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Literacy Assistance Center

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Book Industry Guild
of New York held its annual
softball game to benefit adult
literacy this summer.

See page 9 for more photos.





Literacy UPDATE

NEWS FROM THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

> Howard J. Goldsmith *Executive Coordinator, Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development*

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of Adult and Continuing Education, home to the state's adult education system, has undergone some major changes as part of the department's reorganization under the leadership of Commissioner David Steiner.

The team has relocated its offices right up the street from the Education Building to 99 Washington Avenue, 16th Floor, Room 1624, Albany, New York 12234. The building is also known as One Commerce Plaza.

The unit has also adopted a new name; it is now known as Adult Education Programs and Policy. These changes accommodate NYSED's development of a new major unit focusing on Adult Education and Workforce Development (AWED). The AWED unit will have five major component offices:

> Adult Education Programs and Policy, home of WIA, EPE, WEP, and ALE-funded programs as well as all previous adult education statewide responsibilities

> General Educational Development (GED)

> The Bureau of Proprietary School Supervision

> Vocational Rehabilitation

> The Fiscal and Administrative Services Team

Leadership Changes

In October, the Board of Regents approved the appointment of Kevin G. Smith as deputy commissioner for AEWD. Most recently, Kevin served as executive director and chief operating officer for Literacy New York, Inc. With over 25 years of experience working with local, state, and federal agencies, Deputy Commissioner Smith has an in-depth understanding of the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. He is well positioned to lead AEWD and its many partners in preparing all New Yorkers for self-sufficiency in the global economy.

Also, Debora Brown-Johnson has been appointed assistant commissioner for VESID, heading up the Vocational Rehabilitation areas within AEWD. Debora has played a key role in

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STAR Evidence-Based Reading Instruction

With new information to help redefine groups and refine instruction, your students begin to show progress, moving along the TABE continuum to the next level of GED readiness.

Read more on page 3.

FACELIFT

> Elyse Barbell *Executive Director*

As I look in the mirror lately, I am seriously considering whether an all-out nip-and-tuck is in order or if Botox will cure that droopy expression staring back at me. When I get honest with myself, I realize that, before I start reorganizing my outside, I need to reenergize my inside.

Sometimes the best route to reenergize is to start with your surroundings. Here at the LAC, we are settling into our new home even as we go about our usual activities. We're putting together our spring catalog, which you will receive in December. We're offering our core professional development opportunities in leadership development, health and family literacy, Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults, and the Adult Literacy Educator Core Curriculum. We're developing new initiatives in GED prep, workforce development, and services to formerly incarcerated students, among many others. Meanwhile, our website, www.lacnyc.org, has a fresh look, as does this issue of *Literacy Update*.

Increased attention from the City Council under the leadership of Christine Quinn has also been a great benefit.

Our most exciting news is that Pamela Haas, Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs Manager at IBM, has been appointed chair of the LAC board of directors. Pam is no stranger to this role, having previously served as interim chair, but we are delighted to welcome her officially.

Clearly the LAC is not the only organization thinking in new directions. On the cover of this issue, you will see that NYSED is undergoing reorganization that will affect the entire New York adult education community. Welcome Kevin!

Here in New York City, we will soon have a new director at the Mayor's Office of Adult Education, who will, perhaps, bring a new perspective to our shared work. Increased attention from the City Council under the leadership of Speaker Christine Quinn has also been a great benefit. Look for literacy fairs in each borough that will promote awareness about adult literacy. Though one aim is to give potential students information about options for instruction (which we know are limited), the fairs are also intended to engage employers and create connections among providers. They offer a great opportunity to further develop our relationships with the City Council speaker and the borough presidents.

OK, that sounds like a lot more than a facelift! Maybe our faces aren't really changing that much, but the New York literacy community is indeed reenergizing from the inside. ●



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foundations, corporations, and individuals.

