

**OCTAE Connection Flash Edition****September 24, 2020****Announcing National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week**

Dear Colleagues,

I wanted to reach out to join you and our nation in celebrating National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week. This week calls us to highlight the life-changing difference that adult education programs are making in communities across America. It also calls us to invite stakeholders, from community and business leaders to policymakers at all levels, to join us in this imperative work.

Today we know that there are an estimated 51 million adults from all walks of life who struggle with basic academic skills. Learners who struggle to read, do math, solve problems, and use technology are ill-equipped to enter – much less compete in – the global economy. That's why you do what you do – for them and for our nation's future. Our adult learners must have access to multiple pathways to lifelong learning and career success.

The economic payoff for adults who gain higher skills is greater in the U.S. than in almost any other industrialized country. In the U.S., one level of math gain equates to a 28% hourly wage gain. Our nation – our economy and our society – simply can't operate at full capacity without adult education programs and partnerships with local, regional, and state workforce partners.

That is why I want to offer my thanks to each of you who have found innovative and creative ways to continue impacting learners even in the midst of this pandemic. I know that many of you quickly moved from face-to-face instruction to Facebook, Skype, and Zoom to meet the needs of your learners!

Because virtual, distance, and hybrid learning may be a new environment for some of you, I am pleased to announce that our Division of Adult Education and Literacy has contracted with World Education and the EdTech Center to develop self-paced professional learning microcourses to support teacher development in the area of distance and blended education. Join us for a [webinar](#) on **Tuesday, September 29 at 1 p.m. Eastern** to learn more about the microcourses, which will be available on the Ed Tech Center website in the near future free of charge and linked to the LINCS Resource Collection.

I am also excited to share that we also kicked off the Integrated Education and Training (IET) Design Camps pilot this month. These camps assist state and local teams in using a curated design toolkit to improve and expand current IET offerings. Look for your opportunity to participate in early 2021.

Also, this month we continue our work with 18 states participating in the Teaching Skills That Matter Cohorts. This work assists states in placing an emphasis on the increased need for digital literacy and digital fluency in relation to the essential skills and employability skill sets that learners will need once the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

And, last but not least, in recognition of Adult Education and Family Literacy Week we have announced the [Rethink Adult Ed Challenge](#) to strengthen the role of adult education in preparing learners for apprenticeships and beyond.

As you can see, there is much to be excited about and celebrate even in the midst of these challenging times. I wish each of you safety and success as you continue to provide your learners with the right knowledge and skills, at the right time, for the right next step in their careers and lives. Happy National Adult Education and Family Literacy Week!

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