TALAE 2023 CONFERENCE

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

**Thursday, February 9, 2023 *Breakout Session 1: 10:30 am – 12:00 pm***

**A Roadmap through GED testing for Student Success!**

**Presented by: Brian Smith and Jonna Forsyth**

GEDTS has several resources available to Educators and students so that every student has the opportunity to succeed and earn their TXCHSE! Please join us for a guide through our resources, both free and low cost, to support student success!

**Using Distance Learning to Increase MSG's**

**Presented by: Dr. Debra Hargrove, Lori Slayton, and Dr. Kurt Czupryn**

Ever hear of the None, Some and Mostly Report? Probably not! Come and learn how Hybrid learning makes a big difference in Measurable Skills Gains. This session will discuss Texas’ rate of MSG’s using the data and how incorporating the Approved Distance Learning Curricula combined with traditional instruction help students achieve their goals. Presented by Dr. Debra Hargrove of TCALL and Lori Slayton with TWC, learn the benefits of Hybrid instruction in increasing MSG’s.

**Want Measurable Skill Gains? We’ve Got You!**

**Presented by: Martin Loa and Erin Cococcia**

Across the nation, one of the unifying challenges all programs share is the goal of increasing measurable skill gains. Come see how Burlington’s standards-based digital curriculum provides students with all they need to succeed at school, on any NRS test, and in life as they transition to post-secondary education and career paths. Want level gains? We know just how to help you get them!

**Program Planning**

**Presented by: Ashley Arreola and Whitney Patterson**

Do you take time to plan out the year with your leadership team? Join the Literacy Council of Tyler to uncover ways to plan out the year to meet TWC targets while maintaining the interest of students and staff.

**AEL Career Pathway Programs for Special Populations**

**Presented by: Tadd Wamester and Lisa Carlo**

This workshop will highlight community college use cases that leverage EnGen for sector-specific talent pipeline development programs in the areas of pre-apprenticeship, career pathway transitions, services for Internationally Trained Professionals and refugees. English skills, digital literacy and integrated (IET) career pathway training programs offer so much opportunity for inclusive workforce and economic development programs. We look forward to exploring these topics within a generative and interactive session that includes small group breakout discussion and technology enabled real-time surveys. New innovative blended program models for working with community partners, employers, and with special populations will be highlighted, including those at Austin Community College and other educational/workforce development partners.

**Embracing a Hybrid Nation: The Art of Blending Online & In-Person Classes**

**Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Hills and Krystal Hills**

Hybrid classes are a great way to bring the best of the virtual and physical worlds together. Join our interactive session on ways to engage and retain learners, no matter the device. Learn how you can facilitate your class by incorporating activities that promote student interaction, increase literacy skills and build community.

**Reflect: Scaffolded Instruction and Writing Models for Developing Writers**

**Presented by: Janet Kay**

Our new Reflect series gives students the tools they need to successfully complete writing tasks. Students analyze the various parts of the Writing Models to understand the structure and language required for the writing tasks before applying the principles to their own writing using the state of the art Spark Digital Platform for the Interactive eBook and Online Practice.

**Words Matter: Recognizing and Addressing Microaggressions**

**Presented by: Dr. Olga Escamilla**

The first step in addressing microaggressions is to recognize when a microaggression has occurred and what message it may be sending. When one hears a microaggression what can you do? Come learn about techniques to use anywhere that will help you develop appropriate responses.

**Synergy Opening Presentation**

**Presented by: The Synergy Team**

This presentation will update participants on a statewide initiative put forth by World Education Services. This grants focus is on better services for Internationally Trained Professionals and creating a local network and curriculum that can be used for AEL grants recipients and employers. Learn what has worked and what has not from current participants. Attendees will leave with an overall understanding of the grant initiative and the resources available in creating these services and receive resources to create their own local network and services.

**Thursday, February 9, 2023 *Breakout Session 2: 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm***

**TABE Testing Updates and Overview of the new TABE Workforce Readiness Portal - Aligning TABE Scores to Career Skills from O\*Net**

**Presented by: Chasity Wright and Michael Johnson**

This session will review updates and best practices for TABE testing including Off-Line Testing, plans for TABE 13/14 and discuss the use of TABE CLAS-E Online can support ESL programs. We will review new alignments to Grade Ranges and the Concordance of TABE 11/12 to available High School Equivalency tests. We will also explore the new TABE Workforce Portal that aligns TABE Scores to over 750 of the Bright Outlook careers posted in the US Department of Labor's Occupational Network (O\*Net).

