



News to Use

October 2006

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Program Directors: Please share *News to Use* with all members of your adult education staff.

Dear Colleagues

As you know, one of the first things I did upon coming to Kentucky Adult Education was to travel the state and meet with local adult education program directors and instructors. I'm continuing to visit local programs on a regular basis and have met many adult educators through events in Frankfort and the KAACE organization.

One of the most frequent comments I hear is that – as a system – we should concentrate more on “quality” and less on “quantity.” While there are various interpretations of those concepts, I think the message I'm hearing is basically this – the amount of time, energy and effort expended to meet enrollment goals has left programs with too little time, energy and effort to concentrate on student outcomes.

Enrollment has been important and always will be. We must continue actively recruiting and motivating adults in order to achieve student outcomes that are so important. When I say student outcomes, I'm including GED attainment, higher GED scores and learning gains for low-level learners, as well as better preparing adults for the workforce, to be their children's first teacher and to transition to postsecondary education. All of these outcomes are critical.

In partnership with adult educators, KYAE is exploring ways to move the adult education system in the direction of increasing our concentration on student outcomes. We have to find the right balance between “quantity” and “quality,” and that's where our attention will be over the next few months.

Erika Hindman Hawkes

2007 KYAE conference

KYAE has started planning a fall 2007 Kentucky Adult Education conference. Watch for more information in the November issue of *News to Use*.

Most missed questions on the GED math test

According to an analysis of GED Testing Service (GEDTS) data, four areas of the GED test cause students the most difficulty. Informational materials about these problem areas are posted on the [KYAE Web site](#). The materials include sample questions from each area and an analysis of common student errors that lead to missing the question. Each area also identifies the skill gaps and specific ideas on how to incorporate those skills into classroom instruction.

The four areas most commonly missed on the GED are:

- [Geometry and Measurement](#)
- [Reading and Interpreting Graphs and Tables](#)
- [Application of Basic Math Principles to Calculations](#)
- [Problem Solving and Mathematical Reasoning](#)

The materials were provided to KYAE at a GED Mathematics Training Institute sponsored by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. The institute, designed to help improve math instruction and scores on the GED mathematics test, presented new techniques and strategies for teaching critical mathematics skills. It was also an opportunity for states to benefit from new knowledge as they develop a plan to train others on these techniques and strategies.

Kentucky was represented by Dr. Sandy Kestner, KYAE professional development senior associate; Linda Sheffield, director of the Kentucky Center for Mathematics; Wayne Couvillion, math instructor and trainer, Jefferson County; and Brenda Hill, Madison County program director and math trainer.

GED Wizard training

Training for online completion of the KYAE-6 GED application and demographic form and online student access is available at www.gedwizard.com/help. An audio overlay walks you through the process.

As a part of the new online application and demographic forms, students will have the capability of accessing scores through a password. To do so, students will need an e-mail address. Students who do not have e-mail may create an e-mail address through the GoHigherKy.org Web site. Directions for students are available by clicking [here](#).

Revised Assessment Policy

As announced by e-mail on September 22, 2006, a revised Assessment Policy went into effect for all KYAE-funded providers on October 1, 2006. These changes were required by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), U.S. Department of Education, which oversees federal funding for adult education.

The significant revisions are:

- Pre-assessments must occur at orientation or within the first 12 hours of instruction.
- Providers must comply with test publishers' recommended timeframes for post-testing as provided by OVAE: for TABE, which is the most commonly used assessment in Kentucky, the recommended timeframe is 60 hours of instruction before post-testing if different forms of the test are used; for BEST, 60 hours; for CASAS, 40 hours; for WorkKeys, a regular course of instruction. Please see the "Details" section below for full policy language and OVAE requirements.

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- Instructors may grant an exception to the post-testing timeframes based on professional judgment for individual students. KYAE has developed a “Post-Assessment Exception Form,” which must be completed by the instructor for each exception granted. A link to the form is in the “Details” section below.

KYAE has worked with OVAE over the past year to develop a strategy to fully comply with OVAE requirements while allowing instructors to use their professional judgment to make exceptions to post-testing timeframes. KYAE believes strongly that instructors need the flexibility to administer post-assessments in the best interest of students.

