

Volume 13

Number 1

# FIELD NOTES

by and for the Massachusetts  
Adult Education Community

funded by the Massachusetts  
Department of Education

summer 2003

## OPEN ISSUE

The "Cash" Language: Whose Standard? Sandy Little.....	1
Helping Adult Learners Handle Stress Marjorie Jacobs.....	5
Letter to the Editor Judith Nagata.....	8
How Do You Feel About the War? Haiku from Students' Responses Khiet Luong.....	10
Hopes and Wishes of Parents: A Video on Parenting Issues in an ESOL Classroom Lynne Anderson.....	11
In Plain Language: Reliable Health Information for ABE Students Sabrina Kurtz-Rossi.....	13
Janitors and ESL Teachers: Kindred Spirits Linda Werbner.....	14
Service Learning for ABE Students Lisa Pierce.....	16
State of the State Lenore Balliro.....	17
New and Noteworthy.....	18



# SABES

System for Adult Basic Education Support

Funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education

## The "Cash" Language: Whose Standard?

BY SANDY LITTLE

In my GED classroom, where many students were expelled in 8th or 9th grade, dropped out for personal reasons, left due to MCAS fears or actual repeated failing of the test, standard English is not the primary language. For most, standard English is a distant and unpleasant memory, which the language of hip-hop has helped to soothe. My task, as their teacher, is to not only to equip them with knowledge enough to pass the GED, but also to suggest the usefulness of standard English beyond the GED, and further, to explore why the language of the test, and other standardized tests, is not often the one of their family, their community, their culture.

The GED test is in what Rev. Jesse Jackson has dubbed, "the cash language"—a term my students find amusing since "the cash language," as far as they understand it, includes a vocabulary more like "chronic, whips, packin' heat, and bank." The tension between acknowledging the culture of this language and the language that can connect students to opportunity has become a daily struggle both in and out of the classroom. Out of the classroom, I wonder of the origins of their language. How did "chronic" come to replace "weed" or "pot," and how did cars come to be called "whips?" "Packin' heat," as just one of a hundred ways to say someone is carrying a gun. "Bank," one of what seems thousands of ways to refer to money.

In the classroom, I search for the perfect teaching practice as I attempt to express my respect for their culture, while also attempting to engage them in conversations and lessons that

*Continued on page 3*

# FOREWORD

*Every so often, Field Notes sheds its theme-based approach and opens up the content to anything practitioners want to write about. An issue like this gives a glimpse into what's on teachers' minds. This summer, the topics range widely. Sandy Little kicks off the issue with an article exploring the role of Standard English in a minority GED class. I had the pleasure of working with Sandy as part of Writing for Publication class where this article started. Through her revisions of the piece I came to appreciate her commitment to students, her insights, and her willingness to struggle with some difficult social and political issues in her teaching. I felt soothed as I read the submission of Marjorie Jacobs, a teacher at the Cambridge Community Learning Center, who shares her expertise in stress reduction and its role in teaching ABE. Her articulate and practical article, which also draws on her years of experience as a Buddhist practitioner, speaks to all of us in these anxious times. Lynne Anderson describes her positive experience developing a video on parenting issues with her students, all parents of Boston public school kids. Her article illustrates how teachers can use a participatory approach to identify and develop theme-based teaching and then use that content to teach specific language skills and strategies. Many of us remember the recent janitors' strike in Boston where maintenance workers fought for better working conditions. Linda Werbner makes the connection between the janitors on strike (many of whom represent our ESOL population) and the parallel struggles of ABE teachers and adjunct faculty. Khiet Luong offers haiku developed out of his students' responses to the war in Iraq. Go to the center spread of this issue to read these graceful and poignant pieces, easily adaptable to teaching material in ESOL or ABE classes. Finally, Lisa Pierce, a training and technology program coordinator at Eastern Massachusetts Literacy Council, encourages teachers and programs to explore service learning as a way for students to practice language in context, learn valuable skills, and contribute to their communities. As always, Field Notes welcomes your submissions and your feedback. Please check out the upcoming themes and dates on page 4.*

*Lenore Balliro, Editor*

## **Field Notes Mission Statement and Editorial Policy**

### **Mission**

*Field Notes* is an adult basic education (ABE) quarterly, theme-based newsletter. It is designed to share innovative and reliable practices, resources, and information relating to ABE. We attempt to publish a range of voices about important educational issues, and we are especially interested in publishing new writers, writers of color, and writers who represent the full range of diversity of learners and practitioners in the field.

