Los Angeles Unified School District Implements Evidence-Based Reading Instruction

By Marjorie Schneider

Until we were introduced to Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI), reading classes in LAUSD’s Division of Adult and Career Education (DACE) were “reading labs.” Students read materials at graded levels, worked alone, answered comprehension and vocabulary questions, and were expected to progress. Our reading program was known as the “black hole.” EBRI has changed all that. Since 2009, ninety-four DACE reading teachers have been trained in Evidence-Based Reading Instruction, thanks to our collaboration with the CALPRO EBRI Institute. This means that, with rare exceptions, every Adult Basic Education (ABE) reading class is led by an EBRI-trained teacher.

Despite this comprehensive effort to prepare our teachers, we still have challenges to overcome before we can confidently say that every reading classroom is an EBRI classroom. Some teachers chose to stay with their familiar older methods of teaching reading. Some instructors did no diagnostic reading assessments, basing instructional decisions solely on TABE scores. A good number of teachers incorporated only those EBRI pieces that they felt competent to teach. As one teacher noted:

I am strong in implementing a plan when it comes to vocabulary and building fluency skills. Though I am highly committed to the comprehension and alphabetic pieces, I find it is still a challenge to navigate through them in a consistent manner . . .

This tells me I’m avoiding them.

Clearly, there was a need for further guided practice with feedback.

In response to this piecemeal implementation and to reinforce the CALPRO Institute’s EBRI training, DACE developed the EBRI Community of Practice (CoP).

Since November of 2013, the DACE EBRI CoP has met for nine face-to-face meetings and online. As Dace’s ABE Adviser and EBRI Trainer, I plan and facilitate the sessions. The ambiance is welcoming and respectful; participants freely share and reflect on their EBRI successes and challenges, and work together to demystify EBRI. I create future sessions from their identified challenges.

Continued on page 14
Director's Message

College and Career Readiness Standards: Changing the Way We Teach

By Mariann Fedele-McLeod, CALPRO Director

The College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), released by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education in 2013, is having an impact on adult education nationally. States are working to integrate the new standards at the program level, and to provide professional development for teachers and program administrators who will be revising and updating curriculum. The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education provided three training events around the country last year, and a number of California adult educators attended. Many of those attendees are now engaged with CALPRO in providing professional development on this topic to the field.

In this issue of CALPROgress, you will read about the new CALPRO Community of Practice (CoP) and the shifts in instruction that the standards promote. This CoP is being offered this spring in the northern part of the state at Pittsburg Adult School in the Bay Area and in the south at Poway Adult School near San Diego. Jayme Adelson-Goldstein, one of the initial trainers for this module, writes about what is included in the training and how programs can expect to benefit by hosting the CoP. Sue Pon writes about how the standards are affecting English as a Second Language (ESL) and Family Literacy instruction at Oakland Adult and Community Education, and Raine Bumatay relates the process that Fresno Adult School is using to update math instruction to address the standards. Molly Sundar provides some examples of how to apply the standards to Adult Basic Education (ABE) instruction when teaching a unit on job skills.

This year, CALPRO is developing a second CoP on CCRS implementation. That CoP will be piloted in June in Sacramento. Local programs that would like to send a team to the pilot are invited to apply (see sidebar). After the pilot, the materials will be revised and potential trainers will be trained on the content in September 2015.

CALPRO has been offering professional development opportunities on evidence-based strategies for teaching reading and writing for the last several years. Marjorie Schneider, in our cover story, describes how the Division of Adult and Career Education in Los Angeles is implementing Evidence-Based Reading Instruction, and how it has positively affected learner outcomes like level completion and CASAS data. Kristi Reyes wrote an article for the ESL program newsletter at MiraCosta College in Oceanside, reprinted here, describing some of the strategies she learned in the CALPRO Evidence-Based Writing Instruction CoP.

This issue will provide instructors and administrators with an overview and practical ideas for implementing CCRS. As the field prepares for the implementation of the new federal authorizing legislation for adult education, we need to focus more closely on preparing learners for a future that includes employment at a family-sustaining wage, and further education and job training that require higher skill levels. We invite you to engage with us in the conversation that will lead us to success on this path.

CCRS Implementation Pilot

CALPRO’s new Community of Practice on implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards will be piloted with a small group of program teams in Sacramento in June 2015. Programs close enough to drive to Sacramento that would like to send a team to the pilot are invited to apply by contacting Marian Thacher, mthacher@air.org.

Upcoming Events of Interest

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>CASAS Summer Institute</td>
<td>June 23–25, 2015</td>
<td>San Diego, CA</td>
<td><a href="https://www.casas.org/training-and-support/SI">https://www.casas.org/training-and-support/SI</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ACSA Leadership Summit</td>
<td>Late Fall 2015</td>
<td>Location TBA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.acsa.org/LeadershipSummit/">http://www.acsa.org/LeadershipSummit/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>EL Civics Conferences</td>
<td>2015–16</td>
<td>Location TBA</td>
<td><a href="http://www2.casas.org/online_registration/">http://www2.casas.org/online_registration/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CAEAA Annual Conference</td>
<td>Winter 2016</td>
<td>Long Beach, CA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.caeaa.org/events/index.htm">http://www.caeaa.org/events/index.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>OTAN Technology and Distance Learning Symposium</td>
<td>March 11–12, 2016</td>
<td>Location TBA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.otan.us/tdlsymposium/">http://www.otan.us/tdlsymposium/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>COABE National Conference</td>
<td>April 11–14, 2016</td>
<td>Dallas, TX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coabe.org/">http://www.coabe.org/</a></td>
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A Chance to Dive Deep into College and Career Readiness Standards

By Jayme Adelson-Goldstein

In a season of pumpkins and holiday preparations, thirty-five adult education professionals chose to help pilot the first module of CALPRO’s newest professional development opportunity: Diving Deep: College and Career Readiness Standards.

