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WIOA Guidelines, Halperin & Owen Funds, Other News

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GUIDELINES TO IMPLEMENT WIOA

On April 5th, the Departments of Education and Labor jointly issued advance WIOA guidelines for Titles I and II. The guidelines will officially appear in the Federal Register on April 16. They can be accessed for review at <http://federalregister.gov/a/2015-05540> and FDsys.gov. The DOL's guidelines are geared in detail to Title I of WIOA. The Department of Education's guidelines (115 pages) refer specifically to the programs and activities authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) in

Title II of WIOA.

Adult educators will want to focus on the specific provisions of Title II, but because there are many crossovers between Titles I and II, planners and providers should also be generally aware of the contents of Title I. Special attention should be given in both Titles to the three areas that ED and DOL will jointly administer: the Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the WIOA's One-Stop System Joint Provisions.

Title II Guidelines update and revise existing AEFLA regulations regarding tests that may be used in the National Reporting System...define the purpose of AEFLA and programs authorized by the Act...and describe the process and requirements to be followed by the States in awarding grants and contracts to local providers. Among other things, local workforce development boards will now review applications prepared by applicants for AEFLA funding, applicant groups must be able to demonstrate effectiveness, and local administrative funds must be used to promote the alignment of a provider's activities with the local workforce development plan of Title I.

The guidelines also define and clarify what an adult education and literacy activity and program is under WIOA, and how funds can be used for newly-authorized activities, for corrections education, and for the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program. Moreover, they detail the process by which high school equivalency test-makers should apply for OCTAE consideration, stressing that major changes in tests will occur over the next few years. Guidelines are also given on aligning the National Reporting System to WIOA, and implementing integrated and dual enrollment programs in addition to the sequential programs extensively used now with the lowest skilled adults.

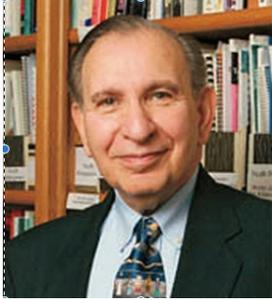
To conform to WIOA, the term "English language acquisition (ELA)" replaces "English as a second language (ESL)" in Title II, and the definition of Adult Education is expanded. WIOA retains the aims of AEFLA set forth in WIA (to help adults improve their education and employment outcomes, become self-sufficient, and support the educational development of their children). But AEFLA's mission is enlarged to include helping adults (those 16 and older) transition to college and job training. This broader mission is clarified for

federal, state, and local purposes. Regular interaction with business and workforce development groups will now be required.

OCTAE invites comment on or before the required 60 days after publication in the Federal Register, following the specific instructions given. According to the advance material viewed by ALP, comments can be submitted in one of two ways: (1) electronically via www.regulations.gov, the federal e-Rulemaking Portal, or (2) by postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery addressed to Lekesha Campbell, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW – Room 11–008, Potomac Center Plaza (PCP), Washington, DC 20202–7240. The Docket ID number (ED–2015–OCTAE–0003) should be indicated at the top of the comments.

Webinars to Help Understand WIOA and the Guidelines. Numerous groups are offering webinars to explain key provisions of the guidelines. The two main groups are the National Skills Coalition (NSC) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CLASP). CLASP will hold a Webinar on the [Priority of Service Provision in WIOA: Serving Low Income & Lower Skilled Individuals](#), on Thursday, April 16, at 2pm EST. An NSC [Unpacking Proposed WIOA Regulations Webinar](#) is scheduled for Wednesday, April 22 from 1pm to 2:25 pm. Although NSC's focus is on Title I programs and investments, adult educators will benefit from this webinar and should use the occasion to pose specific questions about Adult Education.

[Editor's Note: We would be remiss not to stress, as we do at every opportunity, that if our Adult Education system is to meet the expanded mission it has been given under WIOA, it will have to be rescued from the "starvation level" funding under which it currently struggles. A plethora of recent reports, including some listed below, make it clear why we must make the needed investments.]



MEMORIAL FUNDS CREATED FOR TWO ADULT EDUCATION LEADERS

The late Samuel Halperin (May 6, 2014) and Eugene Owen (March 23, 2015) are being celebrated for their contributions to adult education and youth leadership development through the establishment of special annual funds in their names.

Samuel Halperin, principal architect of the federal Adult Basic Education program in 1966, is being honored with the new **Samuel Halperin Lecture and Youth Public Service Award**, by two organizations he founded, the American Youth Policy Forum and the Institute for Educational Leadership. For more biographical information about Sam, [CLICK HERE](#). The first Samuel Halperin Lecture takes place at 3:30 pm on Monday, April 20, at the Renaissance Hotel, 999 Ninth Street, Washington, DC 20001. Hilary Pennington, Ford Foundation Vice President, will give the inaugural speech on the importance of youth education policy and public service. To register for the event or to make a donation, [CLICK HERE](#). The first Halperin Public Service Award winner, Efram Ayalew, immigrated to the U.S. from Addis Ababa. Selected through a juried essay contest, he will be recognized on April 20 as part of the Lecture event.

