

Adult Education & GED Testing

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Roy W. Johnson, Chancellor

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EIGHT HUNDRED EXPECTED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The attendance of this year's annual Adult Education Summer Conference Center is expected to equal or exceed attendance levels of years' past. The conference will be held at the Birmingham Civic Center June 24-26. The conference is the one time a year when adult education supervisors, instructors, and volunteers all get together for professional development and to learn about the trends in their career field. A change for this year is an additional general session Tuesday afternoon, instead of the first set of concurrent breakout sessions, so everyone can hear renowned motivational speaker Gerry Weinhold. It promises to be an important and informative conference, including remarks concerning adult education and workforce development by several key lawmakers. Registration for the conference is available prior to the conference or onsite.

Because we are facing a financial crisis in Adult Education for the program year starting July 1, everyone needs to be aware that the expenses for the conference were allocated to the grantees prior to the transition to the Department.

FIRST ADULT EDUCATION ALLOCATION MAILED JUNE 4

Each college within The Alabama College System received a list of adult education programs within their Service Delivery Area and the allocation amount for the first quarter that each program would represent. Since the majority of the programs within each Service Delivery Area has already been created or will be created by June 30 with a signed Memorandum of Agreement that will unify these programs, the programs were then to work together to create a unified budget. If a program chooses to not be part of the named consortium for some reason, they can notify the Adult Education staff and a separate allocation letter can be awarded for them.

The first allocation amount was based on what each program actually spent July 1 to September 30, 2002. It does not actually represent a reduction in funding. It will take a major effort from each program to control costs as much as possible for this time period and for the entire year. A second allocation letter for the remaining three quarters is planned for early September when we know what our state funding will be. Keep in mind that a significant reduction from the state will only make matters worse. As discussed earlier, we are already facing a huge reduction in federal funding and we will not have the large carryover that was applied to FY 2003 but will not be available for FY 2004. The last three quarters will be difficult for all programs as it is without any further reductions.

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"News You Can Use" is a periodic report from the Chancellor to members of the Alabama State Board of Education and adult education practitioners in Alabama about news of interest pertaining to adult education and GED Testing within The Alabama College System.

ALABAMA SELECTED TO HOST GED CONFERENCE

The American Council on Education's GED Testing Service (GEDTS) officials have selected Alabama as the host state for the 2005 GED Administrator's Conference. More than 200 attend this five-day event each year. Alabama's Bureau of Tourism and Travel provided GEDTS officials a selection of print and video materials promoting Alabama. In the near future, a GEDTS team will visit Alabama to select the specific site.

PERSONAL ATTENTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

It took Wilburn Tennyson more than two years to accomplish his goal of receiving his high school diploma, but it was worth it. He had dropped out of Hueytown High School in the 11th grade because he had a well paying job at a steel company. That was in 1970. Times have changed. After 30 years, the company shut down leaving the 54 year-old Tennyson without a good paying job and little hope of finding another one without a diploma. A friend recommended he call Glennie Turner, director of the Adult Education program in Bessemer. Soon after he enrolled in the Adult High School Diploma Program there. "Ms. Turner told me what I needed, and I have been there ever since," Tennyson said. "If not for Ms. Turner and all of the people at the adult education center, I wouldn't have made it. They wouldn't let me quit." On June 5, Mr. Tennyson received his diploma and his plans include attending Bessemer State Technical College.

SPANISH AND FRENCH VERSIONS OF GED CHANGE JAN 1

On January 1, 2004, the revised versions of the Spanish and French GED Tests will be released. Examinees who have not achieved scores necessary for the award of the High School Equivalency Certificate prior to that date will be required to start over by taking the new versions. According to the American Council on Education's GED Testing Service, scores earned on previous versions of the GED Tests shall not be combined with scores earned on the 2004 tests. With Alabama's growing number of Spanish-speaking immigrants, the GED Test can be critical to their gaining employment or entering education or training programs.

SPANISH BILLBOARD IN DOTHAN GETS RESULTS

The billboard bears a simple message and minimal art, but some in Dothan see it as a promising new trend in local advertising. The sign's single question is "Do you want to speak English?" From an idea from Lynn Ivey, the Adult Education Supervisor, and Cecilia Richter, an ESL Instructor, a significant number of new students have enrolled into their adult education classes for one simple reason. The question was asked entirely in Spanish. It is believed to be that area's first Spanish-language billboard and it is getting results.

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