps.
  -Resources for Early Learning

- **HiSET®**
  -Clarification of HiSET® Policies
  -HiSET® Scoring
  -Frequency of Retesting

- **New Directors’ Program Design Training Webinar**
  -Webinar – April 15, 2015, 1-3PM
  -Face to Face Workshop – April 24, 2015, 9AM – 3PM, Central Mass Workforce Investment Board
  - Please register at: [http://www.doe.mass.edu/conference/?ConferenceID=8091](http://www.doe.mass.edu/conference/?ConferenceID=8091)
Update on SchoolBrains
ACLS reviewed several data collection systems and selected SchoolBrains to replace SMARTT. SchoolBrains is used by many school districts and has been identified by our IT team as a product that could successfully replace the current SMARTT system.

SMARTT Update
- Waitlist Verification and Clean-Up
- Requesting New SMARTT Accounts and Activating New Accounts
- Automatic Exit – February 15, 2015
- Entering Non-SABES Professional Development
- Change in Cognos Desk Review Section
- SMARTT/Cognos Trainings and Support
ABE Educator Evaluation System

Throughout FY14 and FY15, directors and math teachers from seven ABE programs have been participating in a pilot of the proposed ABE Educator Evaluation System. Participants are providing valuable constructive feedback to ACLS in efforts to streamline the system, establish effective processes and develop practical tools to support directors and teachers.

As our next step, ACLS is seeking directors and teachers to participate in a second pilot that will focus on ESOL instruction. Participants will provide critical feedback to the Department on every aspect of this system including:

- Using an ABE educator evaluation rubric;
- Completing a teacher self-assessment;
- Writing and implementing professional development goals;
- Gathering evidence/artifacts of effective teaching practices; and
- Using data to determine the impact of effective teaching on student outcomes.

This pilot will require a ten month commitment (October 2015-June 2016) which includes four face to face trainings, four online webinars, and one end-of-year meeting to reflect on the experience and offer feedback. Participating programs will receive a stipend to subsidize the cost of increased professional development hours, travel expenses, and substitutes.

Specific details about the ESOL pilot, including the application, will be made available to the field by the end of March. Questions about the pilot may be submitted in writing to Patricia Hembrough at phembrough@doe.mass.edu.
Adult Basic Education Local Workforce Investment Board Representatives

Adult & Community Learning Services (ACLS) works with Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) Executive Directors in each workforce region to appoint Adult Basic Education (ABE) representatives to regional LWIB boards to represent ABE priorities. The ABE LWIB Representatives advocate and promote ABE at LWIB meetings, participate in the regional plan development and keep their local ABE colleagues informed of workforce development priorities and activities within their regions.

ACLS convenes the ABE LWIB Representatives to help coordinate efforts, align ABE messaging, and provide a forum for sharing ideas, information and resources. Agenda items at recent meetings have included implementing new WIOA requirements, strengthening relationships with career centers, and the need to highlight the needs of low level ABE and ESOL learners in light of the new WIOA requirements.