Eugene Owen was a seminal force behind many national education assessment initiatives including the PISA, IALS, the NAL, NAALS, and more recently the PIAAC. He was at the forefront in the launching and conduct of these programs, and has thus had a major impact on education policy in the U.S. and abroad. The PISA, first conducted in 2000 in the U.S. now includes over 70 countries. PIAAC, conducted through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, involves more than 30 countries. Mr. Owen

spent much of his professional career as a Senior Advisor for the Assessment Division, National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. His family and friends have set up the [Eugene Harvey Owen Scholarship Fund](#) to help students continue their studies in educational statistics. A memorial tribute will be held on Thursday, April 23 at 12 noon (see more information at link above), at 1025 Thomas Jefferson Street NW, Room 3131, Washington, DC.



NEWS IN BRIEF



McDonald's USA Expands Archways to Opportunities. On April 1st, McDonald's USA announced an improved benefits package that begins for its employees on July 1, including expanded paid personal leave and financial assistance. In addition, its Archways to Opportunities Education program will be expanded to include free high school completion (through [Career Online High School](#)) and college tuition assistance to further the education of an estimated 750,000 employees who work in company-owned or independently-owned restaurants throughout the U.S. The company will also expand its offering of free English language classes. For more information contact [Lisa McComb](#) by email at at McDonald's USA.



Reauthorizing ESEA. Senators Alexander Lamar (Chair) and Patty Murray (Ranking Member) of the Senate Education Subcommittee have reached agreement on reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (also known as No Child Left Behind). The bill is expected to be marked up next week. The Alexander-Murray proposal moves reauthorization forward in important ways, including requiring States to adopt college-ready and career-

ready standards to help ensure that all students are prepared for the demands of higher education and the workforce. The bill would also give the states more authority to design their own assessments, standards, and accountability system, and it would provide federal grants to states and local districts to improve low-performing schools. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#) .



NSC and CLASP Leadership. Two of the most important websites for adult educators are those of the [National Skills Coalition](#) (NSC) and the [Center for Law and Social Policy](#) (CLASP). Both provide timely and ongoing analysis, a rich library of resources, and other services beneficial to professionals in workforce skills and adult education. [Skills Strategies Included in More Governors' Budget Proposals](#), by Brooke DeReniz, is a recent issue from NSC. A report by Judy Mortrude of CLASP, titled [Studies Confirm Favorable Long-term Impacts for Adult Basic Education Program Participants](#), flags documented evidence from recent OCTAE research that participation in Adult Education programs has a substantial payoff. The research, by Portland State University, shows that: (1) Program participants experience significant, often substantial increases in long-term educational and economic outcomes; (2) The enhanced outcomes require an average of 100 or more cumulative hours of program attendance; (3) Enhanced outcomes generally appear several years following program participation; (4) Income gains for program participants average \$10,000 a year, in 2013 dollars; and (5) the overall GED attainment rate has risen from 16 to 36 percent because of program participation and the GED provides an effective "on-ramp" into college. CLASP has also issued other important papers recently, including [Congressional Leadership Budgets vs. Positive Budget Alternatives: The Road Not Taken Leads to a Strong America](#). The core concern of the paper is the damage that will be done to low-skilled adults, other disadvantaged Americans, and the nation if the "reconciliation process" in Congress does not restore or increase funding for discretionary programming.



TechHire Initiative May Benefit Adult Education. Applications for federal grant funding of \$100 million will be available from the Department of

Labor in the fall of 2015, under President Obama's [TechHire Initiative](#). Adult education programs developing workforce skill training services may wish to review the goals and groundrules of TechHire to consider their eligibility to apply. The program will work in 20 cities across the U.S. in cooperation with business, community colleges, and other venues to provide the skills needed to move underprepared adults toward well-paying technology jobs. Grants will be awarded in 2016.