*Field Notes* is also a place to provide support and encouragement to new and experienced practitioners (ABE, ESOL, GED, ADP, Family Literacy, Correction, Workplace Education, and others) in the process of writing about their ideas and practice. Editorial support is always provided to any writer who requests it. Teachers, administrators, counselors, volunteers, and support staff are welcome to write for *Field Notes*.

### **Our Funder**

*Field Notes* is published by the System for Adult Basic Educational Support (SABES) and funded by Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Massachusetts Department of Education. The Central Resource Center (CRC) of SABES is located at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210.

### **Our Editorial Policy**

Unsolicited manuscripts to *Field Notes* are welcome. If you have an idea for an article or wish to submit a letter to the editor, contact Lenore Balliro, editor, by phone at 617-482-9485, by email at <lbaliro2000@yahoo.com>, or by mail at 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Submission deadlines for upcoming issues are published in each issue of *Field Notes*.

Opinions expressed in *Field Notes* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor, SABES, or its funders. We do reserve the right to decline publication. We will not publish material that is sexist, homophobic, or otherwise discriminatory.

### **Our Reprint Policy**

Articles published in *Field Notes* may be reprinted in any publication as long as they are credited to the author and *Field Notes*.

### **Field Notes Advisory Board**

Susan Arase, Susan Hershey, Tom Lynch, Michele Sedor, Sarah Wagner, Lynne Weintraub

Editor:	Lenore Balliro
Layout:	Heather Brack
Proofreading:	Deb Liehs Lou Wollrab

### The "Cash" Language...

*Continued from page 1*

may lead to a road out of "the hood." How do I leave intact their identity and yet reinforce the importance of subject-verb agreement, comma splices, and parallel structure? I struggle with opinions such as that of Prof. Todd Boyd, who suggests that black urban youth, "be all the nigga' they can be," to not just talk about it, but "live it." He quotes rap artist Redman to support this: "I scored a 1.1 on my SAT/ and still push a whip/ with a right and left AC." I struggle with it because the young men with whom I have interacted, who are trying desperately to be all the nigga' they can be, are in and out of juvenile facilities most of their teenage years. I struggle with it because I think that the language and culture of hip-hop is not enough to see my students through to sustainable empowerment.

Framing the importance of learning Standard English within the safe confines of, "If you want to pass the GED, you have to know it," cleanly avoids helping students understand what they are truly up against in society. Furthermore, students who learn material simply because it is on the test are significantly less likely to pass as they have no context in which to store whatever knowledge they may be gaining. My students understand and retain the language of rap because its context is real. It is the drugs they handle, the money they seek, the friends they have lost, the guns they have carried. I cannot easily make real or appealing the context of Standard English to my students as it is the language of the cops who arrest them, the judges who sentence them, and perhaps most importantly, the schools in

which they were unsuccessful. All of my students are either Black or Hispanic, and asking them to envision a future life where they would use Standard English is asking them to have a lot of faith. They must place faith in a society whose open doors have eluded them thus far, and an even deeper faith must

classroom experience.

What makes the early weeks of my GED class unique is that students are reintroduced to themselves as learners. One of the most common complaints regarding their time in public schools is, "We never learned anything." Whether or not people tried to teach them is,

---

*The GED test is in what Rev. Jesse Jackson has dubbed, "the cash language"—a term my students find amusing since "the cash language," as far as they understand it, includes a vocabulary more like "chronic, whips, packin' heat, and bank."*

---

be placed in their own power to reach those doors. GED can be the beginning of this journey, but it must be supported as a beginning and not as a temporary trick to chase away probation officers.