**Ensuring a Seat at the Table**

**Presented by: Dr. Jennifer Kent & Tiffany Johnson**

Join Victoria College President, Dr. Jennifer Kent, and Director of Adult Education, Ms. Tiffany Johnson, for a conversation on the vital role of adult education at institutions of higher education. Understanding the rapidly changing landscape of Texas colleges and the students we serve is essential in successfully advocating for AEL students and programs. Session participants will gain a better understanding of community college initiatives and how partnerships with AEL programs are crucial to the success of educating and training the Texas workforce. This interactive session will foster conversations to identify challenges and solutions to ensure AEL programs have a seat at the table.

**Revitalize Your Class with Game-like Activities to Practice Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing**

**Presented by: Donna Price**

Learn games, mixers and other communicative activities that engage students, lower their affective filter and liven up your classroom. Adaptable for learners of any level or ability, these communicative activities further language acquisition as well as reinforce listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar in both face-to-face and remote settings. Participants leave the workshop with at least five game-like activities they can adapt for learners at any proficiency level.

**Putting the STUDENT in Student Services: Employing Learners as Interns**

**Presented by: Marissa Teager and Susan Gusler**

Who understands the strengths and struggles of adult education students better than themselves? Peer-to-peer support is an invaluable tool for Adult Education programs and in this session Marissa Teager, Susan Gusler, and Consuelo Garcia from Austin Community College will share how their program hires and develops learners as hourly student support staff. Participants will learn how they can develop a student internship program to capitalize on the expertise of their learners and benefit current and prospective students. The presentation will include information on screening, hiring, training and developing student employees, pitfalls to avoid, and some ideas for using your learners to help other students.

**What Community Colleges want and need to excel in AEL**

**Presented by: Monica Stansberry and Michelle Lamons**

This will be a closed focus group to discuss the needs of preparing an adult education program for community colleges. Community colleges will be encouraged to discuss integration of program services and the unique needs and challenges of higher ed.

**Keeping up with Essential Education - Season 2023**

**Presented by: Beth Williams**

This session will provide a brief update on three exciting new projects from Essential Education.

1. New Courses – Digital Literacy and micro-credentialing are a focus for the year. We'll take you through our updated Workforce Soft Skills courses, which include Credly badging. We’ll also demonstrate our new research-based MindPlay Ultra Reading Tutor. MindPlay ensures continual, measurable, and sustainable reading improvement for students.

2. New Features - We'll show you several new features we’ve added to our Adult Basic Education and High School Equivalency courses, including our new remediation content.

3. New Partnerships - We'll talk about our partnership with DRC and how TABE® Test Scores are imported into the Essential Education Learner Management System in real time. The individualized TABE®Test student data prescribes software lesson assignments for students and helps instructors make informed instructional decisions.

**Where do I begin? Using GPS to guide success!**

**Presented by: Melissa Salinas and Angelica Gonzalez**

Session will detail the use of data and using GPS (Goals, Planning, and Strategy) to guide program decisions. The use of a managed open enrollment to improve target outcome. We will share what we did, how we did it and what is next in our journey to overall program success.

**ITP Services and Support for Local Programs**

**Presented by: Tadd Wamester and Lisa Carlo**

This workshop will highlight community college use cases that leverage EnGen for sector-specific talent pipeline development programs in the areas of pre-apprenticeship, career pathway transitions, services for Internationally Trained Professionals and refugees. English skills, digital literacy and integrated (IET) career pathway training programs offer so much opportunity for inclusive workforce and economic development programs. We look forward to exploring these topics within a generative and interactive session that includes small group breakout discussion and technology enabled real-time surveys. New innovative blended program models for working with community partners, employers, and with special populations will be highlighted, including those at Austin Community College and other educational/workforce development partners.

**Thursday, February 9, 2023 *Breakout Session 3: 3:15 pm – 4:45 pm***

**Blended Learning with Spanish Curriculum from Aztec Software, Steck-Vaughn, and Paxen Publishing**

**Presented by: Mitch Rosin and Deanna Crosson**

Participants will learn best-practice blended learning strategies that can be used for delivery of Spanish curriculum across all NRS levels of instruction. This session will focus on how to build and deliver a full Spanish curriculum through a blended learning model to meet student learners where they are in their academic path.