STAR EVIDENCE-BASED READING INSTRUCTION

> Ellen Richer *Director, NYSED RAEN of NYC*

T

hink back to high school biology lab: the smell and, perhaps, the moist warmth of the slide solution, microscope poised in front of you ready to illuminate the minutiae of some cell structure you had to identify. You placed the slide beneath the clips, fussed with the focus knob, and... nothing. You'd play some more, and, finally, something would begin to appear. Readjust the mirror, make more adjustments—and suddenly what began as an undecipherable blur came into sharp focus.

Now the scene changes—to today's GED reading class. Guided by the TABE or some reading level locator, you have placed your intermediate reading students into ability groups—where they linger for longer than you'd expect, and you can't explain their lack of gain. A microscope of sorts appears: an individualized assessment tool that can discern discrete differences in strengths and areas that need focused attention. With new information to help redefine groups and refine instruction, your students begin to show progress, moving along the TABE continuum to the next level of GED readiness.

Welcome to STAR, an evidence-based reading initiative. Compared to K–12 reading instruction, little research on adult reading has been completed. What does exist speaks to the value—indeed the need—to refine our focus, beyond what we can learn from TABE scores, to identify specific areas where students need support: phonics, fluency, alphabetic, or comprehension. Using the literature on promising practices in reading instruction, STAR Reading has created a toolkit to assist administrators in effecting program change and to support teachers in improving reading outcomes for intermediate reading students.

STAR training is extensive: Six full days cover the dissection of the components of reading—phonics, fluency, alphabetic, and comprehension—through individual assessments. The training also includes the art of explicit instruction, class management strategies for student ability grouping, and a justification for managed enrollment.

STAR Reading is not a curriculum, nor does it conflict with any reading strategy in use today. Rather, its features enhance current reading instruction. It provides teachers with a wide array of materials through its web-based, password-protected toolkit, available to all who attend the training. The federal Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) has gathered and is just now compiling data on the effectiveness of this intense training. However, reports from teachers who have been trained to use STAR in their classrooms have ranged from favorable to emphatic, with the expected outlying dissention.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has funded three cohorts of STAR trainees over the last 3 years. In addition, New York City has been involved over the last several months. The goal is to have two certified trainers in NYC to multiply the effects of the STAR reading instruction paradigm.

A federal initiative is underway to explore how evidence-based reading instruction can best be adapted to our particular demographics and needs. The Literacy Assistance Center, along with the City University of New York, the NYC Department of Education, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and the Campaign for Tomorrow's Workforce are working with national reading experts to develop a NYC plan. NYC will receive technical assistance to adapt the STAR approach to evidence-based reading instruction to the many resources that are unique to the NYC adult literacy system.

Those of you who attended the October NYC RAEN meeting at the LAC shared a condensed but informative presentation on STAR. An orientation workshop was held last May. In January and February, we will offer a special two-day training by John Strucker, a recognized clinician who was involved in the underlying evidence-based research. The formal six-day training, endorsed by OVAE and supported by NYSED, is in the planning stages for summer or early fall 2011. Watch for future announcements! ●

HEALTHY FAMILIES THROUGH HEALTH LITERACY

> Barbara Sparks *Director of Professional Development Services*

During a recent visit to the family literacy program at Queens Public Library, I watched immigrant mothers present posters they had made about local hospitals and clinics for their children. Maria's poster depicted the MTA route she needed to take to reach her child's pediatrician, along with a line drawing of the clinic, labeled with its name, and a photo of her children. Lucile's poster showed her daughter's crayon drawings of all their family members and a red pathway to a computer image of the nearby hospital. The women talked about recent doctor visits or upcoming appointments they had made for their children. All this learning was part of the family healthcare module.

As these mothers learned about navigating their communities for family healthcare, they were practicing their English and their newly acquired computer skills along with the presentation and speaking skills they will use to talk with doctors and other health professionals.

Parents and other caregivers want to learn how to keep their families healthy and safe. Silvana Vanconcelos, director of the Queens program, told me that navigating healthcare systems is a key content area because the mothers ask for help with health information for their children. They want to know how to choose off-the-shelf medications, how to schedule appointments, and what questions they should ask the doctors. These are critical questions; health literacy is a family concern.