ABE programs are encouraged to contact their local representatives with questions and concerns. The 2014-2015 ABE LWIB Representatives contact list is included in this mailing. Currently, all regions except for Merrimack and South Shore have appointed representatives. ACLS will inform the field when these vacancies have been filled.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Berkshire</td>
<td>Paul Gage</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>Pittsfield Public Schools</td>
<td>269 First Street</td>
<td>Pittsfield</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pgage@pittsfield.net">pgage@pittsfield.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Todd Lee</td>
<td>Senior Planner</td>
<td>Jobs &amp; Community Services</td>
<td>43 Hawkins Street</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td><a href="mailto:todd.lee@boston.gov">todd.lee@boston.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Frank Cabral</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>SER-Jobs for Progress</td>
<td>164 Bedford Street</td>
<td>Fall River</td>
<td><a href="mailto:serjobs@meganet.net">serjobs@meganet.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brockton</td>
<td>Barbora Hazukova</td>
<td>Regional Manager</td>
<td>Training Resources of America, Inc.</td>
<td>231 Main Street, Suite 302</td>
<td>Brockton</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bhazukova@tra-inc.org">bhazukova@tra-inc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Cod</td>
<td>Toby Maguire</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>ACCESS/Cape Cod Community College</td>
<td>540 Main Street</td>
<td>Hyannis</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tmaguire@capecod.edu">tmaguire@capecod.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Terri Stone</td>
<td>ABE Program Director</td>
<td>Webster Public Schools</td>
<td>41 East Main Street</td>
<td>Webster</td>
<td><a href="mailto:night-school@usa.net">night-school@usa.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin/Hampshire</td>
<td>Judith Roberts</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>The Literacy Project</td>
<td>15 Bank Row, Suite C</td>
<td>Greenfield</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jroberts@literacyproject.org">jroberts@literacyproject.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Lowell</td>
<td>Betty McKiernan</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Lowell Public Schools</td>
<td>408 Merrimack Street</td>
<td>Lowell</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emckiernan@lowell.k12.ma.us">emckiernan@lowell.k12.ma.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater New Bedford</td>
<td>Lisa Jochim</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>UMass Dartmouth Worker Education Program</td>
<td>800 Purchase Street</td>
<td>New Bedford</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ljochim@umassd.edu">ljochim@umassd.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampden</td>
<td>Kermit Dunkelberg</td>
<td>Assistant VP for ABE and Workforce Development</td>
<td>Holyoke Community College</td>
<td>303 Homestead Avenue</td>
<td>Holyoke</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kdunkelberg@hcc.edu">kdunkelberg@hcc.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Metro North</td>
<td>Mina Reddy</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Community Learning Center</td>
<td>5 Western Avenue</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mreddy@cambridgetma.gov">mreddy@cambridgetma.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro SouthWest</td>
<td>Christine Tibor</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>Framingham Adult ESL</td>
<td>PO Box 4860</td>
<td>Framingham</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ctibor@framingham.k12.ma.us">ctibor@framingham.k12.ma.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>North Central</td>
<td>Dale Sanborn</td>
<td>ABE Program Director</td>
<td>Devens Learning Center</td>
<td>100 Jackson Road</td>
<td>Devens</td>
<td><a href="mailto:d_sanborn@mwec.mass.edu">d_sanborn@mwec.mass.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shore</td>
<td>Edward Tirrell</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Operation Bootstrap</td>
<td>20 Wheeler Street, Suite 203</td>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tirrell@operationbootstrap.org">tirrell@operationbootstrap.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Shore</td>
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ACLS will be conducting a series of four webinars on Community Planning based on the training that was conducted in 2014. Connections to the WIOA legislation will be shared during the webinar.

**Details & Registration:** [http://calendar.sabes.org/event/196](http://calendar.sabes.org/event/196)

- **March 30:** Leadership, Vision and Mission for Effective Community Planning Coalitions, 2:00 – 3:30
- **April 13:** The Nuts and Bolts of an Efficient ABE Community Planning Coalition, 2:00 – 3:30
- **May 11:** Membership Recruitment: Marketing Your ABE Community Planning Coalition to Businesses and the Community, 2:00 – 3:30
- **May 27:** Sensemaking: Context to Guide the Coalition, 2:00 – 3:30

All information and registration on the April and May webinars is posted on the SABES calendar: [http://calendar.sabes.org/](http://calendar.sabes.org/)

If you have any questions or need information, please contact Arlene Dale, ACLS Community Planning Specialist: 781-338-3878/ adale@doe.mass.edu
Family Engagement

- Learn about apps parents can use with their children.

- **Renegade Buggies** is a new game with a financial literacy curriculum designed to engage lower-income families in developing basic budgeting and money management skills.

- **Family Time with Apps: A Guide For Parents Using Apps with Their Children**: When we think of apps for kids, we often think of games for kids, for either entertainment or learning. But apps aren't limited to just games or books—apps can provide important social, emotional, and physical experiences too.