**From Curriculum to Classroom!**

**Presented by: Ashly Winkle**

Are you excited about the free digital literacy curricula purchased for Texas AEL providers, but not sure how to integrate it into your program? It is important to provide our students with an opportunity to not only learn, but also to practice the digital literacy skills they learn from the curricula. Join Ashly Winkle during this session where she will share strategies, best practices and lesson ideas for integrating the skills your students learn using the free curricula into your class lessons.

**Listening and Oral Communication--Keys to Student Success on CASAS and Pre-IET Programs**

**Presented by: Robin Graybill**

The strength of Cambridge’s Ventures ESOL program lies in its sound and researched based language learning pedagogy so that your adult students will learn the 4 skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) and be able to communicate effectively in English before they get into an IET program. Listening and Speaking are the two most important soft skills at work according to research. Listening skills are also required for gains on the CASAS tests.

The presenter will demonstrate:

• Communicative activities in Ventures that give students practice speaking and listening

• Similarities in the listening activities in Ventures and on CASAS listening tests

• Transferable workplace skills embedded in Ventures to help students succeed in training programs and employment.

**The Quality Program By Design**

**Presented by: Dr. Irene Ramos**

How would you go about starting an adult education program from the ground up? How do you start from nothing and create a quality adult education program that meets measures and serves the needs of the community? This presentation shares the journey of how a quality program came into being amidst a pandemic and reviews the best practices followed by the staff of one program to make it happen.

**Intentional selection processes that lead to higher credential attainment rates- “Begin with the end in mind.” Stephen Covey**

**Presented by: Chera Crawford**

Literacy Council will discuss its’ student selection process from initial contact to class placement. We will walk through our process of how to keep students engaged through the selection process, how to ask the right questions to find out what you really want to know, and what to do with students who aren’t eligible.

**Getting Started with CASAS eTests**

**Presented by: Elizabeth Scheib**

This presentation will be designed for new users of CASAS eTests or those who are interested in learning more about CASAS eTests. I will teach some basic CASAS vocabulary that will help new users navigate the eTests and TOPSpro Enterprise systems. We will discuss administering a test on-site as well as the remote testing options and resources.

**Transforming a Teacher Centered Classroom**

**Presented by: Susan Gusler**

In this interactive session, instructors will get a chance to assess their teaching style and learn concrete techniques to improve student learning in both virtual and F2F classrooms. We will explore Teacher Talk Time, Economy of Language, and Enabling.

**Building Effective Community Partnerships for Student Success**

**Presented by: Whitney Patterson and Maria Ponce**

The Literacy Council’s Executive Director Whitney Patterson will discuss the importance of effective community partnerships, best practices, and share tools on how to streamline these partnerships.

**Best practices in Employer Engagement**

**Presented by: Anson Green**

Working with employers? How do ITP programs leave the classroom and reach out to employers? You will hear from other service providers and employers on hiring ITP students.

**Friday, February 10, 2023 *Breakout Session 4: 10:15 pm – 11:45 am***

**Stumbling Blocks: the Skills Gaps in RLA and Math Stalling Student Success with GED!**

**Presented by: Jonna Forsyth**

Let's take a serious look at those skills gaps students have shown us that prevent them from successfully earning their TXCHSE!

**DL Capacity Building Initiatives (that worked)**

**Presented by: Dr. Kurt Czupryn and David Goomas**

Benefitting from the DL Mentor I and DL Capacity Building Initiative grants, twelve initiatives were implemented that likely caused the significant gains in participants and proxy hours. These intitiatives will be shared and discussed by staff with first hand knowledge from applying these initiatives. Audience participation will be encouraged.

**Simplify Test Administration and Improve Student Outcomes with TABE CLAS-E**

**Presented by: Chasity Wright and Michael Johnson**

With the success of TABE® 11&12, and over 10 million TABE tests given on the DRC INSIGHT™ online testing platform, TABE CLAS-E™ moves into the 21st century by adding it to the TABE online suite of assessments. TABE CLAS-E users now have the ability to leverage the user-friendly DRC INSIGHT testing platform with an assessment designed specifically for adult English language learners. There is no other test in the adult market that assesses the four content areas of Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking—and now, it will serve even more adult learners by being offered online.