However, preventive family healthcare is not the whole picture. Winston Lawrence, LAC senior program associate for health literacy, pointed out in his recent *Change Agent* article, "The Environment Affects Our Health," that environmental hazards in homes, playgrounds, workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods also contribute to poor health. He recommends helping parents assess their neighborhoods, envision alternatives, and take action. His article suggests curriculum ideas to use in mobilizing parents.

Teachers will design lessons on such topics as risky health behaviors, healthy eating and exercise, reading medicine bottles, and communicating with healthcare staff. They will use a newly developed scale for identifying adult learner growth in health literacy skills and knowledge.

Because of the critical importance of healthcare concerns, the LAC identified "healthy families" as this year's theme for professional development for family literacy practitioners. The challenge is to incorporate health literacy into curriculum while forming partnerships and linkages between literacy programs and local healthcare facilities.

This year, the LAC will offer a series of workshops in which teachers can explore ways to discuss and learn about the health concerns of family literacy learners and to teach about nutrition as an effective everyday practice in preventative healthcare. Family literacy practitioners will also learn to build community capacity through health and literacy activities. Teachers will design lessons on such topics as risky health behaviors, healthy eating and exercise, reading medicine bottles, and communicating with healthcare staff. They will use a newly developed scale for identifying adult learner growth in health literacy skills and knowledge. Another series for teachers will provide ideas on how to incorporate healthcare access and navigational skills into their instruction.

Integrating health literacy into family literacy programs has become a priority because parents want to know about healthcare resources in their communities. They are looking for solutions to health issues for their families. Good family literacy deals with real-life concerns, helping parents identify and access needed services and giving them tools to ensure a healthier community. ●

HONORING LITERACY PRACTITIONERS

On June 30, the Literacy Assistance Center celebrated the 25th annual Literacy Recognition Awards ceremony. In honor of her role in founding the LAC and building New York City's adult literacy system, Marian Lapsley [Schwarz] Cross received a lifetime achievement award.

Former Mayor Edward I. Koch sent a video tribute in which he remembered the pivotal role "Min" Schwarz played in building "a program that I understand is now the model for all 50 states. As far as I know, when she started it, there was no other program like it."

Leslee Oppenheim, director of CUNY's Language and Literacy Program, received a special career achievement award. Six other adult literacy practitioners, representing the spectrum of adult literacy services in the city, were also recognized.

Awardees receive a library development grant for their programs from the Book Industry Guild of New York, sponsor of the Literacy Recognition Award ceremony along with Scholastic, which hosted the event. ●



Top photo: Leslee Oppenheim accepting her career achievement award.

Bottom photo: Elizabeth Horton, Paul Stanley, Jacqueline Cook, Susanne Carothers, Marian Lapsley Cross, Elyse Barbell, Christine Porter, and Pamela Haas.

Workforce Development at the LAC

This fall, the two best-attended offerings at the LAC were both in the workforce development realm: What Is a Job-Ready Adult? and Instructional Strategies for Building Literacy and Job Readiness Skills. In addition, we are working on curriculum development and literacy strategies for work-ready youth and adults at John Jay College Justice Corps and at DC 37, NYC's largest municipal public employees union. Watch for more information!

Health Literacy Conference

Save the date! A major health literacy conference is coming to New York City on May 13, 2011. Watch for more information in the next *Literacy Update*.

Adult Literacy Caucus in the House

A new Adult Literacy Caucus has launched in the House of Representatives, sponsored by Representative Dan Maffei (D-NY). Representative Phil Roe (R-TN) has agreed to co-chair, making the caucus a bipartisan effort! Thank

you to ProLiteracy and the National Coalition for Literacy for their efforts to establish this caucus. Representative Paul Tonko of New York's 21st district is so far the only New York representative to join the caucus.

Summer Intensive Programs

The Literacy Assistance Center offers two certificate programs: Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults (TESLA) and Adult Literacy Educator Core Curriculum (ALECC). Both are being offered now as nine-month programs with cohorts that began in September.