However, this also means that there must be motivation that runs deeper than keeping probation officers and jail sentences at bay. True commitment to one's GED, and to one's future, does not come through such external powers as officers, judges, and case workers. Threats and verbal rewards can only wield so much power over someone who has already entered into a state of insentience. It is rather an internal motivation, that stirring of the soul, that part of us which believes in possibility, that authentically engages learning in hopes of results. While it is not I who can ignite this internal stirring, it is I who can attempt to sustain it and guide it by creating a meaningful

unfortunately, not the question. Instead, the question becomes, "Do these students think they are capable of learning?" People learn best in the environments where they are comfortable, where they feel safe, and for minority students school is a place that offers neither comfort nor safety. Not only is the environment unsettling, but also the content being peddled seems useless. As Linda Christensen explains, "It's about other people in other times." (Christensen, 2000) Rarely are high school students invited to be active in their learning process, to be the ones wielding the power. They wield power when they choose to participate in GED. And when a student chooses it—even as an alternative to risking lock-up—a teacher has a place to begin. Even though I still sometimes dread the look of confusion and hurt, when we talk about "She has to

*Continued on page 4*

**The "Cash" Language...**

*Continued from page 3*

make a decision," versus "She has to make a decision," that discussion signals that the doors are open to conversation about language. When we talk about the barriers created by only speaking one language, an easement can be built for both cultural and academic understanding. "How many countries can you travel to if you only speak German?" I ask my students. And despite the fact that they are not quite sure of the exact answer, they know it's not many. "Yeah, but what if someone does not want to travel to another country?" they ask me. By being here, in GED class, I tell them that they already have their passport and now it's a choice. The contexts that can make fluency a reality for my students are few and far between for the moment, but with help from volunteer speakers, testimonies from various books, and class discussions, Standard English becomes an acceptable tool to carry when seeking new opportunities.

**References**

*Reading, Writing, and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word.*  
Linda Christensen.  
Milwaukee, WI: Rethinking Schools, 2002.

*Sandy Little, who has a master's degree in urban education from Clarke University, is in her second year teaching GED to students involved with the Department of Youth Services. She can be reached at <s.j.little@worldnet.att.net>.*

# Upcoming Issues of *Field Notes*

**Fall 2003: Counseling**

Call with your idea by July 1  
Articles due by July 15

**Winter 2004: Social Justice Issues in ABE**

Call with your idea by Sept 1  
Articles due by Sept 10

**Spring 2004: GED/ EDP/ ADP Programs**

Call with your idea by Jan 2  
Articles due by Jan 10

*Remember, you can get PDPs for writing an article for Field Notes! You can also get writing support along the way. Call Lenore Balliro at 617-482-9485 if you are interested in writing.*

## **Student Writing Wanted!**

We would like to feature a piece (or a few very short pieces) of student writing in every issue of **Field Notes**. Do you include writing in your ESOL, GED, ABE classes? Please consider sending along some samples for publication in **Field Notes**, and tell us a little about why and how you engaged students in the writing process. Email Lenore Balliro, editor, with your submissions: <lballiro2000@yahoo.com>.

# Helping Adult Learners Handle Stress

BY MARJORIE JACOBS

During my 31 years working in adult education as an ABE/GED counselor and teacher at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, I have observed many changes. Most strikingly have been the changes in our student population and society. Our classes used to be filled with adults, most of whom were either born in the US or had emigrated from the British West Indies. They were either working or on welfare.

Within the last 10 years, however, we have been seeing a growing number of young adults in our classes and with MCAS, we anticipate many more youth. These are students who did not function well in high school, many with attendance, behavioral, motivation, and learning issues. We have also been seeing more students with learning disabilities, mental health problems, and physical health conditions. An increasing number of ABE/ASE students are not native English speakers. Many are immigrants, the children of immigrant parents, and/or former ESOL students who have transitioned into ABE/ASE programs. What all these students have in common is a belief in education as a stepping stone to a better life in a society that has become very fast-paced and technologically advanced.