**Survey of Family Literacy Practices in the AEL Classroom**

**Presented by: Amanda Sainz, Faria Asadi, and Sarah Sualehi**

The Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL) values practitioner feedback. We are interested in learning more about how we can better serve Texas adult education programs. In this focus group session, researchers from TCALL will present current data from the Family Literacy Content Standards Implementation Survey distributed in the Fall of 2022. We will facilitate an interactive discussion about this survey's results and allow attendees to share their experiences with the Family Literacy Content Standards. Attendees can also complete the statewide survey if they are interested. This collaborative discussion between TCALL researchers and AEL practitioners will help address and discover barriers impeding content implementation.

**HSE and College: Jump-Starting the Post-Secondary Pathway to Success**

**Presented by: Ilse Reyes and Kerri Rhodes**

For most adult learners, college is intimidating, especially for non-traditional students. However, students need post-secondary opportunities to begin or advance their careers. Through Ability to Benefit, a dual enrollment initiative, adult education organizations like Restore Education provide their students with a jumpstart into the next phase of their academic journey. Join us as we explore the implementation of Ability to Benefit in the San Antonio community, the lessons learned by Restore Education, and participate in a brainstorming session to enact Ability to Benefit in your community.

**Adult Literacy and Dyslexia**

**Presented by: Lara Speights**

Between 5-17% of the US population has dyslexia. However, in Texas public schools, in 2018, only 3.29% of students were identified with dyslexia. Across the US, we have adults struggling to read in our programs who have undiagnosed reading difficulties, including dyslexia. Join Lara Speights, Licensed Dyslexia Therapist and Reading Specialist, as she discusses red flags for dyslexia and practical approaches to reading that are beneficial for all learners, and essential for those with dyslexia.

**ESL Beyond The Classroom**

**Presented by: Maria Araujo Ponce**

The Literacy Council of Tyler will walk through the services provided for ESL Students. The different populations within ESL, and how to provide support services that are meaningful to the students.

**“How Can I Help?” Instructional Coaching and Facilitating for Practical Impact**

**Presented by: Kwame Simmons, Sr.**

This session will be designed to engage instructors and administrators in a reflective process regarding their impact on coaching and facilitating adult learning. Participants will reflect on how they navigate between their role as coach versus instructor. We will grapple with the theory of technical and adaptive leadership styles and how they are best leveraged for results. Participants will leave this session renewed to take charge and inspired to support learners by asking themselves “Who am I in this picture?” and “How can I help?”

**African Bridge Network: Comprehensive Integration Approach to Bridge Gaps for Immigration Professionals**

**Presented by: Emmanuel Owusu**

This session will feature Emmanuel Owusu, the founder and executive director of African Bridge Network -- an innovative nonprofit that supports college-educated immigrants across the state of Massachusetts. He will discuss his comprehensive integration approach to bridge gaps for immigrant professionals through mentorship, career navigation, networking, and fellowship opportunities. Emmanuel has turned local employers into champions for immigrant professionals through their Immigrant Professional Fellowship, in which individuals are trained with ABN and partners and then placed in a 3-month fellowship in non-clinical positions in leading hospitals in the Greater Boston Area.

**Friday, February 10, 2023 *Breakout Session 5: 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm***

**Rise High School Equivalency**

**Presented by: Kevin Curran**

New 2023 HSE preparation software from McGraw Hill. Are you tired of using software that was built in 2014 to teach your HSE students in 2023? Rise High School Equivalency is a diagnostic, adaptive learning system for the 2014 GED® Test and the HiSET™ . Rise meets students where they are, and then guides them via flexible and streamlined instruction through the skills needed to meet their objectives. Rise provides clear instruction and real-world application through practice and formative assessment. Rich, informative data generated by student responses provides valuable insights that are fed into student and teacher dashboards, so individual and class performance can be monitored and tracked.

Come and see the latest in HSE preparation.

**Fulfilling Your Learning Needs with the PD Portal**

**Presented by: Dr. Debra Hargrove**

Join TCALL team members as we provide tips on how to successfully use the PD Portal to fulfill your annual professional development requirements. Topics will include creating an account; resetting your password; searching for, requesting, and completing professional development; locating certificates of completion, and joining and posting in Connect Communities. There will be time for discussion and hands-on practice in the PD Portal so please bring your laptop or tablet! This presentation is geared towards anyone who participates in professional development for Texas Adult Education and Literacy.

**Phonemic Awareness: Improving Oral Comprehension**

**Presented by: Elizabeth Moya**

This session serves as an overview to some of the common phonemic sounds that English language learners find challenging when trying to understand others. Participants will identify strategies to assist students with their oral and listening communication as well as increase the learners’ confidence when interacting with others. Be prepared for some fun as you experience the session from the student's perspective!