Serving as an introduction to the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), the five-week-long community of practice (CoP) gives participants time to delve into the shifts that underlie the standards and to discuss their concerns and questions about the role of the CCRS in their programs. Naturally, the chief aims of this module are to help adult learners reach their goals and increase their learning gains, as is the case for all CALPRO professional development opportunities. The Diving Deep CoP achieves these aims by building adult educators’ awareness of the key shifts in instruction that are part of the English Language Arts (ELA) and Math CCRS, and by encouraging these educators to take this information back to their programs.

To participate in the module, schools send teams of one administrator and two or more instructors. Ideally, a team reflects its program offerings (Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, English as a Second Language [ESL], High School Equivalency, etc.) and team members have some time to meet and discuss assignments, as needed. The module is facilitated by two trainers, one focusing on ELA and one focusing on Math. This team facilitation makes it easy to provide feedback during the online discussions and to provide tasks that target participants’ areas of interest in the face-to-face sessions.

The five school teams participating in the October to November 2014 pilot were from Elk Grove Community and Adult Education, Fairfield-Suisun Adult School, Oakland Adult and Career Education, Roseville Adult School, and Stockton School for Adults. In addition to the school team participants, ten adult educators from other school sites attended as part of the Training of Trainers for this module. Those educators represented Fresno Adult School, Martinez Adult Education, MiraCosta Community College, Los Angeles Unified School District Division of Adult and Career Education, Mt. Diablo Adult Education, Pittsburg Adult Education Center, and San Diego Community College District Continuing Education.

The CoP begins online, with participants asynchronously introducing themselves and reviewing the role of standards in general and the CCRS in particular. Soon, however, everyone gathers in the first of two face-to-face sessions, interacting and collaborating in real time on tasks such as analyzing the complexity of a text or determining the mathematical area of focus for each level. Both of the two face-to-face sessions and the interim period between these sessions focus on one of the shifts in both ELA and Math. In the last week of the CoP, following the second face-to-face session, teams develop a fact sheet that identifies the key concepts underpinning the shifts’ role in the CCRS. This culminating task allows all participants to frame the information from the module in a way that will be most meaningful for their programs and will help them anticipate questions that their colleagues may have. (See p. 4 for examples of fact sheets created during the pilot.)

Thanks to the feedback and hard work of the pilot participants, the Diving Deep module was revised and finalized in time to launch in March 2015. Are you interested in Diving Deep into the CCRS? Contact CALPRO to learn how.

The following are key advances, or shifts, in instruction that are an integral part of the English Language Arts CCRS for adult education:

1. Complexity: engaging with complex text and its academic vocabulary
2. Evidence: reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from both literary and informational text
3. Knowledge: building knowledge through content-rich informational text

The Math CCRS are also founded on three key shifts:

1. Focus: focusing strongly where the standards focus
2. Coherence: designing learning around coherent progressions from level to level
3. Rigor: pursuing conceptual understanding, procedural skill and fluency, and application—all with equal intensity


Biography: Jayme Adelson-Goldstein was the cofacilitator (along with Wendy Heard) on the pilot of the Dive Deep module. Jayme provides face-to-face workshops, webinars, and online instruction on numerous adult ESL topics and is the cocreator, with Catherine Green, of CALPRO’s Virtual Workroom for Multilevel ESL Instructors (http://www.calpro-online.org/VirtualWorkroom/default.asp). She teaches in Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages’s certificate program and works as a curriculum consultant and professional development specialist for several agencies throughout the United States.
College and Career Readiness Standards: A Tool for Alignment

By Sue Pon

“What are the texts worth reading?”
“What are the questions worth answering?”

This is a new mantra that is repeating in my head. These are simple questions to ask, but they make me pause to think about how to focus our students in High School Equivalency (HSE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

• Would a student have to read the text to answer the question?
• Does the reader have to dig deep to answer the question?
• Is the question worth spending class time and student attention on?

These questions are the immediate “take-aways” from the CALPRO College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) Communities of Practice Pilot that I bring to teachers in the Oakland Adult and Career Education (OACE) program.

Oakland HSE courses focus on preparing students for the GED exam. GED teachers are asking students text-dependent questions in alignment with the CCRS and in preparation for the new GED examination. Evidence-based writing is also a shared standard between the CCRS and the new GED examination, and more commonalities are emerging as the GED teachers are looking deeper into the CCRS.

ESL Family Literacy teachers are focusing on nonfiction reading and text-dependent questions in alignment with the Common Core State Standards. ESL Family Literacy teachers highlight the fact that the CCRS comes directly from the Common Core, as they connect the instruction of parents with that of their children. As part of their EL Civics unit, parents are creating booklets with text-dependent questions to use at home when reading with their children.

On a programmatic level, the CCRS provides a tool, as well as challenges, for alignment within the field of adult education.

• The rubrics of the CCR anchor standards provide tools to coordinate curriculum and instruction among ESL, Adult Basic Education (ABE), and GED classes. Teachers and students can see the progression of skills and identify a student’s readiness for the next level. There is also a preliminary alignment of CASAS ESL and ABE levels with the National Reporting System and CCR adult education levels.
• As AB86 Regional Consortia work to coordinate adult education services, there is a need to align the educational systems among K–12, Adult Education, and the Community Colleges. The CCRS can facilitate transitions and program integration by guiding the coordination of assessment, curriculum, and instruction.

• A critical piece for the CCRS as a tool for alignment is assessment. Do adult education standardized assessments align with the CCRS?

As we all begin using the CCRS, our instruction will become better aligned with each other within Adult Education and more aligned with the community college academic and career and technical education courses in better preparing our students for a productive future. We will also, we hope, become better at addressing “What are the questions worth answering?” We will focus on the critical skills needed to succeed and not waste a minute of instructional time.

Biography: Sue Pon is the administrator of Oakland Adult and Community Education and has served as assistant principal and program facilitator. She has been an adult educator for more than twenty years and has contributed to building the Parent Education program and the Community-Based English Tutoring program, and she is an author of the widely used ESL video and workbook series, Sharing English Together.