We also offer these programs as summer intensives: a year's worth of learning in just a few weeks, plus out-of-class projects. The TESLA summer intensive program will begin July 8, 2011, and ALECC will begin August 8, 2011. For information on joining the next cohort of either the TESLA or ALECC certificate programs, contact Marilyn J. Rymniak at marilynr@lacnyc.org, or 212.803.3322.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

TUESDAY 11/2

Teaching English to Adult Speakers of Other Languages

9:30 am–12:30 pm

Audience: New adult literacy, ESOL & GED teachers

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Learn about communicative language teaching, use of contextualized language in ESOL instruction, vocabulary development, and strategies-based instruction for successful acquisition of a second language.

WEDNESDAY 11/3

Developing Alternative Funding Streams

4:30–7:00 pm

Audience: New & experienced program directors & managers, community college administrators

Facilitator: Luz Rodriguez, Foundation Center

You've sharpened your skills, cut organizational excesses, and maximized your resources. Now learn to augment your traditional income sources with alternative and blended funding streams.

THURSDAY 11/4 & 11

Using TABE to Plan a Student's Educational Program

9:30 am–3:30 pm

Audience: TABE administrators, teachers, program managers

Facilitator: Ken English

In this two-day series, you'll explore the Reading sections of TABE L, E, and M from an adult literacy specialist's perspective and learn to make better connections between assessment and instruction.

FRIDAY 11/5

ASISTS Data Roundtable

2:00–4:00 pm

Audience: Program managers, data managers, data entry staff

Facilitator: Nell Eckersley

A monthly opportunity to ask questions and share data experiences with other members of the adult literacy field, the ASISTS data roundtable is an informal meeting for people working with NRS data. Registration required.

WEDNESDAY 11/10

Integrated Results-Oriented Program Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation

3:30–6:30 pm

Audience: Program managers, administrators, coordinators

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Learn to use a results-oriented framework for strategically planning a family literacy program and its multiple components.

FRIDAY 11/12

Health Literacy Teacher Share

2:30–4:30 pm

Audience: Health literacy teachers

Facilitator: Winston Lawrence

Calling all health literacy study circle participants! Come share your experiences, challenges, and successes in health literacy instruction.

TUESDAY 11/16

Rethinking the GED Math Test

9:00 am–4:00 pm

Audience: Pre-GED & GED teachers

Facilitator: Shannon Allen

Many teachers spend their careers preparing students for the GED without ever taking the practice test themselves. In this workshop, you'll take the test, review the full scope of math skills covered, and learn simple techniques for turning word problems into math problems.

THURSDAY 11/18

Interactive Program Development

Restricted to those enrolled in the certificate program Leadership Development for Emerging Leaders.

FRIDAY 11/19

ALECC Valuing Diversity & Appreciating Difference

1:00–4:00 pm

Audience: New adult literacy, ESOL & GED teachers

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Through the use of proven models, you'll improve your ability to manage and benefit from the multi-dimensional differences that adult learners bring to the classroom.

ASISTS Data Entry

9:30 am–4:30 pm

Audience: New data entry staff or other staff who use ASISTS daily

Facilitators: Nell Eckersley, Kate Tornese

This training introduces new users to the Adult Student Information System and Technical Support (ASISTS) web-based data system.

TUESDAY 11/23

Nutrition for Healthy Families

10:00 am–1:00 pm

Audience: Family literacy teachers & program managers

Facilitator: Heddy Mills

Discover how to engage parents and caregivers who seek to adopt healthy lifestyles, helping them to use nutrition as an effective everyday preventative health practice.

BEST Plus Test

Administrator Training

9:30 am–3:30 pm

Audience: Teachers, administrators, intake staff

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Become a certified BEST Plus Test Administrator. Participants receive a test administrator guide and practice CD.

ALL EVENTS ARE HELD AT
39 BROADWAY, SUITE 1250.

For more information and registration,
go to www.lacnyc.org, email rsvp@lacnyc.org,
or call 212.803.3323.

TUESDAY 11/30

Bringing Science and Poetry into Children's Lives

9:30 am–12:30 pm

Audience: Family literacy educators
Facilitators: Ellen Goldsmith,
Anne Marie Tevlin

Learn to help adults tap children's natural interest in science and the mysteries of the world, exploring the science concepts in classic children's books and using them as a springboard for creating original poetry.