**Using community collaboration to address underlying needs for adult learners**

**Presented by: Kristina Rivas-Jones**

This presentation will discuss the importance of understanding the unique needs of your adult learner, outside of the classroom. Techiniques for community collaboration through collective impact will be explored.

**Connecting Real World Workforce Skills in the IET**

**Presented by: Jeannie Hale**

Often times students come in to IET's to change their career, however they may not have some of the necessary skills to make informed decisions on job market comparisons. This presentation will share curriculum activities that address navigation in changing careers such as fringe benefits, hourly vs. salary wages and negotiating your value add as an employee.

**Instructional Strategies for Family Literacy: A Teaching Approach for the AEL Practitioner**

**Presented by: Amanda Sainz, Paula Bauer, and AnneMarie Molinari-Sanders**

The Texas Adult Education and Literacy Content Standards now include Family Literacy. This session will provide attendees with Family Literacy resources that support intergenerational learning and development! We will also discuss how to foster a love for family learning that will last a lifetime for students. We will begin with an overview of the Texas AEL Family Content Standards and expectations for implementation. Then we will share several lesson plans that support differentiation and Universal Design for Learning principles. By the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to identify the anatomy and structure of the Texas Family Content Standards, identify their role within the family system, and prepare a family literacy lesson in a face-to-face or virtual classroom. Whether you teach an ABE or ESL course, we have materials for you to take home today!

**Family Math Literacy Initiative (FMLI) Call Center**

**Presented by: May OBrien and Linda Fehoko**

Did you know that in the past two years, 82% out of the 77,000 GED test takers had difficulty passing the math test even though they successfully passed RLA, Science, and Social Studies, according to the GED Testing Service?

To meet the needs for math instructional support, the Family Math Literacy Initiative Call Center funded by TWC will open to the public in March 2023.

The purpose of the Call Center is to provide services to participants and their families that focus on learning basic math operations and enhancing digital skill building. Collaborating with 4 Ever Clever Learning LLC, the Call Center will have 20 part-time rotating certified math teachers who provide math instructional support throughout the week and on weekends from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Teachers will use the Zoom platform with editable virtual whiteboard functionality to deliver these services to participants.

**WES & American Immigration Council (AIC)**

**Presented by: Chelsie Kramer and Katherine Gebremedhin**

This session will help participants better understand credential evaluations, a tool for degree equivalency, and how to use data and research available on immigrants and refugees to enhance the available services and their delivery in adult education. With a credential evaluation, international education and experience can be recognized and utilized in the United States. This session will provide an overview of the process of integration into the U.S. workforce for internationally educated immigrants and refugees, offer steps for effective planning, and share guidance on how you can use available tools and programs to support your career advancement. Additionally, Chelsie Kramer of the American Immigration Council will demonstrate how to use interactive data tools to get comprehensive state and local immigration data in real-time. This data and research can be used to advocate for better services, such as credential evaluations, across Texas and provide relevant information to employers and other stakeholders about internationally trained professionals.

**Friday, February 10, 2023 *Breakout Session 6: 3:15 pm – 4:45 pm***

**Jump Start to Success! Now that We Got Them, How Can We Keep them!**

**Presented by: Jonna Forsyth**

Now that they've walked through the door and signed up for classes, how can we keep them coming back for more? Recognizing the courage it took to "show up", and the grit and persistence it takes to continue, let's discuss challenges and suggestions for success. It's all about the student, and we engage with them!

**833-498-2255: Anytime Day or Night, the Call Center Will Help You Thrive**

**Presented by: Ashly Winkle**

Do you struggle to support all of your students’ and instructors' technical needs? The Distance Education Call Center is here during those times you need technical help the most. Whether it is during a remote class, while your students are studying at home, or when you are choosing a new distance learning curriculum, we are here for you. Join Ashly Winkle as she discusses benefits, integration strategies, and advocacy of this amazing resource, which is now available and developed with the intent of helping you strive.

**Engagement Strategies for the Adult Ed Classroom**

**Presented by: Jackie Dowell and Larisa Elliott**

In thie session, you can expect to learn about fundamentals of engagement and how two high-engagement models can increase participation and investment of learning from your students. We will explore one model on how to present lessons in a manner that empowers your student's learning and willingness to participate, and one model outlining how to get true buy-in from your students resulting in investment in their own learning.