- Check out **Resources for Early Learning** website which is filled with more than 2,500 FREE resources on children ages birth to five that support early childhood educators and families while they help children grow and learn.

**Family Engagement: Apps for Children and Families**

*A New Financial Literacy Curriculum for Families: Renegade Buggies®*

![Renegade Buggies](https://renegadebuggies.familieslearning.org/)

*Renegade Buggies*, is a brand new iOS/Android game with a financial literacy curriculum designed to engage lower-income families in developing basic budgeting and money management skills. Visit [http://renegadebuggies.familieslearning.org/](http://renegadebuggies.familieslearning.org/) to download the app.

The Renegade Buggies® game covers four concepts: unit prices, buying in bulk, coupons, and promos. The entertaining gameplay meets the educational goals seamlessly and enables Renegade Buggies to engage parents and children in a joint-learning process. It also reinforces money-saving tips parents may or may not know while instilling the value of fiscal responsibility in children from a young age.

By capturing these situations in a game, Renegade Buggies provides parents with a tool that enables them to learn with their children about how to make smart choices with money.

This app is made available by the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) with funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation – longtime partners in giving families resources to learn together regardless of the parents’ educational or economic background. Renegade Buggies was created by renowned educational game developer FableVision and is available in the iTunes and Google Play stores, as well as on NCFL’s site.
When we think of apps for kids, we often think of games for kids, for either entertainment or learning. But apps aren’t limited to just games or books—apps can provide important social, emotional, and physical experiences, too. *Family Time with Apps* is designed to help parents better understand the variety of ways that apps can support children’s healthy development and family learning, communication, and connection. The guide aims to show parents how to find the best apps that fit their child’s needs, provide tips on how (and why!) to use apps together, and highlight even more resources that will make the process of selecting apps less overwhelming, and more fun. Visit [http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/publication/family-time-with-apps/](http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/publication/family-time-with-apps/) to download the book.

The [Joan Ganz Cooney Center](http://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org) is an independent research and innovation lab that focuses on the challenges of educating children in a rapidly changing media landscape. It conducts original research on emerging education technologies and collaborates with educators and media producers to put this research into action.

**Family Engagement: Resources for Early Learning**

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**Check out Resources for Early Learning**

**For Parents with Young Children**

The Department of Early Education and Care has developed a website filled with more than 2,500 FREE resources on children ages birth to five that support early childhood educators and families while they help children grow and learn.

This site provides exciting, engaging media-rich learning opportunities for educators, parents, and caregivers of children. From detailed lesson plans to simple, everyday activities, you and your parents will find everything you need to help children ages birth to five succeed.

There is a special section for:

- **Parents** to make each day a learning adventure for their child with quick and easy ideas, useful tips, and practical, how-to parenting videos.
- **Children** which provides age-appropriate videos, interactive games, and other media for children 3—5.

**Resources for Early Learning:** [http://resourcesforearlylearning.org](http://resourcesforearlylearning.org)
Clarification of HiSET® Policies

The Massachusetts High School Equivalency Office has received numerous inquiries indicating confusion among the HiSET® testing population regarding two important policies affecting successful completion of the HiSET® and the attainment of the Massachusetts High School Equivalency Credential. Please help your students understand the policies below and their implications.

HiSET® Scoring:
Each of the five subtests in the HiSET® battery is scored on a scale of 1–20. In order to pass you must do all three of the following:

- Achieve a score of at least 8 on each of the five individual subtests
- Score at least 2 out of 6 on the essay portion of the writing test
- Have a total combined score on all five subtests of at least 45

Examinees should be reminded of the following implications:

- If you have one or more subtest scores below an 8, you cannot pass no matter how high your other scores are or how high your total score is for all five tests.
- If you have a score of less than 2 on the essay portion of the Language Arts Writing test, you cannot pass no matter how well you did on the multiple-choice section of that test, no matter how high your other scores are, or how high your total score is for all five tests.
- Even if all of your subtest scores are 8 or above, you cannot pass unless you achieve the combined total score on all five subtests of at least 45.

