**Arkansas Adult Education Advisory Council**

**August 20, 2020**

**AALRC-Little Rock, AR**

**Called to Order** Chairman Bill Ritter called the meeting of the Arkansas Adult Education Advisory Council to order.

**Attendees**

*Members* present: Bill Ritter, Barbara Hamilton, Nancy Leonhardt, Tammie Lemmons, Marsha Taylor, Sherry Organ, Dr. Debbie Faubus-Kendrick, Jan Robertson, Amy Sturdivant, and Regina Olson

*State Staff* present: Dr. Trenia Miles, Bridget Criner, and Dianne Doyle

**Distance Learning Preparation**

Dr. Miles discussed the preparation for distance learning across the state.

* Dr. Debbie Faubus-Kendrick stated during intake, staff prepare a plan with students ahead of time. During this time, they discuss whether the student has access to the Internet, equipment needs, etc. Students are provided a flash drive with the student handbook and documents with login information and orientation.
* Sherry Organ: Students set an appointment to take the TABE assessment. Face to face classes are scheduled to start Monday, August 24th.
* Centers across the state are playing things by ear and trying to be proactive as best as they can. Some centers have set aside supplies for single use by students.
* Parents are faced with several challenges-virtual school, working from home, loss of income, etc. It is important to let residents know that centers are open and services are still available for students to earn their GED® and receive training by offering a flexible schedule, online learning, and TABE/GED® online.
* Fort Smith Adult Education offers a class for parents to brush up on their skills in order to help their children with their virtual assignments.
* Dr. Debbie Faubus-Kendrick setup a hotspot outside her center for students’ use.
* Regina Olson flipped her entire program. Teachers teach across all counties virtually by subject matter. Center is available by appointment only.
* Tammie Lemons-College setup her staff with Zoom accounts.
* Suggestion: Staff to learn available hotspots in their areas and inform students

**Proctoring TABE Online**

Dr. Miles asked how many centers are using TABE online with their students. She stated there’s a need for the whole state to offer TABE online. A few of the directors on the committee stated they are offering TABE online; however, there have been a few issues. These issues included being kicked off the system, students don’t have the necessary equipment or operating system, etc.

Training for TABE online will be offered through AALRC. Tammie Lemmons suggested Cindy Robinett as the trainer.

Centers that use the online intake application can note “Online App” at the top of the application since students are unable to sign the application virtually.

**GED Online**

Dianne Doyle provided an update on GED® Online. Students are now able to take the Official test online. So far, there have been eight test takers and five have passed all subjects.

Retakes are allowed, because there is only one version of the test at this time. There are plans to have a second version uploaded soon. At that time, retakes will be allowed.

Regina stated that if students complete the GED® online, there’s no way of centers knowing this information. Dianne stated that Directors can reach out to her office, and they can check the student’s status. Dr. Miles asked if the state can get a list of these individuals. Dianne stated this can be done through GED Analytics. She also stated she could send a list monthly to the centers.

Students are provided the opportunity to test online after they have passed a GED® Ready. They will receive an email giving the student the option to take the Official online.

**GED Pass Rate by Demographics-Ad hoc Committee**

Dr. Miles stated that African American students have a significantly lower pass rate on the GED® than any other demographic. This is a statewide issue. In order to address this issue, an Ad hoc Committee will be formed consisting of directors, teachers, and other staff from the field. This committee will look at data and try to identify trends/patterns and create intervention strategies. Dr. Miles stated that we cannot look at retention without looking at demographics. Bill Ritter and Barbara Hamilton volunteered to be on the committee.

**Adult Education Survey**

A survey was sent out to the field on training topics, and the results were discussed with the committee. The responses from the survey included Program Management, Recruitment & Retention, etc. The committee suggested trainings on Best Practices in these areas. Amy Sturdivant suggested a PD spreadsheet would be helpful that lists the requirements and timeline. Barbara Hamilton suggested reinstating the Mentoring Program for new Directors. Other suggestions included: FAQ’s published for the field. This will help ensure answers are consistent and everyone is kept informed.

Meeting Adjourned