**Level Up Your Teaching Game with These Three Reflective Practices**

**Presented by: Michele Vick**

As teachers, we often develop habits and routines that become more entrenched the longer we teach. When was the last time you paused to reflect on your teaching practices and consider what is working and what needs adjustment? This session will explore a few simple, yet powerful reflection activities you can engage in that will help you identify and target areas for growth in order to increase your effectiveness in the classroom.

**Using Registered Apprenticeships as a Workforce Solution**

**Presented by: Joy Jamerson**

The Healthcare Career Advancement Program (H-CAP) is a pioneering national labor-management organization that promotes innovation and quality in healthcare career education. H-CAP also serves as a DOL-contracted intermediary, providing no-cost technical assistance and funding support to employers, non-profits, colleges, universities, or other entities interested in developing a Registered Apprenticeship program in healthcare and behavioral health.

This workshop will focus on the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship through the lens of equity and inclusion and the positive impact it can have on individuals. When done correctly, Registered Apprenticeships allow employers to recruit and retain skilled workers, promote diversity in hiring, and empower individuals to gain new skills that are marketable to employers without having to take on crippling amounts of debt that often come with traditional postsecondary education and training models.

**Blended Learning with Aztec Software, Steck-Vaughn, and Paxen Publishing**

**Presented by: Mitch Rosin and Deanna Crosson**

The global pandemic challenged adult education programs to effectively use technology to continue to provide both assessment and learning options for adult learners. Many programs quickly switched to a distance learning model while still utilizing print materials via a blended learning model. This workshop will highlight blended learning models, how technology can enhance the delivery of curriculum and how Aztec, Paxen, and Steck-Vaughn’s came together to provide the ideal solution for a blended learning model.

**5 Best Practices for a Successful Online Program**

**Presented by: Jeanine Wenzel and Elizabeth Bohon**

This presentation will highlight how Community Action's Online coordinators implemented specific strategies to promote better recruitment, orientations, attendance, and retention for the Online Course program. Relevant materials will be made accessible at the end of the session. In-person attendees are encouraged to bring their own devices.

**Healthcare Certification & Alternative Careers for Second Language Learners& Internationally Trained Professionals**

**Presented by: John Hunt**

This session will feature John Hunt of the NYC Welcome Back Center at LaGuardia Community College (CUNY), a resource center for internationally trained nurses seeking to contribute their skills to the US healthcare sector. He will discuss the Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming, case management, and referral services offered at LaGuardia to English language learners navigating healthcare certification and alternative careers, including sample ESOL lessons contextualized to the healthcare sector.

**Saturday, February 11, 2023 *Breakout Session 7: 9:30 am – 10:45 am***

**Factors Facilitating Reading Gains For Struggling Adult Learners**

**Presented By: Barbara McNamara**

Building Blocks Phonics is a curriculum designed for low leveled readers and ELLs. We provide the “why behind the how” which in turn grants access to a broader reading and language base. The one-hour workshop covers the varying factors that facilitate reading gains for struggling adult learners.

**Statewide DEPDC/TWC Digital Literacy Curricula Initiative Everything You Need to Start Using Computer Essentials**

**Presented By: Beth Williams and Charlie Weeks**

For our Texas AEL educators, join us for an in-depth look at the recently revamped Essential Education’s Computer Essentials course! Featuring 110 new or updated lessons, activities, and assessments. The course aligns with internationally recognized digital literacy standards and allows students to earn digital badges and certificates to showcase their successes.

In this training, the Essential Education training team will walk you through the following:

1. The new Computer Essentials course content and features;

2. How the three modules closely align with IC3 and other digital literacy standards;

3. Our new badging feature and the certificates students can earn throughout the course;

4. Practical implementation steps like adding students, accessing the content, and running reports.

This session is for all AEL educators and will equip you with the tools to implement Computer Essentials right away, whether you teach in-person lessons, take a blended learning approach, or utilize distance education.

**Brain Hacks: Teaching Moves that Deepen Understanding and Strengthen Recall**

**Presented By: Michele Vick**

There's a lot of murky "brain-based" teaching advice floating around out there. This session will seek to dispel some common neuromyths. It will then present several proven, research-based instructional strategies that teachers can begin using in their lessons right away to strengthen learning. With each strategy, participants will also explore an EdTech tool they can use to facilitate that instructional move in the classroom.