TABE Test Administrator Training

9:30 am–3:30 pm

Audience: Test administrators,
program staff
Facilitator: Be Jensen

Learn about the test state-funded programs use to place students in adult basic education classes and to measure educational gain: Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE).

WEDNESDAY 12/1

Extending Program Impact through Health Literacy Instruction

9:30 am–12:30 pm

Audience: Adult and family literacy
program managers
Facilitator: Winston Lawrence

Participants will learn ways health literacy instruction can help programs highlight positive student outcomes that can be used to demonstrate program impact to funders and community decision-makers.

NRS Foundations

9:30 am–4:30 pm

Audience: For teachers, data staff
& others new to NRS
Facilitator: Rosemary Matt

Learn about the history and importance of the National Reporting System and its impact on funding. Subjects include NRS data flow and teacher responsibilities, the development of education and employment plans, and outcome measures.

THURSDAY 12/2

GED Testing Network: Prep Program Emphasis

1:00–3:30 pm

Audience: GED teachers & program staff
Facilitator: Ellen Richer

Learn about developments in online resources and about a field-based study on increasing community residents' access to the official practice test. Discuss local issues, challenges, and policy implications.

NRS Advanced Training

1:30–4:30 pm

Audience: Program managers and other
staff responsible for program planning
Facilitator: Rosemary Matt

Learn to use National Reporting System (NRS) data as a catalyst for program improvement.

FRIDAY 12/3

Effective ESOL Lesson Planning

9:30 am–3:30 pm

Audience: New ESOL teachers & tutors
Facilitator: Susan Dalmas

How do you develop effective lessons for multilevel ESOL class? Learn the elements of effective lesson design and how to integrate interactive activities and related materials.

ASISTS Data Roundtable

2:00–4:00pm

See 11/5 for description.

SATURDAY 12/4

Methods & Materials of Communicative Language Teaching

Restricted to those enrolled in the TESLA certificate program.

TUESDAY 12/7

Math Problem- Solving Strategies in the ABE Classroom—and Beyond

9:30 am–4:30 pm

Audience: ABE, Pre-GED &
GED math teachers

Facilitators: Solange Farina,
Denise Deagan & Charlie Brover

Participants will explore a problem-based approach to math in the adult education classroom and practice implementing it.

WEDNESDAY 12/8

Effective Communication: Working with Parents from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds

3:30–6:30 pm

Audience: Teachers, program managers,
parent coordinators & staff of new family
literacy programs

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Participants will share and explore techniques for communicating with parents from different cultures. They will also learn strategies for supporting parents as they advocate for their children and receive resources they can use to refer parents to literacy and community services.

Web 2.0 Tools for the 21st Century Classroom

1:00–4:00 pm

Audience: Teachers, program managers
Facilitator: Nell Eckersley

You've heard the term. Do you know what it means? Fill your virtual toolbox with resources during this hands-on opportunity to explore the use of emerging technologies in the adult education classroom.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CONTINUED

THURSDAY 12/9

NYSED Regional Adult Education Network of NYC

9:30 am–12:30 pm

Audience: Staff of agencies receiving federal or state funds to provide adult literacy services

Facilitator: Ellen Richer

The NY State Education Department regularly gathers program leaders to discuss RAEN initiatives and concerns.

NRS Report Card Training

1:30–3:30 pm

Audience: Program managers and other staff responsible for program planning

Facilitator: Rosemary Matt

This session will train you in interpretation and evaluation of the NRS Report Card.

FRIDAY 12/10

ALECC The Art & Science of Teaching Reading to Adults

1:00–4:00 pm

Audience: New adult literacy, ESOL & GED teachers

Facilitator: Shannon Allen

Participants will understand the importance of the five major components of reading instruction as well as the importance of vocabulary and learner knowledge in the reading process. Differences between teaching reading to adults and teaching reading to children will be emphasized.

MONDAY 12/13

ASISTS Data Entry

9:30 am–4:30 pm

See 11/19 for description.

