



The Reporter

November 2009

CAHSEE Prep Classes Now Available for EGUSD High school Seniors

EGACE is pleased to announce that in addition to its current credit recovery classes, concurrently enrolled EGUSD seniors now have the opportunity to enroll in intervention courses for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). EGACE is offering this course on its adult education campus (8401 Gerber Road, Sacramento) two evenings a week. These non-credit courses are free of charge.

Instructor Erin Gress provides students with learning opportunities using several different modalities: standards-based texts and materials, hands-on activities,

direct instruction, and computer-assisted instruction. Soon, students will also be using *CAHSEE Steps*, a web-based curriculum that students can access online in the classroom and through their own personal computers.

The English Language Arts CAHSEE Intervention Course meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and emphasizes instruction in the content specified on the ELA section of the exam: Word Analysis, Writing Strategies, Writing Conventions, Writing Applications, and test-taking strategies.

The math CAHSEE Intervention Course meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30-9:30 p.m. and emphasizes instruction in the content specified on the mathematics section of the exam: Probability and Statistics, Number Sense, Algebra and Functions, Measurement and Geometry, Algebra I, and test-taking strategies.

New students may enroll on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Interested students should contact their high school counselor for registration forms.

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'Today I am fortunate to have woken up, I am alive, I have a precious human life, I am not going to waste it. I am going to use all my energies to develop myself, to expand my heart out to others, to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, I am going to have kind thoughts towards others, I am not going to get angry or think badly about others, I am going to benefit others as much as I can.'

- Dalai Lama

EGACE Partners with Sacramento Job Corps

In November EGACE began GED testing at the Sacramento Job Corps. The Job Corps houses and trains about 500 young people at their facility on Meadowview Road and EGACE have been working with CDE for several months to bring onsite testing to their students. Kate Hoime tests 15-18 students there every Wednesday and Friday morning. Welcome, Sacramento Job Corps students!



Elk Grove Adult and Community Education is Selected to Participate in State-wide Adult Basic Education Initiative

“Earning a high school diploma is a critical achievement no matter what age you are. Adult education allows adults to seek broader employment opportunities that will support a brighter future for themselves and their families.” (State Schools Chief Jack O’Connell)

For the past several years, national reports on adult literacy have called for improved adult education programs, especially in the area of Adult Basic Education (ABE) where performance indicators, according to the federal Workforce Investment Act Title II, have been declining. These indicators measure how well adult students perform in reading, writing, mathematics and whether they earn a high school diploma and transition to post-secondary education. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the number of Californians with less than a high school education has increased by 11 percent; and the number with less than a 9th grade education has grown by 17 percent.

California’s literacy need is high, with over 19 percent of the adult population lacking a high school diploma. Thirteen percent of this population is between the ages of eighteen and twenty four, while over 86 percent is twenty-five years or older. Lower literacy means lower earnings and higher rates of poverty.

According to a 2008 report by the National Commission on Adult Literacy, high school dropout rates are “staggering,” and more focus is required on the needs of the unemployed, the low-skilled workers, immigrants, parents with low literacy skills, high school dropouts, and high school graduates who lack college readiness skills.

In the fall of 2008, the California Department of Education (CDE) announced plans to launch a statewide ABE Initiative. CDE would coordinate its efforts with field and leadership projects, such as the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO), the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN), and adult education programs throughout California to improve student learning outcomes through the use of data, research, and best practices.

The goals of the ABE Initiative are to:

- ◆ Improve student learning outcomes
- ◆ Improve student transitions into and out of ABE programs,
- ◆ Improve the quality of classroom instruction,
- ◆ Improve support for ABE students, and
- ◆ Increase enrollment of under-served populations into ABE programs.

What do we know about ABE students?

ABE students are a “special” population of learners who have had “unique” educational experiences. They often have little confidence in their academic abilities and have trouble with persistence. ABE students are often academically under-skilled and usually have poor study skills. But ABE students are desperate to learn!

--Bob Murio, Counselor, Napa Valley Adult Education

In the spring of 2009, EGACE was selected to participate in the initiative. Teachers and administration met to identify the strengths and challenges of its ABE programs, to set goals for improvement, and to develop and implement a work plan. EGACE’s goals for 2009-2010 school are to:

- ◆ Implement the use of standards and research-based curriculum in ABE classes,

- ◆ Provide training and professional development opportunities and support to ABE teachers on strategies and techniques for teaching adults with low levels of proficiency and/or learning disabilities, and
- ◆ Ensure stronger partnerships and better articulation with outside supportive services such as the One-Stop Career Center, the Department of Rehabilitation, the WIA I and Youth Works programs, and Cosumnes River College.

New curriculum was introduced in ABE classrooms this fall. EGACE has transitioned from using textbooks only to a digital curriculum that provides scaffolding and focused remediation to support below-proficient readers in comprehending grade-level content. Students in ABE math, reading, and writing classes also receive direct whole class and small group instruction by the teachers.

Along with ongoing assessments and check-ups, CASAS pre- and post-testing takes place on a regularly scheduled basis in reading math. Students are kept apprised of their test results and progress toward meeting their goals.

