

First Mondays

Monthly Notes for Virginia's Adult Education Providers



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF
**TECHNOLOGY, CAREER &
ADULT EDUCATION**
OFFICE OF ADULT EDUCATION & LITERACY SERVICES

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Calendar



VAACE Conference
October 23-24, 2013
Roanoke

GED Chief Examiners Meeting
Oct. 30, 2013
Staunton

GED®



All GED® testing accommodation requests for the 2002 test must be received by OAEL by Oct 30, 2013. All paper work must be complete and accurate in order to meet this deadline. Accommodation requests received after October 30 will result in the applicant's being tested on the 2002 test without accommodations or waiting to test after January on the 2014 GED® test

Virginia Adult ESOL Health Literacy Toolkit

This past September, VALRC published a comprehensive online resource for EL/Civics and ESOL teachers and programs that want to improve health instruction in their classes to better prepare English language learners to use today's healthcare system. The *Virginia Adult ESOL Health Literacy Toolkit*, written by an ESOL educator and healthcare social worker and funded through EL/Civics grant money, promotes multiple EL Civics goals. Improving health literacy helps adult English language learners (ELLs) become more engaged, effective, and responsible users of one of the most complex, challenging, and costly systems in U.S. society. As the Toolkit states, "With U.S. health care costs ballooning and health care reform a national priority, keeping health care costs down by accessing and using care effectively and efficiently can be viewed as a civic responsibility."

Simply by virtue of being limited English proficient in the U.S., ELLs fall into a group at particularly high risk for low health literacy and correlated negative outcomes like increased emergency room visits and hospitalizations, higher rates of and worse outcomes for chronic conditions, errors using prescription medications, and communication breakdowns in hospital care that lead to medical mistakes. Poor health, of course, severely limits one's opportunities for civic participation and engagement. We might not fully appreciate how much all of this affects learners in our programs because it can be difficult to ascertain how many learners leave ESOL programs because of their own poor health or a family member's poor health.

Health content has been part of ESOL instruction for decades, and educators report that instructional units on health tend to be of high interest to learners. Unfortunately, however, standard ESOL health content has not formally been updated in recent years to prepare learners for the U.S. healthcare system we are working with in 2013. One important example is the issue of asking for an interpreter. While it is important to know body parts and describe symptoms in simple English, typical ESOL textbook material for beginner health units, the 2013 reality is that it is essential that learners know how to ask for an interpreter. Every limited English speaker, regardless of immigration status, has the legal right, thanks to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to a medical interpreter free of charge in medical facilities that receive federal funds (e.g., Medicare payments). ELLs in a health crisis are far better off knowing how to ask for an interpreter ("I need an interpreter, please. I speak Spanish.") than attempting to communicate with a health care provider in broken English.

Money Matters



The following are due on
October 17, 2013:

first quarter reimbursement requests, program income reports (or statement of intent not to collect), SLCA expenditures reports, and local program match reports (even if there is no match to report).

Race to GED and PluggedIn VA funding for 2013-2014 are from Virginia Lottery funds, which are not released to VDOE until late in the calendar year. Therefore, while expenditures may be made against these funds during the first quarter of the fiscal year, there will be no first quarter reimbursement.

You may begin submitting requests for reimbursement at the end of the second quarter.

Budgets will be loaded in OMEGA in early January.



OAEL

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Please visit the [OAEL Web site](#) for more information about adult education and literacy in Virginia and for news and updates throughout the month.

The Virginia Adult ESOL Health Literacy Toolkit breaks down for educators the complexity of issues that ELL's face in health care. The Toolkit provides simply written resources and materials in an easy-to-navigate format to help educators understand the basic information and language ELLs need. The Toolkit contains:

- [Reproducible lesson plans and materials](#) for teaching high interest, challenging health topics in EL/Civics and ESOL classes
- [Easy-to-read tip sheets for learners](#) on accessing, navigating, and communicating in U.S. health care
- [Case studies](#) for teachers to better understand healthcare challenges learners may face
- [Resources for understanding and explaining U.S. health care](#) to English language learners
- Resources and tips for accessing [affordable care](#)
- Examples and how-to's for engaging in interdisciplinary [health literacy projects](#), which holds great potential for enhancing instruction and helping your program benefit from community resources and expertise while developing lasting partnerships.

The Toolkit is the first comprehensive resource of its kind for ESOL health literacy. While it has only been available for a month, VALRC has received enthusiastic comments on the breadth and quality of the contents from ESOL teachers and program managers, researchers in health literacy, a moderator of a national health literacy discussion list, public health workers, and others.

If you are interested in having Toolkit author Kate Singleton, MSW, LCSW, present to your program on how you can use the Virginia Adult ESOL Health Literacy Toolkit, please contact Nancy Faux (nfaux@vcu.edu) at VALRC to arrange a training.

Regional Data Meetings

OAEL plans to offer regional data awareness meetings across the state beginning in late October. The meetings will focus on three distinct areas of data collection and reporting: measuring performance (report cards, desk reviews, federal accountability standards), using data for regional program improvement, and data entry do's and don'ts. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Lebanon – Monday, Oct. 21
- Roanoke – Tuesday, Oct. 22
- Fishersville – Tuesday, Oct.29
- Alberta – Friday, Nov.8
- Springfield – Tuesday, Nov.12
- Spotsylvania – Friday, Nov. 15
- Henrico – Monday, Nov. 18
- Virginia Beach – Tuesday, Nov 19

For information about registering to attend one of these meetings, please contact Jane Swing at jswing@radford.edu or by phone at 540-831-6207.