It is critical that programs:

- Document all exceptions for students who post-test prior to the test publisher’s recommended timeframes as provided by OVAE; timeframes are spelled out in the revised Assessment Policy. Original forms must be in the student folder; copies are to be kept by the program director.
- Collect and report **all** daily student contact and attendance hours to limit the number of exceptions. NRS defines [contact and attendance hours](#) as “hours of instruction or instructional activity the learner receives from the program. Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote student learning in the program curriculum, such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring or participation in a learning lab. (Note: Time spent on assessment can be counted only if the assessment is designed to inform placement decisions, assess progress or inform instruction. Time used to take the GED test, for example, cannot be counted as instructional activity.)” Please see the frequently asked questions below for more information on eligible hours.

Assessment Policy Details

The following are links to important information on the revised Assessment Policy, which is effective October 1, 2006. Please print this information and share it with instructors and other appropriate staff.

[Revised Assessment Policy](#), p. 10-21

[KYAE Post-Assessment Exception Form](#)

[History of Changes](#) (This document allows providers to compare the previous KYAE policy language with the new language.)

The KYAE Policy and Procedure Manual and AERIN data manual have been updated to reflect policy changes.

Assessment Policy Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do I have to place exception forms in folders of students who post-test before October 1, 2006?

A: No. The policy is effective October 1, 2006, and KYAE will make sure auditors are aware of the effective date.

Q: Is the copy of the exception form placed in a local program director file or forwarded to Frankfort?

A: A copy should be placed in the local program director file.

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Q: Does KYAE realize most students will have exception forms in their folders?

A: KYAE is aware of this possibility. It is critical that providers accurately record and report all contact and attendance hours. Careful recording of all types of eligible hours will provide a more accurate accounting of student effort and will reveal a truer picture of student attendance and a better tally of hours between pre- and post-testing.

Q: Do homework hours count?

A: Study time outside the adult education center may be counted as contact and attendance hours with these conditions:

- It must be assigned by the instructor as an instructional activity.
- The instructor must document that the assignment or lesson was completed.
- The instructor must determine a reasonable and appropriate amount of time to record for the assignment or lesson.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Janet Hoover at Janet.Hoover@ky.gov or (502) 573-5114, ext. 109.

Assessment Policy Monitoring

During program visits, KYAE staff will review student folders for copies of the “Post-Assessment Exception Form” and will review the program director’s file for copies.

Assessment Policy Background

As reported in the [June](#) and [September 2005](#) issues of *News to Use*, OVAE representatives met with KYAE staff and visited two local programs in May 2005. As a result of the visit, OVAE required KYAE to:

- Revise its Assessment Policy to include publisher recommendations for the time interval between pre- and post-testing (effective October 1, 2006).
- Include an accommodated testing section in the Assessment Policy (effective July 1, 2006).
- Discontinue the use of the A-LAS assessment (effective July 1, 2006).
- Revise AERIN so that assessment scores automatically populate the NRS functional level and determine if an educational gain has been made (effective July 1, 2005).
- Collect daily student contact hours (effective July 1, 2005).

Contact Us information in AERIN

Local adult education program staff members use the Contact Us information in AERIN to identify the person responsible for a specific role or product in other counties. Up-to-date Contact Us information is necessary for every county, but there are several omissions. Please make sure your county’s information is up to date. Directions follow.

- Log into AERIN.
- Click onto the Manage Your Locations link at the bottom of the screen. This opens the My Locations screen.
- Click onto the Edit Details link beside FY 2007.
- At the Locations tab, enter information about your main center location. There should be one entry per fiscal year, but the information may be updated throughout the year as needed.
- The Site tab is an optional tab to enter satellite sites.
- The Location Roles tab is a new tab. This process populates the Contact Us screen used by other local adult education program staff to identify the person in your program with responsibility for a certain product or role.

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- For detailed instructions on completing each tab, refer to the [AERIN manual](#), beginning on page 6.

Programmatic checklist available

At the September meeting of the new KYAE Advisory Committee, providers asked for the programmatic checklist used by auditors when visiting adult education programs. The document has been posted on the [KYAE Web site](#). This checklist provides a description of students by AERIN code and includes the documentation that should be placed in student folders.