The Path to Revising Math Curriculum

By Raine Bumatay

CALPRO provides professional development on the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) in which participants learn relevant strategies and methods to align and implement the CCRS. In the mathematics breakout sessions, participants examine the CCR math standards and create exercises related to various standards.

In addition to participating in the CALPRO CCRS pilot training, I was able to attend the College and Career Readiness Standards Implementation Institute in New Orleans, where participants experienced a daunting task of reflecting on planning challenges. At each table in the room, participants sorted, organized, and determined the most essential standards for each adult education level. After listening to all perspectives, each group chose the most essential standards and compared the list with a prepared list of competencies by grade level.

I brought this information back to our instructors at Fresno Adult School, where we served about 1,500 ABE students and 1,000 adult secondary students last year. Math teachers already are challenged by the need to condense thirteen years of K–12 math instruction into one school year. The CCRS narrows down math skills for each level of adult education—the essential standards to focus on for Adult Secondary Education assessments, as well as the most necessary for higher education and careers. The CCRS also provides a framework for teachers when developing curriculum maps, common lessons, and assessments.

One of the first things we did was to survey our math instructors regarding professional development needs. More than half of the teachers surveyed expressed a need for content support in mathematics. We worked with the Fresno Pacific University to create a math instruction class for teachers. Participants would earn six units of postbaccalaureate credit over two years. The syllabus was organized around the strands of mathematics and aligned with the Common Core Readiness Standards: Number, Geometry, Algebra, and Statistics and Probability. The class, conveniently hosted at Fresno Adult School, allowed participants to experience modeled lessons that included the use of technology. Content instruction by strands familiarized teachers with the CCRS and made planning instruction for students a much less arduous task.

In addition to these college courses, we provided technology training for our teachers and embarked on revising our curriculum. We moved from an independent study model to focused math classes with direct instruction in all four topic areas, and teachers created common assessments based on our textbooks.

Although enrollment has decreased in our ABE program, we continue to see the pattern of fewer students earning more benchmark points. For example, in 2011, 1,559 students earned a total of 356 benchmarks by midyear; 23 percent of students earned points. This year, 653 students have earned 315 benchmarks by midyear; 49 percent of students earned points.

Biography: Raine Bumatay is the administrator of English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, and High School Equivalency at Fresno Adult School. She has been on the editorial panel for the California Math Council and on the state Instructional Materials Review Panel for mathematics. She came to Adult Education four years ago from high school teaching and administration, and has been active in reconfiguring High School Equivalency instruction to match the new CCRS and GED 2014.
Using thematic units around job topics as a vehicle for English instruction can be highly motivating to students who come to adult school in the hope of obtaining a better job. How can we increase the rigor of these units to incorporate the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)? Pages 9 and 10 of Pimentel’s seminal 2013 report College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education summarize three key shifts in our approach to content that undergird all the English Language Arts and Literacy CCRS standards. By examining these three shifts, we can find ways to adapt our current lessons.

**Select Complex Nonfiction Texts**

The CCRS demonstrate a shift toward more complex, content-rich, nonfiction texts because that is what students are asked to comprehend in college and career settings. Instead of lecturing to transmit the target job skill, you can increase complexity by having students read an informational text. This also creates an opportunity for you to teach an explicit reading or writing skill. For example, students could read about interviews and then practice identifying the central idea.

**Teach Academic Vocabulary**

Academic vocabulary is stressed by the CCRS because it is used in a variety of scholastic contexts. Be strategic when selecting vocabulary to teach. For instance, when students read about résumé writing, it is more valuable to emphasize “objective” than “curriculum vitae” because students will see “objective” again in different academic domains. There are a variety of word lists detailing the words that appear most frequently in the academic corpus, such as Coxhead’s Academic Word List (http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/resources/academicwordlist).*

**Emphasize Evidence**

The CCRS emphasizes the importance of evidence from text—not just personal experience—in reading, writing, and speaking. Guide your students to use textual evidence. For example, after students read about soft skills, facilitate a debate about which skill is most important. Initially, students may cite personal experience, but encourage them to also use the text itself as evidence. Dig deeper still and ask them to provide evidence from other items the class has read. Culminate with a writing assignment.

**Conclusion**

By keeping these three major shifts in mind, you can increase the rigor of your existing lessons to satisfy the requirements of the CCRS and better prepare your students to be successful in their future college and career experiences.

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*Resources cited in this article are included as examples and are not endorsed by CALPRO.*
In our training as ESL teachers, we learn about the importance of teaching the writing process and how it gives students the skills necessary to tackle writing tasks beyond our classes, but as grammar aficionados, it is all too easy to slip into the grammar editing mode when providing feedback to students on their writing. Also, we find that our students are most concerned with this aspect of their writing, and rightly so. However, research shows that students do not really learn from corrections and often times do not know how to correct their errors when they are pointed out to them.

We can help students value fluency and accuracy and make them more confident independent writers by planning scaffolded lessons that include all stages of the writing process, teaching writing implicitly (having students learn by doing) and explicitly (overtly teaching rules, steps, conventions), and employing the gradual release of responsibility model.

In order to refresh my memory and methods regarding writing instruction and be a better writing teacher, last fall I completed the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project's (CALPRO) Community of Practice: Evidence-Based Writing Instruction, a free two-month certificate program that including online readings and discussion, lesson planning, two face-to-face Saturday meetings at the Los Angeles Unified School District Central Office, and valuable networking, idea-sharing, and reflecting.

I would like to share some of the take-aways I gained from the program: activities and ideas to consider for each phase of the writing process.

Ideally, we would give plenty of time to each step of the writing process in our lesson planning, but due to the time constraints of eight-week terms, I have often heard teachers lament that they would like to be able to devote an entire term to writing alone. Of course, our level classes are integrated skills, and students come with needs for honing their other language skills. A possible solution? Go for quality and quantity. How?

1. Include fewer revised paragraphs so that students leave a class with fewer (two or three) high-quality, revised paragraphs that they worked on the entire term, of which they can be proud and from which they have gained the tools necessary to approach future writing tasks.