**Start Right with the End in Mind! Using Student Learning Objectives**

**Presented By: Elizabeth Moya**

Do you ever end your class wondering if ALL of your students understood the lesson activity? How do you REALLY know if your lesson was successful? Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) are here to help! Join this session where you will identify how to create learning measurable goals. Participants will walk away with easy-to-use, templates and resources to ensure you meet your lesson planning goals and your students learn successfully – no matter their literacy level!

**Achieve Soft Skills and Employability Training**

**Presented By: Jalon T. Harris**

Interactive presentation that gives educators the knowledge to teach soft skills in the classroom. Soft skills are what employers need to have longevity on the job.

**A Teacher’s Dozen: Activities to Engage Your Learners**

**Presented By: Ana Aparicio, Taynim Johnson, and Elinore Ramos**

In-person, virtual, hy-flex...donut worry! No matter what your English language classroom looks like, dip into our session to learn how to spice up your teaching and make any lesson more engaging. From warm-up activities and vocabulary lessons to grammar topics and pronunciation practice, we'll have a variety pack of ideas and activities to energize your classroom.

**Keeping Learners Motivated and Engaged**

**Presented By: Mitch Rosin and Deanna Crosson**

Keeping learners coming to classes can be challenging for the most seasoned instructor. Priorities for any adult education program include learners meeting objectives and programs achieving goals. Join this session to preview ways to address classroom and instructional issues that will help with learner persistence. This session will also preview features within Aztec’s products that can help keep learners engaged in the instructional process.

**Student Panel: Internationally Trained Professionals**

**Presented By: Select ITP Students**

Join us for a panel of ITP students that have successfully navigated U.S. systems and found a successful career. Learn what worked and did not work through their journey.

**Saturday, February 11, 2023 *Breakout Session 8: 12:45 pm – 2:00 pm***

**Teaching Testing Tactics**

**Presented By: Carl Sevier**

Even when our students know the content and skills they need to pass the GED, they are often daunted by the test. Join Mr. Sevier for an interactive session full of test-taking tactics that will increase the confidence your students feel when they sit down in front of that computer in the GED testing center. Participants will learn strategies they can use tomorrow to teach students better study skills, essential test knowledge, tips for taking the test, and coping with anxiety.

**The Power of Plickers**

**Presented By: Ashly Winkle**

Plickers is an EdTech tool that allows instructors to collect real-time formative assessment data without students needing paper and pencil or their own devices! Not only can Plickers be used for face-to-face instruction, however, it can now also be used for remote and/or Hyflex models! Join Ashly Winkle as she demonstrates the Power of Plickers in AdultEd Instruction.

**The POWER of Art to EMPOWER Students**

**Presented By: LuAnn Turley**

Inspire and equip English language learners to strengthen speaking, writing, reading and listening skills by incorporating works of art from the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston into educational experiences. Discover inquiry-based strategies that encourage dynamic language development and learning by inspiring and motivating students to connect with their cultural roots through the use of the museum's global encyclopedic collection of world art. Explore specific classroom activities that empower student engagement and motivate students to achieve their targeted goals. Learn how to utilize the MFAH website to access hundreds of lessons for your classroom and receive collaborative teaching tools in electronic and paper formats. See how the power of art can empower your classroom!

**Keep Calm and Math On!**

**Presented By: Krista Mosher**

Math, whether teaching or learning it, tends to cause strong emotions in people – both positive and negative. Teachers rarely reflect on their own feelings towards math and how their attitude can affect their adult education students. In this session, I will have participants create a personal, life-long math timeline to identify key factors that may affect their attitude towards math today. Through that discussion we will investigate causes of math anxiety based on research and personal experiences and explore some in-class practices to help combat it for both teachers and students. Activities will include easy to adopt math practices using patterns and math self-discovery strategies, using videos and technology to help alleviate teacher and student math anxiety.

**Improving Students’ CASAS Scores with Aztec and Steck-Vaughn**

**Presented By: Mitch Rosin and Deanna Crosson**

This session highlights key strategies for identifying students' needs as identified from their CASAS score reports, and then assigning appropriate, standards-aligned activities for increasing their MSGs and EFLs. Additionally, this session will detail specific steps to use students’ CASAS scores to track and increase learning outcomes. Specific steps instructors can use to identify areas of need with CASAS Content Standards Reports will be outline, discussed, and explored. Aztec products, tools, and specific strategies will be shared.