Byrd Scholarship recipients

Congratulations to the six GED graduates who are recipients of scholarships through the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program. The scholarships are awarded to students who “demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and show promise of continued academic achievement.”

The Byrd Scholarship provides up to \$1,500 per year for a total of four years. To qualify for the Byrd Scholarship, GED graduates must have a minimum composite score of 2700 and be recommended by an adult education provider.

This year’s GED winners were:

Danielle Baker, Laurel County

Danielle was a home school student and earned her GED to have a nationally recognized credential. She is attending Somerset Community College and plans to major in Nuclear Medical Technology. Danielle is also an accomplished musician and is learning Japanese.

Jenna Garrett, Jefferson County

Jenna had dropped out of school after the tenth grade, although she had been a good student. She came to the Student Service Center at Ahrens just after turning 18 and decided she wanted to attend college. She earned her GED in July 2005 and is enrolled at Jefferson Community and Technical College.

Joshua Miller, Boyd County

Joshua had the highest GED writing score (710) of all Boyd County graduates last year. An Ashland Community and Technical College student, he is the first in his family to attend college. He wants to be a creative fiction writer.

Dana Scott, Marshall County

Dana was home schooled and denied entry into postsecondary school without a recognized credential. She attained her GED with a cumulative average of 672. She is a working mother of five children and attends West Kentucky Community and Technical College. She plans to transfer to Murray State University to complete a degree in Chemistry.

Kayla Tarter, Bullitt County

Kayla received a score of 3140 on the GED and was recognized as an honor graduate. She is attending classes at Jefferson Community College and will attend the University of Louisville in the spring of 2007 to pursue a medical career.

Khadijah Amani, Fayette County (no information available)

New KYAE staff member

Ashley Smither has joined KYAE as an associate in administrative services. She is filling the position left vacant by Michele Koizol’s transfer in July. Most recently Ashley worked in the Kentucky Department of Revenue, Enterprise Collection Branch. She has a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Kentucky State University.

Please send all invoices to Ashley. She can be reached at (502) 573-1555, ext. 250, or Ashley.Smither@ky.gov.

Please allow us to introduce...

“Please allow us to introduce...” is a monthly feature spotlighting KYAE staff members to help adult educators become more familiar with KYAE staff. This issue features Erika Larson and Marilyn Lyons.

If you need a staff contact for particular subject areas, check the [Staff Listing by Service Topics](#).

Erika Larson

As KYAE’s distance learning coordinator for nearly two years, Erika provides training and support on KYVAE resources, coordinates KYVAE enhancements to meet provider and student needs, evaluates potential new products, and works with vendors to stay informed of the latest technology.

With a bachelor’s degree in business administration and a master’s in educational psychology (emphasis in instructional design and technology), Erika has a diverse professional background. For 10 years, she ran a small business offering instructional design and technical writing. She has also worked as an administrator and teacher for a corporate learning center, a bank examiner and a commercial bond underwriter.

Erika says the best parts of her job are working with providers to help them understand and utilize technology in the classroom and redesigning KYVAE functionality to meet the needs of educators and students.

Fun fact: “My husband and I love to scuba dive whenever we have the opportunity to travel. If it were up to me, I would travel the world in my wetsuit looking for the next great dive site.”

Marilyn Lyons

Marilyn Lyons is a senior associate responsible for research and data analysis in program performance, instructional strategies and best practices. Marilyn has been on the KYAE staff for one year; she was previously an assistant dean at the University of Kentucky Graduate School, where she worked for eight years.

Marilyn has a bachelor’s degree in anthropology and a master’s in higher education, both from UK. She is working on an educational policy studies and evaluation doctorate at UK. Marilyn enjoys analyzing and interpreting data using SAS, her favorite statistical software.

She says she enjoys her work because “adult education offers a second chance to fill dreams for many Kentuckians.” Citing the 11 percent of Kentuckians in below basic prose and below basic document literacy and 20 percent in below basic quantitative literacy, according to the 2003 literacy survey, she says it’s exciting to be part of the effort to raise educational attainment in Kentucky.

Marilyn lives in Lexington with her 16-year-old daughter, Brittany, and two “spoiled rotten” Shih Tzu puppies – Dyamond Champagne and Precious Ruby.