2. Request an in-class writing consultant who can confer with students on first drafts and can guide students to self-correct in the editing stage.

3. Include nongraded, nonrevised writing assignments, such as journal entries or discussion boards, as often as every day to get students into the habit of writing and which do not require written teacher comments beyond a question, a word of encouragement, or a checkmark. These are good opening and closing lesson activities.

Finally, while there is a common misconception that teaching writing, the most difficult skill to master in any language, should be reserved for higher levels (intermediate and above), writing instruction should indeed begin at the lowest levels. The process may run faster given that students are limited in what they can produce and the tasks we have students do at lower levels tends to be more controlled writing (Language Experience Approach, filling in blanks and copying, and writing answers to questions, for example); however, the sooner students are introduced to the process of writing, the better.

I definitely recommend the many professional development opportunities CALPRO provides. For more information, see the calendar of events (http://www.calpro-online.org/rc/rrc/calendar.asp?rrc=RRC&page=--calendar) for descriptions and registration, as well as the page on online professional learning (http://www.calpro-online.org/onlineCourses.asp), which include webinars, online workshops, and self-directed courses.

Research-Based Tips for Providing Feedback on Lower-Order Concerns

- When possible, provide oral feedback as in a one-to-one conference session. Ask student to read the paper aloud. Students will often locate and correct their own errors.

- When providing written feedback, don’t mark all errors—choose what you will mark based on whatever grammatical features the assignment lends itself to (verb tense, subject–verb agreement, word order)

- Decide on type of feedback: Indirect feedback (such as a checkmark in the margin for an error on a line of text or circling errors) or—as research indicates is more effective—Direct feedback (a shortlist of editing symbols such as SP, C, T, AG, to not overwhelm students). Whichever you choose, have a consistent system of marking and coding errors and teach mini-lessons to provide students’ chances to learn and practice using written feedback to self-correct.

- Consider providing direct corrections only at lowest levels and when the error correction is complex and beyond the student’s current level of production.

Biography: Kristi Reyes has taught ESL to adults in San Diego County since 1998 in a variety of programs. She currently teaches advanced and vocational ESL in the noncredit program at MiraCosta College in Oceanside, California.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Process Phase*</th>
<th>How-to: Implementations for Improved Writing Instruction</th>
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| **Prewriting**          | • Include brainstorming sessions on the topic for idea and vocabulary generation and to connect oral language to written: lists, graphic organizers (charts, tables, diagrams, clustering, mind maps—examples), or outlines.  
• Have students do freewriting or quick writes to get all ideas on paper without concern for mechanics.  
• Use paragraph frames as appropriate (effective with low-level students and higher level students when the assignment is more complex). |
| **Writing**             | • Provide models (not just perfect ones but also average and mediocre ones for student evaluation and discussion).  
• Realize that a good paragraph need not be defined by a set number of sentences; differentiate the instruction for students who have better writing skills. |
| **Sharing and Revising**| • Conduct peer review sessions with read-alouds, providing a form or checklist, or conduct writing workshops in which, as a whole class, students evaluate how classmates’ paragraphs (starting with most confident students writers, getting their permission to use their work with or without their names revealed) do or do not fulfill an assignment’s requirements. These sessions build community, engage students in critical thinking, and provide students the opportunity to see classmates’ approaches to the topic and task and view other models.  
• Teacher provides feedback using specific questions and suggestions for strategies students can use to revise content and organization (higher order concerns). |
| **Sharing and Editing** | • Duplicate student sentences that have the most commonly repeated/most frequently committed errors on a handout for an error-correction session followed by grammar minilesson(s).  
• Include sentence-combining activities for intermediate-advanced level students to learn how to compose more complex sentence structures.  
• Help students learn to monitor/self-correct through read-alouds, self- and peer assessment checklists (without peers doing editing or marking classmates’ papers), error correction charts, and/or editing marks that are explicitly taught and practiced.  
• Provide feedback focusing on only a few errors (the most egregious because they interfere with intended meaning or the most commonly committed) which, when revised, would lend the paragraph the most clarity in terms of mechanics. |
| **Postwriting**         | • Use rubric scoring for final summative assessment and feedback.  
• Have students reflect and review: compose a reflective letter on strengths, improvements, and plans to improve further; a checklist of “I can . . .” statements (*I can name the elements of a paragraph . . . brainstorm, plan, and organize my ideas before beginning to write . . . compose a topic sentence, write and revise a paragraph in English . . . correct my spelling and grammar errors . . .*), grammar review, vocabulary building activities. |

*Source for Writing Process stage definitions: CALPRO EBWI CoP Session 2 handout, Ronna Magy.*
Resources for Further Reading

- Daily Teaching Tools: Free Graphic Organizers for Teaching Writing  
  http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/free-graphic-organizers-w.html
- Education Place Graphic Organizers  
  http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/
- Gradual Release of Responsibility in Writing Instruction  
  http://www.bcps.org/offices/cls/writing/secondary/writing_instruction.html
- MiraCosta College Noncredit ESL SLO Writing Assessments  
  department lesson plans, materials, and rubrics  
  http://www.miracosta.edu/instruction/continuingeducation/esl/slowritingassessments.html
- Project WRITE Graphic Organizers and Outlines  
  https://project writemsu.wikispaces.com/file/view/graphic+organizers.pdf
- ReadWriteThink lesson plans and printouts (graphic organizers, peer- and self-assessment checklists and forms, paragraph frames, rubrics), videos, student interactive, and strategy guides for teaching writing  
  http://www.readwritethink.org/
- Sentence Combining in an ESL Writing Program  
  http://wac.colostate.edu/jbw/v1n3/davidson.pdf
- Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL) Just Write! Guide and Fact Sheets  
  https://teal.ed.gov/resources
- Text Structure Frames  
- Thinkport Graphic Organizers  
  http://www.thinkport.org/technology/template.tp

Professional Development Anytime, Anywhere

**By CALPRO Staff**

Why not take advantage of professional development online? You can participate in an online course on a Saturday morning with your morning coffee or on a Sunday night with a hot cocoa or a nightcap as you get ready for the new week. You supply the cocoa; we provide the online learning.