**Case Management for ITP Students: A Tiered Approach for Low- and High- Language Level Participants Part 1**

**Presented By: Rosa Tapia and Kerri Rhodes**

Internationally Trained Professionals as a subset of English Language Learners have specialized needs compared with the generalized population. Providers can start to serve these individuals where they are at through case management and provide customized advising, career exploration, workplace preparation, digital skills, document translation and evaluation along with other intensive services. Part 1 will focus on entry and intermediate level services while Part 2 will focus on advanced level services.

**Saturday, February 11, 2023 *Breakout Session 9: 2:15 pm – 3:30 pm***

**Sounding-out, Sound Blending, and Sight Words: How to Build Basic Literacy in Beginners**

**Presented By: Elizabeth Martinez**

This presentation demonstrates efficient techniques for meeting the needs of non-literate and-low literacy beginners by the teaching of explicit, intentional phonics, as well as ways to teach the sight words that are necessary for understanding normal prose in the quirky, exception-ridden language that is English. The presenter will show, not just tell, how teachers can walk students through each step of the early-reading process. Participants will be given tasks to help them “channel” their students and “do” many of the demonstrated oral exercises as if they were students themselves. These tasks will involve pronouncing the different vowel and consonant sounds, associating phonemes with graphemes and with pictures, “walking through” the sound-blending process, ear-training for distinguishing different vowel sounds, and recognizing diagraphs, diphthongs, and suffixes. In summary, the presentation demonstrates techniques for helping students learn to decode with automaticity and to get meaning, richness, and pleasure from what they read.

**HITS Different - Impact of Student Perspective & Innovation on High Impacting Teaching Strategies**

**Presented By: Dr. Appajosula Rao**

Through history, Academia has explored various methods of effective instruction, anywhere from Modeling to Interactive Instruction to Scaffolded Instruction, and so on. Overtime, many methods have been either antiquated or modified to adjust to the demands of current generations. Furthermore, when considering Adult Education sector, the needs of the primary demographic dictate the teaching-learning relationship. In fact, the adult learner perspective becomes the literacy framework in which the content should be built into. In this presentation, we will look at 5 of the most effective, high impact instructional strategies and apply them to the current educational climate. We will learn how to Supplement the already proven, high impact instructional strategies, with innovative approaches, to address the complex challenges that adult education student face and gain a deeper understanding on what the actual student perspective may look like.

1) Contextualized Learning, prior knowledge activation and project-based learning

2) Fostering Critical Thinking and Logical Thinking through reverse engineering

3) Reinforcing Self Awareness, Positivity and Visualization in the classroom

4) Building confidence through Mentoring, Peer Coaching, and Reciprocal Teaching

5) Encouraging team-based learning through cooperative groups while building agency and autonomy

**Potent Strategies for Literacy Development: Supporting Adults to Become Highly Skilled Readers**

**Presented By: Dr. Clarena Larrotta and Dr. Jan Adversario**

Literacy supports personal empowerment, social integration, and human development. Thus, the presenters describe ten literacy strategies utilized by highly skilled readers. This is an interactive discussion on how minimizing cognitive load, celebrating success, and making real world connections can support adult literacy development. Conference attendees can expect literature resources, demonstration, relevant examples, and recommendations for practice.

**Dual Enrollment and IET Models in Healthcare – Pharmacy Technician Training**

**Presented By: Mitch Rosin and Deanna Crosson**

Dual enrollment and Integrated Education and Training (IET) models are an important program offering that meets the needs of diverse learners. This session will provide an overview of both models with a focus on Pharmacy Technician as one of the fastest growing career pathways in the country. Session topics include the three components of IET: adult education and literacy, workforce preparation, and workforce training, as well as an overview of how dual enrollment in a high school equivalency program along with pharmacy technician training can lead to employment in a high-demand and high-paying occupation. Aztec Software’s digital course offerings will be used as a model.

Aztec’s Pharmacy Technician training program prepares learners to take the national assessment needed to become a licensed Pharmacy Technician. This online preparation series is ideal for dual enrollment for high school diploma/equivalency candidates and/or for IET programs focusing on healthcare career pathways. This program prepares students for the PCTE national exam.

**Case Management for ITP Students: A Tiered Approach for Low- and High- Language Level Participants Part 2**

**Presented By: Lisa Carlo**

Internationally Trained Professionals as a subset of English Language Learners have specialized needs compared with the generalized population. Providers can start to serve these individuals where they are at through case management and provide customized advising, career exploration, workplace preparation, digital skills, document translation and evaluation along with other intensive services. Part 1 will focus on entry and intermediate level services while Part 2 will focus on advanced level services.