Over the past several months, EGACE teachers and administrators have attended CALPRO, CASAS and CDE sponsored/supported trainings and have begun to implement the strategies learned in the classroom:

- ◆ *Using Learner Data to Plan and Guide Instruction*
- ◆ *Organizing and Managing ABE Instruction,*
- ◆ *Adults With Learning Disabilities,*

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- ◆ *Instructional Strategies for Math,*
- ◆ *Instructional Strategies for Reading, and*
- ◆ *Transitioning Students from ABE to ASE, CTE, and Work.*

EGACE will measure its progress toward the goals set in the ABE Initiative work plan through the use of data such as level completion and persistence and

will analyze its success using the following indicators:

- ◆ Increased enrollment in ABE classes through better methods of identification, placement, and retention,
- ◆ An increase in the number of students who transition from ABE to Adult Secondary Education or GED classes within the school year,
- ◆ An increase in the number of high school credits and diplomas earned by ABE students, and
- ◆ An increase in the number of GED completers within a school year

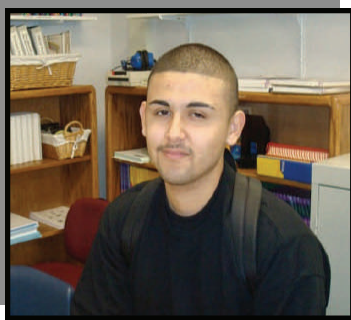
What do ABE Students Need?

ABE students need an educational environment that is committed to teaching them and an instructor who is qualified and who demonstrates that he/she is dedicated to improving the student's skill level. They need up-to-date research-based curriculum, materials, and instructional strategies that give students the best chance to be successful. And lastly, they need a carefully structured educational plan that will encourage, monitor, and challenge their educational progress.

--Bob Murio, Counselor, Napa Valley Adult School

GRAD Student Success Story

Lorenzo Saucedo expects to get his high school diploma this year from Elk Grove Adult and Community Education—and he is excited about that—because the school district has given him an alternative path to succeed. He is 20 years old and came to adult education last year needing assistance with high school credit recovery. Unfortunately, Lorenzo's traditional school system just hadn't been working for him. It is not that he



was not interested in learning but, according to Lorenzo, "The teachers did a lot of lecturing, and classes were too long, and boring." So Lorenzo went to Rio Cazadero High School where he was able to "work at my own pace." He passed both his CAHSEE language arts and math tests, but ended up credit-deficient by the time he turned 18 and had to leave his alternative high school. But now he is here and doing well. He is

currently enrolled in a GRAD (Graduates Receiving Adult Diplomas) English course, working at his own pace through the Apex Learning system, and expects to finish by the end of the semester. He has also been working with the Youth Works program at the Career Center on campus to complete his resume, practice applications, and other job-readiness assignments. Before long, we will be saying goodbye to Lorenzo and wishing him all the best as he walks away with his high school diploma, ready for employment.

Apex Learning is Now Available at Elk Grove Adult and Community Education

Students working toward a high school diploma are now learning in our GRAD, or Graduates Receiving Adult Diplomas, program covering multiple high school subjects via digital curriculum, Apex Learning. Apex is a high quality, challenging curriculum that meets high school credit requirements. Its curriculum comprises standards-based instructional content specifically developed for online delivery but is being used effectively in a computer lab setting at EGACE's Adult Education campus while providing the students the option of studying at a distance as well between scheduled class times. Apex curriculum supports students' different learning styles via text, images, audio, video, animations, and interactive elements. The GRADS courses are facilitated by experienced Adult Educa-

Literacy Advantage Courses

Literacy Advantage courses meet the needs of students who are not prepared for grade-level academic challenges because they are reading below proficient

tion teachers who support the students through one-on-one instruction and tailoring the computer-based curriculum to meet each student's needs.

Core Courses

Core courses meet the needs of a range of students as they endeavor to master rigorous content and earn credits toward graduation.

Since the beginning of this school year, Apex has changed the way EGACE students learn. The majority of Apex students at EGACE have completed the required chapters of work to date and are passing the courses. In the classroom all of the students are focused and totally engaged.

This is what's being said by students using Apex...

- "I'm able to focus longer without getting up out of my seat."
- "Apex is interesting! There are pictures, graphs, and cartoons."
- "I like being able to listen to the audio while doing my work."
- "I like being able to log in at home too."

This is what's being said by teachers facilitating Apex...

- "Apex interactive format is helping to promote higher success"
- "Students are more engaged and stay focused longer."
- "Students are attending classes regularly and have fewer absences."
- "More assignments are being completed on time."

Adult Secondary Education is also partnering with other district high school to offer Apex to credit deficient seniors.

Apex Builds on Bloom's Taxonomy

The Apex Learning approach to assessment is based on Bloom's classic six-level taxonomy.

Why is adult education important to our schools and community?

Did you know that 80-90 million U.S. adults today, about half of the adult workforce, do not have the basic education and communication skills required to get or advance in a job that will pay a family-sustaining wage according to the National Commission on Adult Literacy in *Reach Higher, America*. If we can encourage even four million dropouts to earn a high school diploma by 2010, the net fiscal benefit to federal, state, and local government would exceed \$25 billion annually (*Reach Higher, America*).