**College and Career Readiness Standards—Newest Self-Directed Course**

CALPRO already offers seven self-directed courses that you can take entirely at your own pace. Topics include Effective Strategies for Writing Instruction, Math Instructional Strategies, and Learner Goal Setting. Beginning in April 2015, CALPRO will make available a new course, Introduction to College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). This course will take you through the three key instructional shifts indicated in the CCRS for Math and for English Language Arts (ELA). CALPRO self-directed courses are outstanding resources for very independent learners or adult educators with an irregular schedule for professional learning. For more sustained and focused professional learning, team up with one or more colleagues from your program and take this course together, using it as a springboard for looking at needed changes in your agency’s programs and curricula. Register for any of the eight courses by locating its title on the CALPRO Event Calendar (http://www.calpro-online.org/rrc/RRC/calendar.asp).

**Facilitated Four-Week Online Courses**

These courses run for a specific four-week period and have a facilitator. From our list of fourteen course titles, each year CALPRO offers a varied selection to address priorities in the field. Topics include Lesson Planning, Learner Persistence, Postsecondary Transitions, and Integrated Education and Training. These courses fill up fast; so when you see one announced that you are interested in, don’t wait to register. Registration, limited to thirty participants, is usually reached in a couple of weeks after registration opens. Plan to spend three to four hours per week in a course, and upon completion, you will receive a certificate for fourteen hours of professional development.

This summer, there will be two online courses offered in July, Evidence-Based Writing Instruction for the English as a Second Language (ESL) Class is a new online course that
was offered for the first time in summer 2014. Participants will explore a variety of strategies for teaching writing to non-native speakers. There is also an Adult Basic Education version of this course that will be offered again soon.

The second course available in July is Effective Lesson Planning. Each part of a lesson is reviewed and discussed, with examples provided, and participants will end up with a lesson plan of their own based on an effective lesson structure, including the use of backward design. See the CALPRO Event Calendar (http://www.calpro-online.org/rrc/RRC/calendar.asp?rrc=R-RC&page=calendar) to register.

**Electronic Community of Practice**

CALPRO’s electronic Community of Practice (e-CoP) is a community of adult educators that supports peer-to-peer professional learning. The focus is on increasing the rigor of instruction and improving student learning. The community’s online hub is located at [http://calproecop.groupsite.com](http://calproecop.groupsite.com). Committed to reaching higher together, e-CoP members engage in ongoing conversations on a variety of topics related to high school completion, teaching multilevel ESL, using rubrics, applying CCRS, among many others. Members can also initiate conversations to explore other professional interests, concerns, and questions. Two webinars will be offered by the e-CoP in May 2015, one on alphabetics and one on fluency in teaching reading.

Through its website, e-CoP members can also share lesson plans and other resources, add professional learning events to the community calendar, and reach out to one another for advice and information. In addition, the e-CoP sponsors webinars on topics of interest to teachers and administrators. Past webinar topics have included Using Rubrics with ESL Learners, Analyzing ESL Comprehension Questions, Developing Students’ Problem-Solving Skills, Integrating Basic Skills with Job Training, and Direct, Explicit Instruction. (Archived sessions can be accessed through the e-CoP webinar page of the Video Library on the CALPRO’s website.)

Two new webinars will be offered in May 2015. Alphabetics: A Focus on Word Parts will be on May 8, and Strategies for Building Reading Fluency will be on May 14. Each of these webinars addresses an important component of evidence-based reading instruction. Register for these and other webinars on the CALPRO Event Calendar (http://www.calpro-online.org/rrc/RRC/calendar.asp?rrc=RRC&page=calendar). E-CoP membership is required in order to participate; membership is free, and registration takes only a few minutes. For more information, visit [http://calproecop.groupsite.com](http://calproecop.groupsite.com) or contact Catherine Green, e-CoP Manager.

**Highlights of CALPRO Activities**

*By CALPRO Staff*

**Leadership Institute**

Congratulations to the CALPRO Adult Education Leadership Institute Class of 2014 graduates!

They are as follows:

- **Michael Aaron**, Beaumont Adult School
- **Giuliana Brahim Crosby**, Milpitas Adult Education—Elmwood Correctional Facility
- **Valeria Covarrubias**, East Los Angeles College
- **Jean Ellis**, Ventura Adult and Continuing Education
- **Paige Endo**, Mt. Diablo Adult Education
- **Blanca Gil**, Oxnard Adult School
- **Peter MacDonald**, Silicon Valley Adult Education
- **Harkirat Mann**, East Side Adult Education
- **Carvette McCalib**, Monterey Adult School
- **Angelica Mendoza**, Milpitas Adult Education
- **Carol Otjens**, Grossmont Adult School, Health Occupations Center
- **Teresa Palzkill**, Poway Adult School
- **Barbara Pongsrikul**, San Diego Continuing Education
- **Leslie Quinones**, San Diego Continuing Education
- **Karyn Crowe Ruiz**, Visalia Adult School
- **Alexandra Scott**, Palo Alto Adult School
- **Julio Segura**, Delano Adult School
- **Thomas Smith**, LAUSD Division of Adult and Career Education
- **Ami Takanashi**, Rowland Adult and Community Education

The one-year leadership development program is offered to practicing administrators new to adult education, providing them effective, high-quality management and leadership skills to enhance their ability to operate adult education programs. These graduates join the more than six hundred adult educators who have participated in the leadership institute since its inception in 1985. We wish them continued success as they move forward in their careers.
In early November 2014, more than forty nominations for the 2014–15 leadership institute were received. Of these nominations, twenty-four were selected for the Class of 2015 Adult Education Leadership Institute. The participants met in December 2014 for the first two-day session of the institute and again in February 2015 for the second two-day session, and they will meet again in June for the third two-day session of the institute. The Class of 2015 is as follows:

Wesley Braddock, Sweetwater Union High School District (UHSD)
Randy Clem, California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation—Kern Valley Adult School at Kern Valley State Prison
Valerie Clifford, Campbell UHSD
Mary Coggins, Lompoc Unified School District (USD)
Monica Diaz-Sanchez, El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center (NEC)
David Finley, Redlands USD
Annette Gross, Murrieta Valley USD
Betty Harrington, Fairfield-Suisun USD
Patty Hurtt, Poway USD
Sheri Jensen, Eureka City Schools
Sheila Joseph, Martinez USD
Rhonda Koff, Folsom Cordova USD
Corinne Layton, San Diego Community College District (CCD)
Todd Livingstone, Pajaro Valley USD
Danny Lockwood, Pittsburg USD
Leo Lynch, Los Angeles USD
Albert Michael, Bassett USD
Jennifer Owens, Grossmont UHSD
Angelica Ramirez, Los Angeles City College
Sylvia Robles, Hamilton USD
Sheryl Sanchez, Sweetwater UHSD
Grace Sauser, Davis Joint USD
Emilio Urioste, Burbank USD
Andres Uyeda, Stockton USD

Professional Learning Community Institute 2015

The Adult Education Office of the California Department of Education and CALPRO are pleased to announce the 2015 CALPRO Professional Learning Communities Institute (the PLC Institute). Professional learning communities focus on establishing collaborative teams that select key standards, employ formative assessments, and differentiate classroom instruction to achieve student learning gains. The essential questions that drive a PLC are as follows:

1. What do we want students to learn? (planning and pacing instruction)
2. How will we know if they have learned it? (collecting data)
3. What do we do if they do not learn it? (intervention)
4. What do we do if they do learn it? (enrichment)

The goal of the PLC Institute is to provide agencies with the framework and training necessary to develop and sustain a PLC process of school improvement focusing on student results through embedded professional learning. The PLC Institute prepares teams of school or agency representatives to establish results-oriented and process-driven teacher groups that collaborate to identify student learning challenges, set learning goals associated with these challenges, and collectively identify the instructional and assessment strategies that most effectively help students meet the goals.

The following educators completed the PLC Institute in 2014:

Xuan-Mai Ackerman, Simi Valley Adult School
Dr. Sharon Brockman, Mt. Diablo Adult Education
Leslie Carter, Grossmont Adult School
Holly Correa, Simi Valley Adult School
Paige Endo, Mt. Diablo Adult Education
Vivan Ibarra, South Bay Adult School
Gale Lee, South Bay Adult School
Lupe Lozano, El Monte-Rosemead Adult School
Josephine Majul, El Monte-Rosemead Adult School
Jackie Memberto-Kelly, South Bay Adult School
Jeff Meredith, Foothills Adult School
Veronica Montes, Culver City Adult School
Wendy Murphy, Mt. Diablo Adult Education
Jennifer Owens, Foothills Adult School
Todd Parizo, Mt. Diablo Adult Education
Tawnya Richards, Grossmont Adult School
Leila Rosenberg, Culver City Adult School
Joy Rosenberg, Culver City Adult School
Susan Taylor, Grossmont Adult School
Robyn Wiggins, Grossmont Adult School

In 2015, the Institute will be held in two sessions, in May and October, over a total of five days, and will include a preliminary webinar and online learning assignments. Applications were due on April 3, 2015. The May session will provide agencies with the framework and the training needed to craft plans and start a PLC process of school improvement. This process will focus on student learning through ongoing professional development embedded in the agency’s school calendar. Participating schools are expected to use the intervening time between the May and October sessions to take action on plans to lay the groundwork for PLC implementation for the 2015–16 school year. The two days in October will be devoted to continuing training, feedback, evaluation, and problem solving in support of implementation.

Check the CALPRO Event Calendar (http://www.calpro-online.org/rrc/RRC/calendar.asp?rrc=RRC&page=calendar%0D) for the training dates.
Emerging Professional Development Priorities for Adult English Language Learner Practitioners

By CALPRO Staff

For more than fifteen years, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) of the U.S. Department of Education has provided a series of initiatives, assistance, and professional development to states to promote effective teaching of English language learners (ELLs). One of OCTAE’s most recent efforts is the Literacy Information and Communications System (LINCS) English as a Second Language Professional (ESL Pro) project, led by American Institutes for Research (AIR). The purpose of this project is to help states increase their capacity to prepare teachers to meet the needs of adult ELLs, and to help all ELLs achieve the educational outcomes that will lead to academic and career success.

As part of the project, AIR and its partners are developing several resources that form the basis of three thematic suites of material. Each of these suites is identified and described below.

1. Meeting the Language Needs of Today’s Adult English Language Learner

Adult ESL instructors and programs play a vital role in developing ELLs’ linguistic competence, critical thinking, and academic readiness skills through increased rigor of instruction and heightened expectations for all learners, moving them beyond survival English and better preparing them for postsecondary education and career training.

2. Integrating Digital Literacy into English Language Instruction

Adult learners fall along a continuum of digital skills, including the language, technology, and problem-solving skills required for participation in everyday digital contexts. To support adult ELLs’ enhancement of digital literacy, it is important for instructors to use technology in language learning environments in order to extend learning opportunities and promote learner autonomy.

3. Connecting Adult ESL to Regional High-Growth Career Pathways through Contextualization

The newly passed Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act underscores the importance of linking Adult Basic Education (ABE) with vocational training. Contextualization of instruction related to career pathways can accelerate the transition of ABE students to training and work, and several program models are appropriate for use with immigrants with limited proficiency in English.

The online resources that will comprise the thematic suites include short issue briefs that provide an overview of key considerations on each topic; companion learning resources that synthesize and expand seminal LINCS resources and illustrate these topics in action in classrooms and programs; and online training modules that provide options for in-depth study. As they are produced, these resources will be available free of charge through the LINCS Resource Collection.