Fun fact: “I joined a church bowling team and learned that, although I am right handed, I bowl better with my left hand!”

ESL resources

ESL/Civics Link available

A new online course for ESL instructors, PBS ESL/Civics Link, is available on [PDtrack](#). ESL/Civics Link, managed by KET, is a flexible PD opportunity for adult education ESL instructors. Jefferson County instructors were instrumental in the development of the product, which is designed to enhance cross-cultural awareness and integrate English literacy instruction and civics education. It is required for all new ESL instructors. For more information, contact Joyce Bullock at (502) 573-5114, ext. 118, or Joyce.Bullock@ky.gov.

Upcoming workshops recommended for ESL instructors

Please see [PDtrack](#) for details on the following workshops.

- October 6, BEST Plus Implementation, Versailles
- October 13, ESL for the Workplace, Versailles
- October 13, Instructional Strategies for ESL – Engaging Family Literacy Volunteers, Tutors and Learners, Shelbyville
- December 1, Newspapers in Education, Lexington
- January 11, Newspapers in Education, West Liberty
- January 26, Learning Stations in the ESL Classroom, Elizabethtown
- February 2, CASAS Implementation, Kenton County
- April 13, BEST Plus Implementation, Frankfort

CASAS sample test items

CASAS sample test items are available on the [CASAS Web site](#) to familiarize students with CASAS reading and listening test items.

Free newspapers for classroom use

Free *Lexington Herald-Leader* newspapers for use as a teaching tool in Central and Eastern Kentucky counties by going to www.nieconnects.com and clicking on ORDER.

On October 24, the *Herald-Leader* will carry “Life Skills,” a 12-page bilingual supplement about basic skills in consumerism, finance, health, education, nutrition and communication. Log on to www.nieconnects.com before October 22 to order newspapers with this special publication.

Kriss Johnson, Newspapers in Education (NIE) manager for the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, will teach two workshops about incorporating the newspaper into the classroom. Both workshops are posted on [PDtrack](#). If you have any questions, contact Joyce Bullock at (502) 573-5114, ext. 118, or Joyce.Bullock@ky.gov.

- December 1, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., *Herald-Leader* in Lexington
- January 11, 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Morehead State University, West Liberty

During the 2006-07 school year, NIE will publish an Adult Education Teacher Activity Guide. If you are interested in providing input on the content, please contact Joyce at the information above.

Amazon project expands

Amazon.com, Commerce Lexington’s Workforce Development Partnership, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and Kentucky Adult Education-Council on Postsecondary Education expanded the

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Go, Earn, Do - GED initiative to help adults in an eight-county Central Kentucky area achieve their GED.

Amazon.com will provide up to \$40 for a GED test fee reimbursement, a \$20 Amazon.com gift card and preference in hiring to GED graduates who are residents of Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Garrard, Jessamine, Madison, Scott and Woodford counties, where most of Amazon's Lexington facility employees live. Amazon requires the minimum of a GED for employment at its Kentucky facilities. The test fee reimbursement and gift card will be available to all GED graduates in the counties, regardless of whether they are interested in Amazon.com employment.

Amazon.com, which operates several Kentucky fulfillment centers, launched the Go, Earn, Do - GED program in 20 Campbellsville-area counties in 2005. Since then, more than 1,100 people in 20 counties have successfully earned their GED through the program.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Should the student folder contain a copy of the student GED transcript?

A: No:

- For security reasons, programs should **not** keep a copy of the transcript in student folders. Students are provided an official transcript. Official transcripts, not copies, must be used for employment or postsecondary purposes. Additional official transcripts must be requested from KYAE.
- There is no NRS requirement to retain a copy of the transcript.
- An AERIN screen showing student scores and the ACE/GEDTS statement of passing scores is sufficient for audit purposes.

Valuable links

White House Conference on Global Literacy

Read about [The White House Conference on Global Literacy](#).

Humanities and Social Sciences Network

The Kentucky Association of History, Kentucky Historical Society and Kentucky Virtual Library have organized a new ["Humanities and Social Sciences Network."](#) Visit the Web site to subscribe to the listserv.