D.C. Pioneers Adult Charter Schools. Adult charter schools seem to have potential as an alternate approach in adult education with strong funding advantages. The concept for the schools originated in Washington, D.C., where the first adult charter school was formed in 1998 by converting a 45-year-old nonprofit group to a profit making form. The D.C. Public Charter School Board, which operates independently from the school system, recently approved the District's seventh adult charter school, [The Academy of Hope](#). The adult schools provide basic adult education services to enable adults 16 and older to acquire a high school equivalency diploma and move onto pathways to a job that pays a living wage. The K-12 charter school system in the District typically gets up to \$14,000 per student; the Academy of Hope will reportedly receive around \$10,000 per student and must raise funds to fill the gap. The Academy already serves nearly 2,000 students, and funding is tied to enrollment levels. The Academy will be a presenter at the upcoming COABE conference on April 21-24. A recent posting by Adult Education Advocate David Rosen suggests that some 90 adult charters schools are now operating across the U.S. and the movement appears to be growing.



Testing Agencies Lobby in the Political Arena. According to a [March 30 Washington Post article](#), the four major standardized testing companies are spending millions every year lobbying state and federal officials and political leaders to "persuade them to favor policies that include mandated student assessments." An analysis done by the Center for Media and Democracy, which tracks corporate influence on public policy, says that Pearson Education, ETS, Houghton Mifflin, and McGraw-Hill "collectively spent more than \$20 million lobbying in states and on Capitol Hill between 2009-2014." Pearson Education, "the largest education company in the world,"

reportedly spent about \$8 million, and also "underwrote untold sums on luxury trips for school officials" in New Mexico as part of a bid-rigging lawsuit it is fighting. The Educational Testing Service lobbied "heavily" in California to introduce a statewide testing system there. The companies have all donated to the Foundation for Excellence in Education, a member of the American Legislative Exchange Council, more commonly known as ALEC.



MDRC Tracks Proven High School Equivalency Programs.

Mindful of the data provided by the recent PIAAC assessment, MDRC has taken an interest in examining effective high school equivalency programs and spreading the word about them. Two such programs are treated in ***A Career Approach to GED Instruction***. One is the pioneering GED model of LaGuardia Community College in NYC, the other is a similar program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. For more information, [CLICK HERE](#).



Language Mix of Students Affects Achievement. There has been a dramatic increase in the limited-English-proficient (LEP) adult populations in a number of states. In Virginia and North Carolina, for example, the percentage of LEP students has more than doubled in the last 15 years. Researchers Christopher Jepsen (University College Dublin) and Thomas Ahn (University of Kentucky) researched this phenomenon and recently posted some of the findings. In [How Does the Language Mix of Students Affect Student Achievement](#), they conclude that both LEP and non-LEP students in a classroom would perform better if they were separated for language arts instruction. Part of the reason is that the new LEP mix of students is more linguistically diverse than in the past, not mono-linguistic. But a related finding is that separation of LEP and non-LEP students for math instruction would have a "devastating impact." The researchers suggest that school districts experiencing large influxes of linguistically diverse LEP students will need new kinds of teacher training and may lack the financial resources to educate their LEP students. Although the study was at the level of K-12 schooling, some of the findings and issues may have relevance for adult education.



Distance Learning to Advance Adult Education. Tyton Partners, in collaboration with COABE, is carrying out a Joyce Foundation–funded project to take a fresh look at the use of technology to advance Adult Education. The first of two reports was released at the end of March, [Learning for Life: The Opportunity for Technology to Transform Adult Education, Part 1: Interest in and Aptitude for Technology](#). A main purpose of the study is to motivate developers of technology software to give more attention to the Adult Education market and to help incentivize Adult Education use of distance learning technology. The Office of Educational Technology of the U.S. Department of Education, has just released [Ed Tech Developer's Guide: A Primer for Software Developers, Startups, and Entrepreneurs](#). This 67–page resource adapts the knowledge and experience gained for years by researchers, developers, and educators into practical advice on how and what technology to apply for various educational purposes. [Also see [The Power of Technology to Transform Adult Learning: Expanding Access to Adult Education and Workforce Skills Through Distance Learning](#) by Mary McCain for the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy in 2009, which remains one of the most continually downloaded of CAAL's research reports.]



The National Council of State Directors of Adult Education published [The Decennial Scurry](#) in early March. It explains in part the recent decline in GED and alternative equivalency diploma participation and success rates.



From Engineer to Resettlement Advisor. [Omar Shekhey, an American immigrant from Somalia, was featured on National Public Radio on April 1](#) as part of its series "about individuals who don't have much money or power but do have a big impact on their communities." Shekhey gave up his engineering career to found the Somali American Center in Clarkson, GA, just outside of Atlanta. The Center helps refugees find jobs, deal with government forms, and otherwise assists their resettlement needs in America. He drives a taxi on evenings and weekends to raise extra money to help the refugees with their food, clothing, and bill payment needs. Clarkson

is commonly considered "the Ellis Island of the South." Thousands of refugees from Somalia, Bhutan, Iraq, and other hot spots of the world are resettled there by the U.S. government.

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