The project has also established teacher user groups to provide expert reviews of ESL-focused Open Education Resources (OER), a selection of which relates to the preceding thematic suites. OER are digital teaching and learning materials of all types—including text, videos, games, and assessments—that are freely available and adaptable for use in any educational setting for all types of learners. Additional information about these products will be disseminated to the field and will be available through the LINCS Resource Collection. If you wish to be notified as materials become available, join the LINCS Adult ELL group to receive updates on this and other ESL-related projects (http://www.calpro-online.org/rrc/RRC/calendar.asp?rrc=RRC&page=calendar).1

Update from the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network

Technology Training and Integration

The Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN) offers both online and face-to-face workshops. All workshops are free! New topics this year, based on constituent feedback, include the following:

- Open Educational Resources and Adult Education
- Soft Skills for Career Success
- Using iPads in Adult Education
- Citizenship Preparation Technology Resources

1 This information is provided by CALPRO and does not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Office of Career, Technology, and Adult Education or the U.S. Department of Education.
To find and register for these and other technology-focused workshops, visit http://www.caadultedtraining.org. You can search specifically for OTAN trainings using the “Filter events” boxes on the left side of the screen; select “OTAN” from the “By Sponsor” dropdown menu.

**Pilot Projects**

**GED Academy Seat License**
On the basis of input from our OTAN advisers, OTAN purchased 1,000 GED Academy seat licenses. Twenty percent of the licenses were designated for rural counties, with the remaining 80 percent assigned to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) II agencies according to the number of adult secondary education students served. All licenses were claimed within fifteen minutes of the opening of the online application. Currently, there are thirty-seven agencies participating in the pilot, with more than 1,100 students served. Agencies participating in the seat license pilot will collect data on enrollment, completion rates, and method of content access. Licenses are active until June 19, 2015.

**Community Model of Online Learning**
Baldwin Park, Fairfield-Suisun, and Torrance Adult Schools were selected via a competitive application process. Pilot goals include the following:

1. Initiating and/or enhancing agency use of online and blended learning opportunities for adult learners
2. Decreasing the amount of time learners spend in remediation courses to complete a high school diploma or equivalency, or to transfer to career technical education, an apprenticeship program, community college, or an institution of higher education
3. Leveraging existing OTAN distance learning instructional resources and professional development offerings

Initial reports indicate that collaboration is already occurring across agency attendance boundaries to positively affect increasing numbers of adult learners.

**Contact Us!**
Phone: 916-228-2580, or e-mail at support@otan.us.

**The Latest from CASAS**

**Training and Technical Assistance: Spring 2015**
CASAS will continue to provide training at regional network meetings and has scheduled a variety of online “data detective”-related sessions that help agencies with data cleanup and the use of assessment results to inform instruction. Seventeen different workshops that address NRS guidelines, California payment points, data integrity, and using assessment data for instruction will be available throughout March, April, and May.

CASAS has also continued to emphasize training and technical assistance for new agencies, with more one-on-one discussion over the phone, and specific online network meetings for agencies new to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998 and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and also new to EL Civics.

**CASAS Study for High School Equivalency Exams**
CASAS is conducting studies to compare CASAS assessment results to student outcomes on the 2014 GED and the HiSET. The goal will be to provide agencies with the correlation between CASAS scores and both high school equivalency (HSE) exams, similar to the 2002 study that provided this relationship with the previous GED. This will help instructors determine a learner’s readiness to prepare for and pass the HSE exams.

**CASAS Data Portal**
The CASAS Data Portal has been updated to include Federal Table 4, persistence, and core performance data from PY 2013-14, so agencies can now review their own data and compare them both to the results of other agencies and performance statewide. The data portal allows users to search and compare local performance data with state goals and performance. The portal also enables agencies to verify past performance, including outcomes dating back to the 2004–05 year. Find the data portal at https://www.casas.org/dataportal.

**2015 CASAS Summer Institute**
Registration is now available for the 2015 CASAS Summer Institute. For information about Summer Institute (SI) registration, follow this link: https://www.casas.org/training-and-support/SI/registration. This year’s Institute will focus on implementation of the WIOA and will feature Virginia Hamilton, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Region 6 regional administrator, as the keynote speaker. Summer Institute will also emphasize several up-to-date workshops on topical issues such as Common Core State Standards and high school equivalency and, as always, include many opportunities to learn more about TOPSpro Enterprise, CASAS eTests, and California accountability.
Since 2013, we have reviewed and practiced the following:

- Diagnostic assessments in the four components of reading
- Student class assessment profiles and grouping charts
- Cooperative learning strategies
- Academic vocabulary instruction
- Comprehension strategies
- Creating long-term lesson plans with objectives
- Classroom management strategies

Despite the funding challenge of the last few years and reduction in teaching force, our EBRI CoP continues to thrive because our teachers have seen their effort and commitment pay off. Again, here is a teacher’s recent comment:

> In the reading lab, I taught the readings. . . . Many students did not improve. With EBRI, I teach the readers, and students make steady gains in reading competency and confidence.

> It feels good to have support from a group that understands the specific needs of our reading students, teachers, and classes. Thanks . . . for bringing us together. . . . I now enter my classroom more inspired, motivated, and empowered.

Our improved completer ratios confirm the steady gains our teachers have witnessed with their students. Just prior to our implementation of EBRI in our reading classrooms, in the 2008–09 school year, 25 percent of our students finished Reading 2 and 3. As of this school year to date, 42 percent of our reading students have completed their courses.

Data validate the fact that students’ increased reading ability has transferred to another type of exam as well, the CASAS. Although the .75 learning gain is not as dramatic as the gain we see with the TABE, it is considered significant because of our ever-increasing student pool.

There is obviously more work to be done. However, because of EBRI and the supporting CoP, our teachers are better prepared and more confident in their abilities to administer diagnostic assessments; they have been diligent in assessing new students in alphabets, fluency, and comprehension within the first two weeks and deliver effective evidence-based reading instruction. We plan to continue the CoP next year.