TUESDAY 12/14

Contextualized Curricula: I-Best and Other Models

1:00–4:00pm

Audience: Program directors & managers, community college administrators, Workforce1 program developers

Facilitator: Ellen Richer

I-Best, or Integrated Basic Education Skills Training, blends technical or vocational skills training with pre-GED and GED preparation. Come and explore the nuts and bolts of introducing a contextualized model in your program.

WEDNESDAY 12/15

Helping Immigrant Professionals Navigate Educational Systems

1:30–4:30 pm

Audience: Program managers, counselors, case managers

Facilitators: Paul Feltman & Katherine Gebremedhin

This workshop will address the systemic issues facing immigrants who are skilled professionals. It will identify reliable resources and services available for foreign degree evaluation and advising. Participants will explore the process of authenticating documents and potential problems in accessing documents.

BEST Plus Test Refresher Training

9:30 am–2:30 pm

Audience: Previously certified BEST Plus administrators

Facilitator: Be Jensen

Need to keep your BEST Plus certification current? This refresher is for you.

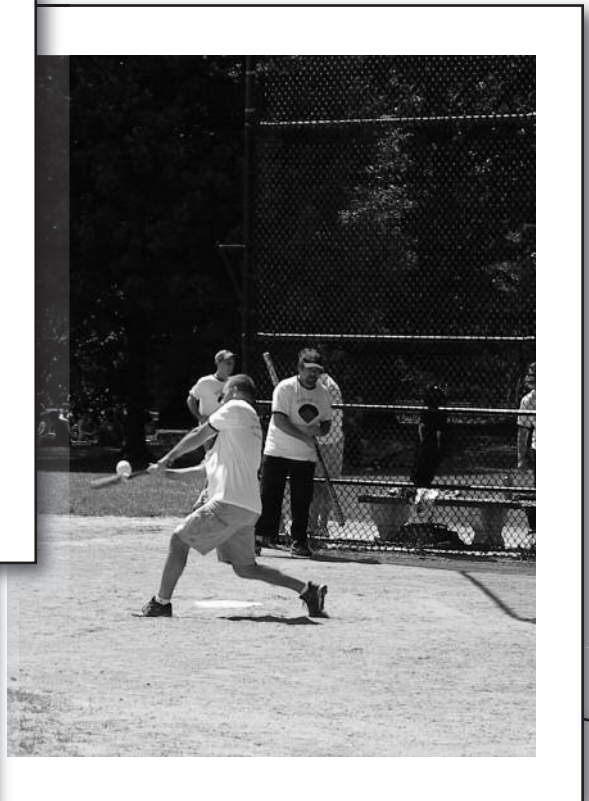
THURSDAY 12/16

Communicating Effectively

Restricted to those enrolled in the certificate program Leadership Development for Emerging Leaders.

BOOK INDUSTRY GUILD SOFTBALL GAME BENEFITS LITERACY

Once again this summer—for the 18th time—the Book Industry Guild (formerly Bookbinders' Guild) of New York held a softball game in Central Park to support the cause of adult literacy in NYC. Book Industry Guild members provide a free book to every child who stops by. They purchase program ads and donate prizes to be raffled off at the event. They even play softball! The LAC is grateful to the Book Industry Guild for its steadfast support through the years. Particular thanks go to Steve Bedney and LAC board member Paul Stanley for their work in organizing the event.



Literacy Zones are a reform initiative... to close the achievement gap in urban and rural communities marked by concentrated poverty and high concentrations of families and individuals with limited literacy or English language proficiency.

managing the New York State Vocational Rehabilitation program for the last 20 years. She has served as director of District Office Administration since 2003. Debora has extensive knowledge of the vocational rehabilitation process as well as experience on national and state consortiums focused on designing and improving rehabilitation services. Her knowledge and experience in administration, planning, and operations will serve her well as assistant commissioner.