Unfortunately, learning to read, write, speak English, do math, move up grade levels on TABE tests, and/or pass GED exams does not happen overnight. Learning is usually a slow process that requires a relaxed, focused, committed mind. The learner must work hard and steadfastly without losing motiva-

tion over a number of months or sometimes years. Adult learners have so many commitments—to family, jobs, community, their health, school—that they are under tremendous pressure. In many cases, they also expect or really want quick results. The longer they are in school and working a low-paying job or are unemployed, the more their frustration and stress builds. The more stress they have,



the more their learning suffers as their minds become distracted and forgetful. Disappointment, eroding motivation, and negativity may result. Because of this stress, many students drop out, often returning later to complete unmet goals.

A host of other changes in recent years, particularly as a result of 9/11, has affected adult learners. Fears of terrorist attacks in US cities, the tightening of immigration laws, the dismantling of the welfare system, an economic recession, cuts in health care, a shortage of affordable housing, and MCAS has also led to increased levels of stress.

## Stress and Its Effects on Adult Learners

What is stress? Stress is a natural, inescapable part of life. From birth, we are constantly having to adjust our behaviors and thoughts to an ever-changing environment in order to survive and hopefully have a happy and meaningful life. Stress is based on our perceiving the world around us as unsafe, whether physically or emotionally. It can be defined as the perception of danger to our mental and/or physical well being, the perception that we cannot cope, and the perception that we are not in control. Stress can be momentary or chronic, lasting for years.

How we perceive something is complex because it is based on a number of factors, such as our senses, past experiences, family, memories, culture, socialization, gender, age, race, socio-economic status, personality, health, education, and self-esteem. This explains why not all people react to stressful events in the same way. Some are more resilient, having more resources and strategies available to them to cope with life's ups and downs.

Characterized as part of a low-literacy and low-income population, adult learners suffer the negative effects of stress disproportionately to the middle- and upper-class populations in the US. They have fewer resources available to them, making it more difficult to deal with housing, employment, and health issues. They are also more at risk for health conditions, such as

*Continued on page 6*

## Helping Adult Learners...

*Continued from page 5*

blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, drug/alcohol addiction, and others.

Stress negatively impacts learning. The list below lists stress-related symptoms in the classroom that interfere with attendance, ability to learn, and the attainment of educational goals.

### Stress Erasers for the Classroom

Since stress is a major obstacle confronting adult learners, teachers and counselors need to recognize it and address it. More one-on-one counseling should be provided to find out why students are not attending school, what help they need to support their learning, and what resources are available in their community to assist them in their lives. Counselors and teachers working together can also help students set realistic educational goals. Teachers and counselors should also educate themselves about the signs of stress and develop strategies for the classroom that can help student reduce their stress. The following is a list of suggestions to help students handle their stress within the ABE/ASE classroom. All can be used as a vehicle for teaching traditional classroom content.

#### 1. Create a Safe Learning Environment.

At the beginning of a semester, the class and the students should make a list of rules for a respectful, comfortable, safe learning environment, which includes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. Confidentiality needs to be included and discussed so that everyone's privacy is respected and trust

among students is fostered. These rules should be posted in the classroom, and every student should have a copy. Periodically, these rules should be reviewed, especially when new students enter after the semester has begun.

#### 2. Write About Stress.

Just writing about stressful events can reduce stress. We can encourage our students to write poems, letters, journal entries,

a journal of positive experiences, whatever makes them happy, eye-opening observations, new and exciting learning.

#### 4. Brainstorm a Collective List of Students' Stress Erasers.

Have students brainstorm a list of what they do to ease their stress. Then encourage students each week to practice one suggestion from the list and record their experiences in their journal.

---

*Since stress is a major obstacle confronting adult learners, teachers and counselors need to recognize it and address it.*

---

short stories, notes. The classroom provides an ideal setting for students to share their stressful experiences and thoughts. They can receive support from their classmates and teacher, and by discussing and writing about their stress, they can unload and leave behind some of it.