Did you know that approximately 20% of the population in California is high school dropouts? And a large percentage of adults are deficient in basic math and English skills.

At EGACE, students are building these skills to:

- Help their own children do better in school.
- Find better jobs in the community.
- Earn high school diplomas and GED Certificates.
- Participate in civic duties, including voting.

Since January 2008:

129 credit-deficient EGUSD 12th graders have enrolled in EGACE high school subject classes. 78% of them completed their course and earned credits toward graduation.

EGACE 2008-09 statistics:
197 EGACE students and community members passed the GED.

82 EGACE students earned a high school diploma.

Volunteers Help Keep EGACE Campus Clean

For the past year, EGACE has partnered with A Family Affair Bridges, a state-funded, non-profit organization that provides adults with developmental disabilities with training and activities that aid them in learning life management skills. Bridges also provides them with opportunities for social interaction, job training and daily field trips that allow them to integrate with and participation in the public life of the community. Approximately 100 adults

at different levels of cognitive functioning are enrolled at A Family Affair Bridges. Each morning, Monday through Thursday, two Bridges volunteers arrive at EGACE with their job developer/coach, James “JD” Dotson, to begin their workday. They perform light custodial duties such as emptying trash cans, wiping down table tops and other surfaces, cleaning windows, restocking paper towels and toilet paper, and picking up litter from the campus and its perimeters.

EGACE staff recognizes JD for his time and dedication and thanks Greg Sweet, Michael Gregg, Nathan Johnson, Leland Stites, and Ricky Jones for their hard work. “We are a bunch of good workers”, says Jones, who likes to crochet in his spare time. EGACE looks forward to continuing its partnership with A Family Affair Bridges.

Distance Learning (DL) Student Essay

Nga Nguyen has been an ESL student participating in Distance Learning as well as in ESL classes with Linda Boice and Susan Escobar. She attends her classes regularly and meets weekly with a DL teacher like clockwork, turning in pages of carefully completed homework. Her writing and pronunciation have improved a lot in nearly two years at Elk Grove Adult and Community Education. In her own words, she describes her challenges and successes in a response to the essay prompt, “Is it difficult for you to ask questions on the job? Why or why not?”



The first time at work that was difficult for me to ask questions to customers. I didn't know how to speak and understand English. I got the manicurist license when I came here. Most customers are American people so I have to speak English with them. I learned some basic questions to ask them but they didn't understand because I didn't speak correct. For example, I said, “Wash your hands.” Customers thought “Watch your hands,” so they watched their hands and said “Look good.” And sometimes I said, “On Tuesday” but they heard on Thursday.

Now I go to school every day so my English improved. I can make more money than before because I talked a lot to customers and asked them some words I don't understand. Now it is easy for me to ask questions on the job.

We are delighted to support Nga in her continuing success as a worker, a student and a parent, one of more than a million students in California who are learning for life.

GED at a Distance

South Sacramento and Elk Grove adults can find another way at Elk Grove Adult and Community Education to prepare for the GED test through GED DVD Checkout and GED and pre-GED online courses. These distance learning options have been accessed by many students in conjunction with face-to-face classes at our Gerber Road campus as well as by many adults throughout the community who prefer to or have to study at a distance.

GED DVD Checkout provides high-quality curriculum in the form of DVDs and workbooks for students to take home and complete as well as invaluable weekly tutoring at the EGACE Distance Learning office on a drop-in basis. We have 39

workbooks and DVDs covering the five subject areas of the GED test. If you or a family member is interested in GED checkout, please come during our registration/testing hours Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. or, to schedule a placement or post-test, call our office at 686-7717.

Pre-GED and GED Online study is an option for those students who prefer an online delivery system and for those who can not attend weekly tutoring sessions. Pre-GED Online is specifically designed to support students requiring lower-level curriculum in the five GED subject areas. The online materials are dynamic and interactive, even providing

practice GED tests. The Distance Learning resource teacher supports the students through a class website via Moodle as well as through emails and one-on-one tutoring, as needed. Call EGACE to sign up for one of our virtual seats.

Many students ask, “Can I get my GED Online?” We always have to say, unfortunately, that GED tests have to be taken “in the flesh” at GED testing center. We can provide only GED test preparation “at a distance”; however, Elk Grove is one of the local GED testing centers and most EGACE students qualify for a discounted GED test fee

Student Passes His ServSafe exam

Matthew Johnson a participant in the South County Youth Works program recently completed EGACE’s ServSafe—Food Handling Certification Course and passed the exam, earning his ServSafe certification. Matthew also participated in the Summer Youth program funded through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). He earned his GED and hopes to obtain a degree in electronics technology. Through the Youth Works program, Matthew is being placed into a paid experience assignment at the Veteran’s Administration working in the kitchen. .

Great job Matthew!!

Distance Learning student Zhen Liu said, “My son likes it. He says ‘Mommy, I want to see the DVD for the doctor,’ referring to the EGACE-produced Talking to a Doctor DVD.