Frequency of Retesting:
Examinees may take each subtest only three times during any calendar year. While it is tempting for examinees to retest quickly after failing a subtest, it is advised that those in this situation delay taking a subtest for the third time and instead to spend time preparing, since after a third failure, they must wait until January 1 of the next year to test again in that subject. This is especially relevant if the testing is occurring early in the calendar year.
New Directors’ Program Design Training Webinar
Presented by Donna Cornellier and Beverly Rosario

Adult and Community Learning Services will hold a two-hour webinar and a full day, face-to-face workshop for new directors to become familiar with the continuation funding process, the submission of the program’s design in SMARTT, and the alignment of the program’s budget to the SMARTT plan.

Materials for the webinar will be sent out three weeks prior to the webinar and should be reviewed by all participants. Directors' questions will be addressed during the training. Any director who is absolutely unable to attend the webinar must inform Beverly Rosario at brosario@doe.mass.edu by 5:00 PM on April 3, 2015.

The webinar and workshop are mandatory for all new directors.

WEBINAR:
Date: April 15, 2015
Time: 1:00PM to 3:00 PM
Please register at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/conference/?ConferenceID=8091

FACE to FACE WORKSHOP:
Date: April 24, 2015
Time: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Location: Central Mass Workforce Investment Board
44 Front Street, Suite 300
Worcester, MA 01608
Parking Garages – cost range between $8.00-$15.00
City Square Garage at 100 Front Street
Central Parking at 201 Commercial Street
Update on SchoolBrains

ACLS reviewed several data collection systems and selected SchoolBrains to replace SMARTT. SchoolBrains is used by many school districts and has been identified by our IT team as a product that could successfully replace the current SMARTT system. Transitioning from SMARTT to SchoolBrains would result in a system that is user friendly and flexible to meet the needs of the ABE programs and the reporting requirements. The new system would be implemented in 3 phases:

Phase 1 - Class and student management
Phase 2 – Budgeting/program planning
Phase 3 - Trainings for both system administrators and end users

Unfortunately, due to IT budget cuts for FY15 there the Department is not able to proceed with the implementation of this project. If funds are available in FY2016, the Department will proceed with the migration of SMARTT to SchoolBrains at that time.

Thanks to many users who participated in webinars to learn more about the new data collection system and provided great feedback.
For more information contact Donna Cornellier at dcornellier@doe.mass.edu
SMARTT Update

1) Waitlist Verification and Clean-Up
There are still a few community adult learning center coordinators who need to submit the Waitlist Verification. 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”.

There are currently 3,339 students waiting for ABE services and 12,061 waiting for ESOL services. Please note that students who have been waiting for services prior to 2010 were removed from the waitlist. In reviewing waitlist data, we have found many duplicates as well as incorrect gender data entered. I will be e-mailing coordinators with a list so that users can make the corrections.

2) Requesting New SMARTT Accounts and Activating New Accounts
Here are the steps to request a new SMARTT account. Go to http://smartt.doemass.org and click on the button “Request Access”.

Fill out the “SMARTT Access Request Form” completely. Be sure to include your email address and level of access correctly. If you need more information regarding access levels, go to http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/smartt/ and click on “SMARTT Access Levels” to view the various levels for the sections of SMARTT. Once the form is submitted, the system generates an e-mail to the project coordinator to activate the new account. The project coordinator goes to the “Users” module to activate the new logon and enters a generic password. The user is notified and is required to enter his/her own password at the first logon.
3) **Automatic Exit – February 15, 2015**

There were 231 students who were auto exited on February 15th, 2015 who had no attendance for the months of September 2014 through January 2015. 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, (August, September, October)

2) No attendance has yet been entered for that student during the current two month period (November and December) for which data entry is allowed.