**CASAS Learning Gains**

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<th>Completer Ratio</th>
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**Biography: Marjorie Schneider** has been an educator for more than thirty years. Within the LAUSD Division of Adult and Career Education (DACE), she has taught English as a Second Language, Basic Reading and Language Arts, High School Equivalency Exam Preparation, Individualized Instruction Labs, and Evidence-Based Reading Instruction. Marjorie was part of LAUSD’s 2008 Project Star EBRI pilot program. Currently, she is the DACE Central Office Adult Basic Education Adviser and facilitator of the division’s Evidence-Based Reading Instruction Community of Practice.
Collaboration is the Key to Student Learning Gains

By John Tibbetts, EdD

The task of education, including adult education, is to teach students what they need to learn to succeed in the twenty-first century. Success includes a satisfying job that will enable them to live the American Dream: a roof over their heads, food on the table, some money to spend on favorite activities, and a feeling of success. Research and evidence tell us that there are many ways to achieve learning gains: Recent studies show mild gains from an increase of time in class, teaching techniques such as flipped learning, online learning, and Communities of Practice. But if our goal is to produce learning gains that are significant and pervasive, the evidence clearly leans toward the practice of collaboration at all levels: leadership, instructional staff, support staff, and in the classroom itself.

A study that involved twenty diverse countries (Mourished, Chijioke, and Barber 2010, quoted by Anrig 2015, p. 33) reports that “highly collaborative practices in schools are associated with unusually strong student outcomes.” Michael Fullan states in the introduction to the above study, “The power of collective capacity is that it enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things—for two reasons. One is that knowledge about effective practice becomes more widely available and accessible on a daily basis. The second reason is more powerful still—working together generates commitment” (Anrig 2015, p. 33).

The one educational practice that appears to meet these goals best, when properly implemented, is the Professional Learning Community (PLC). Some of the key role changes are cited below.

Collaborative Leadership

• A recent study of college teams identified two kinds of leadership: directive leaders and empowering leaders. Directive leaders assigned roles, gave clear directions, and set expectations for compliance. Initially, these teams outperformed the other teams. Over time, however, the directive-led teams began to plateau. The teams led by the empowering leaders shared power, encouraged dissenting opinions, and promoted shared decision making. These empowered teams, after a slow beginning, began to eclipse the directive leadership teams and continued to do so. They experienced greater collaborative learning and continuing improvement in performance (Goodwin 2015, p. 74).

The author compared these findings with an old African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” PLC leadership is best represented by empowering leaders, who take time to promote a culture of collaboration and trust.

• A second important characteristic of collaborative leadership involves community collaboration. Not only are community resources such as internships, scholarships, and grants important, but equally important is involving community citizens and business leaders in school activities. These activities might include speaking with students, demonstrating needed skills for the twenty-first century, and sponsoring student achievement.

• A third key leadership element is providing support. The leader must not only be willing to do more than affirm a belief in the PLC, but be ready to act on that belief. Those actions include providing time and resources for collaboration, insisting that instructional staff support the collaborative process, and participating, when necessary, as a member of the collaborative team.

The Instructional Collaborative Team

• First and foremost, instructors must study and practice collaborative team-building. Sharing successes is easier than sharing strategies that don’t work for some students. Understanding the process of studying student work and resolving what to do for those who learn and those who don’t requires a level of personal security, as well as team work.

• Instructional teams must be able to make certain decisions: what standards must be achieved for each course and level, what formative assessments best determine initial and continuing student performance, and what instructional strategies best serve students who succeed and those who don’t. Students and teachers can work together in designing and completing many formative procedures, such as rubrics or questioning strategies at differing levels of complexity.

The Collaborative Classroom

• For too long, some adult classrooms have continued the traditional practice of the teacher standing at the front of the class and the students responding. This practice has been especially pervasive in ESL classrooms. It is not always the fault of the teacher. One principal gave a teacher a low evaluation because she was practicing a “jigsaw” cooperative learning activity. He explained that she was not teaching, and the adult students were out of control. The effective collaborative classroom may more closely resemble a multiple-ring event. Some students may be working in groups on project-based or problem-based activities. Others who are having difficulty may be grouped for
a scaffolding activity. Others may be reading, doing research, or writing—individually, in pairs, or in small groups. The teacher is the planner, the orchestrator, the guide on the side.

- In addition, students are taking greater responsibility for their own learning: setting goals, helping others, or engaging in blended learning or advanced technology activities. Marx (2015, p. 30) observes that “blended learning will result in the need for extensive changes in how teachers teach and how students wish to learn.” Fisher and Frey (2015) have done much research and writing around the principle of a gradual release of responsibility, especially effective with students having difficulty. Students follow the four stages of gradual release of responsibility: the teacher demonstrates; the teacher and student perform the task together; students collaborate on the task; and finally, students do it alone.

**Staying on Track**

As is evident from the preceding levels of collaboration, maintaining an effective PLC can be hard work and messy, especially during the early stages. But teachers who admit to the difficulty involved are thrilled by the challenges and successes. Kotter (1996, p. 157) reminded us that “new approaches usually sink into a culture only after it’s very clear that they work and are superior to the old methods.” The successful PLC requires a watchful eye to stay focused on the goal. Distractors in adult education are (1) the large number of part-time instructors who may have other full-time responsibilities, (2) open-entry/open-exit student enrollment instead of managed enrollment, (3) the high turnover of both instructors and administrators, (4) the lack of funding provided to adult education programs, and (5) the lack of prior professional development in the PLC process.

The good news is that an increasing number of K–12 programs are becoming PLCs. It is therefore easier for district and local leadership to understand and accept the same process in adult education programs. Students who move on to college and career positions are far better prepared by a PLC process than they would be by traditional lecturing. Adult education leaders have the special responsibility to ensure that new faculty are willing to participate in the collaborative process.

> “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we have been waiting for.”
> Barack Obama (from BrainyQuote)

**References**