Adult Education Programs and Policy (AEPP)

The mission of AEPP is to promote, develop, and support adult education programs. Its ultimate goal is to provide adult students with successful pathways and transitions to post-secondary education, apprenticeship training, and employment. Responsibilities and duties of AEPP include:

- > Administer Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II funding
- > Manage state funding for Employment Preparation Education (EPE), Adult Literacy Education (ALE), and the Welfare Education Program (WEP)
- > Oversee the Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN) of seven regional technical assistance centers that provide staff development and support for over 200 adult education agencies throughout the state
- > Develop regional Literacy Zones to support family and adult literacy services in underserved neighborhoods across the state
- > Oversee statewide policy and the administration of the GED test in New York State
- > Support agencies in promoting successful postsecondary transitions

- > Maintain an adult education accountability system aligned with federal National Reporting System (NRS) requirements
- > Assist the Commissioner of Education as a member of the State Workforce Investment Board

Robert Purga continues to lead the reorganized AEPP unit.

Literacy Zones

Along with a new RFP (request for proposals) for which responses were due on October 15, NYSED launched a new website dedicated to Literacy Zones. New York City will be funded for nine new programs for a total of 11 Literacy Zones throughout the five boroughs. In total, there will be 35 Literacy Zones statewide, supported by \$10 million in annual funding. The new website is at www.nys-education-literacy-zones.org.

Literacy Zones are a reform initiative developed by the New York State Board of Regents and NYSED to close the achievement gap in urban and rural communities marked by concentrated poverty and high concentrations of families and individuals with limited literacy or English language proficiency. Literacy Zones will provide a systemic focus on meeting the literacy needs of individuals from birth through adult. NYSED has identified 18 Literacy Zones across the state, with 17 more to be awarded over the next few months. Each Literacy Zone and its satellite sites can provide pathways out of poverty for individuals and families.

WIA Reauthorization

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act is currently on hold at least until after the election cycle and most likely until 2012 or 2013. In the interim, Brenda Dann-Messier, assistant secretary of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education, has made it clear that that adult education should not be working in silos: Adult education, community colleges, and career and technical education must be more closely aligned. NYSED is taking up that charge with its statewide partners and stakeholders. We look forward to many more improvements as we get closer to reauthorization. ●

ANNOUNCING

Local and National Conferences

The American Association of Adult and Continuing Education Annual Conference, October 24–30, Clearwater, FL. Register at www.aaace.org.

NYSED Post-Secondary Transition Summit, November 9–10, Albany, NY. Contact Ellen Richer, ellenr@lacnyc.org.

National College Transition Network Annual Conference, November 14–16, Providence, RI. Information at www.collegetransition.org.

California Council for Adult Education (CCA) and Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE), April 17–21, 2011, San Francisco, CA. Information at www.ccaecoabe2011.com/

NYSED Post-Secondary Transition Summit, April 4–5, 2011, Albany, NY. Contact Ellen Richer, ellenr@lacnyc.org.

World Forum on Child Welfare

The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families is one of the co-hosts of the World Forum on Child Welfare, being held November 8–11 in Palisades, NY. The International Forum for Child Welfare and Mentoring USA are the other organizers. The World Forum is held annually to spotlight developments in and concerns about child welfare worldwide. For information, go to www.worldforum2010.org.

GED COMPASS SHOWS THE WAY

It's no secret to literacy practitioners that the GED testing system in New York needs improvement. Test-takers register for multiple exams and then show up unprepared, even as well-prepared students wait for an available seat. The pass rate in New York State, 48 percent, is the lowest in the nation.

GED Compass, an online resource launched this summer, is a one-stop shop for all things GED. Movies of GED students and teachers talking about the importance of GED and pre-GED education inspire would-be test-takers to learn more before signing up for the exam. On this comprehensive site, users can:

- > Learn about the test format and content
- > Discover the official practice test and where to take it
- > Find a GED preparation program in their area
- > Sign up for an exam seat when they are ready

The Literacy Assistance Center designed this new resource with the needs of adult literacy programs and their students in mind. Sponsors include the New York City Council; the NYC Departments of Education, Youth and Community Development, and Small Business Services; the New York Community Trust; and the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. The LAC particularly thanks City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, who championed this project and has become a strong voice for adult literacy services in the city.

Point your web browser—and your students—to www.gedcompass.org to learn more. ●