*The next auto exit will be on March 15, 2015 for students who had no attendance for October through February.*

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<td>April – June</td>
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4) **Entering Non SABES Professional Development**

For more than two decades, Massachusetts has provided funding for the professional development of practitioners in its adult learning centers. In the past few years, the need has become more critical for program staff to participate in professional development that is grounded in timely research and best practice. For example, the sharpened focus on college and career readiness for all adult learners requires that teachers have strong knowledge of subjects that are key to adult learners' success in their next steps (i.e. ESOL, mathematics, reading and writing) and that they demonstrate effectiveness in teaching these subjects. Similarly, program directors and other staff members must be equipped with tools and strategies that support quality instruction.

ACLS requires every staff member in ESE-funded programs-no matter how experienced-to develop and implement an annual professional development plan. One policy requirement is that staff development activities and hours be entered in the professional development database in SMARTT. The reason for this stipulation is that an accurate professional development database allows ACLS to analyze trends, including relationships between training activities and practitioner or student outcomes. Below is a reminder to programs about correct procedures for entering data into SMARTT.

Professional development is defined as a structured learning activity that is designed to strengthen the skills and/or knowledge needed by individual practitioners to perform effectively in their program staff role/s. The terms staff development and professional development may be used interchangeably; both focus on the needs of individuals to improve their work in a system. A third closely related term is program development, which focuses on systems needed to sustain a program.

Staff development may take place through a variety of activities that allow practitioners to study, practice and reflect in the process of acquiring new skills or knowledge. Examples of staff development activities are:

- Workshops
- Online coursework
- Peer coaching
- Study circles
- Teacher research
- Mini-courses and institutes
- Visits to another program to learn new practices
Examples of program development activities that **do not count** as staff development are:

- Program staff meetings
- Development of a program’s continuous improvement plan
- Development of a program’s curriculum

Teachers, Program Directors, Advisors, Technology Coordinators, and Support Staff members may fulfill their individual professional development requirements by participating in activities offered by SABES, ESE, or other professional development providers. SABES training activities, including those offered at the annual MCAE Network conference are all listed on the SABES calendar at this link: [http://calendar.sabes.org](http://calendar.sabes.org). SABES enters into SMARTT the data on staff development events that it offers. Similarly, ESE enters the data on staff development activities that it offers, e.g. New Directors’ Orientation.

Data on professional development (PD), other than that provided by SABES or ESE, must be entered into SMARTT by the program. This PD must relate directly to an individual’s staff position. PD that is unrelated to a person’s ABE/ESOL job role should not be entered in SMARTT. Practitioners should consult with their Program and Staff Development Facilitators or supervisors to connect their PD activities to their job responsibilities. Program Directors should, in turn, decide on the appropriateness of the PD as it relates to program development goals.

Events that some programs have listed incorrectly in SMARTT in the past include:

- Staff meetings
- Individual meetings with supervisors
- ESE monitoring exit meetings
- Annual ABE Directors’ Meeting
- ALI Meetings
- A yoga class

These activities do not count as staff development because they 1) involve no structured learning activity, 2) focus on program or state-level issues rather than on individual staff needs, or 3) do not relate to an ESE staff role.

In order to enter staff PD hours, locate the "Add Non-SABES PD" screen through the Staff PD link in the Staff Information screen in SMARTT. If you need additional information or assistance for data entry, please contact your Program Specialist or go to [http://smartthelp.zendesk.com](http://smartthelp.zendesk.com) to submit your issue.

5) **Change in Cognos Desk Review Section**

The Desk Review cubes can now be viewed in a report format. The filters are Fiscal Year, Site Specialty, and Columns. The columns are Attendance, Goals, and All. Therefore users can view the data for all sites in one Attendance report and get percent attendance and average hours in one report.
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, 2015 – 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, Charlie Herbert, 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  10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**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.

Would you like to generate nice looking reports for meetings that will better inform your staff, your board of directors, your students etc? This two hour workshop can help you be more confident in Cognos Generate your own reports, save them to run them later. 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
- Adapt a view from Favorite reports to reflect relevant site data


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