The *Mind/Body Health Newsletter* in 1999 reported that patients in experimental groups writing for 15–20 minutes a day about their deepest thoughts and feelings about a very stressful event for 3 to 5 consecutive days experienced fewer visits to the doctor, improved mood, and a more positive outlook compared to control groups writing about ordinary matters such as their plans for the day.

#### 3. Keep a Joy Journal.

Keeping a joy journal is a strategy to reduce stress and at the same time build optimism. Students keep

#### 5. Start the Class with Movement or Exercise.

Start a class with a few minutes of lively music which conveys energy and happiness. Have students bring in their own music (a great way to share in the diversity of cultures within a classroom). In each class a student can formally teach classmates how to dance to the music or informally get others to follow his/her movements.

Try some aerobic exercise (like running in place, marching in place, jumping jacks) or quiet stretching/yoga at the beginning, between classes, or in the middle of a class longer than 1 1/2 hours.

#### 6. Learn and Practice Good Nutrition for the Mind and Body.

Teach the importance of eating a well-balanced diet. Use different food pyramids from around the world and explain how to read food

*Continued on page 7*

## Helping Adult Learners...

*Continued from page 6*

labels. (Such topics combine reading, math, and science.) Talk with students about eating well before coming to school. Encourage students to drink water during class and bring healthy snacks for breaks (e.g., dried fruit, fresh fruit, nuts, low-fat cheese). In class talk about, write, and share recipes and have potluck lunches or dinners in class.

### 7. Learn and Practice Diaphragmatic Breathing.

Teach students how to distinguish shallow chest breathing from deep diaphragmatic breathing and practice the latter. Spend five to ten minutes in silence doing diaphragmatic breathing exercises, such as counting each cycle of breathing from 10 down to 0; inhaling 1-2-3-4 and exhaling 4-3-2-1; or visualizing the breathing process and sensations in the body. Students can also practice coordinating their breath with a phrase that each student makes up for him/herself, for example, on the inhalation saying "I am" and on the exhalation saying "Letting go of stress." Make a list of student generated meditation-focus phrases that they can use for practice.

### 8. Practice Mindfulness.

Mindfulness is the ability to be present in the moment, not have your mind wandering to the past or future. Being mindful means being able to focus or pay attention to whatever is happening at that moment without expectation or judgement. This is accomplished by engaging in only one activity at a time and doing it slowly. Mindfulness is necessary for learning to take place.

### 9. Practice Positive Thinking and Positive Speech.

Our ability to resist stress through positive thinking and trying to redirect our negative thoughts into positive ones is called stress hardiness. When we think in a positive way, we feel more self-confident and more in control, thus making us more resilient to stress. As a result, we suffer less from our negative thoughts, which to a large extent are grounded in our fears.



On the first day of class, establish that the classroom is not a place for negative thinking and speech. It is a positive thinking/speaking zone. Students should carefully listen to the way/attitude they phrase things and help each other reframe negative speech into positive speech. Teach students to write positive affirmations, put them on the wall of the classroom. During class, have students help each other to reframe negative thoughts/speech by listening carefully to what each other says.

Practice the stress reduction strategy of Stop-Breathe-Reflect-Act. This strategy helps stop the snowballing of automatic negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. It can turn off the stress response and

support the notion that we can take positive action and regain control during a stressful situation. When students are asked to do something they find stressful (like writing an essay) and they start to speak negatively ("I hate this, I can't do this"), ask them to stop, take a few deep breaths, repeat the negative statements that they just said for themselves and their classmates to hear. Get students to talk about why they would make such statements (fears from earlier school days) and help each other to reframe their thoughts so that they can approach the work with an open, positive mind and attitude.

### 10. Teach Study Skills.

Having good study skills helps give students a feeling of control over their own learning and, thus, can ease school stress. The following are two useful study skills to teach:

- ◆ An organized notebook system that invites studying and homework completion: the 3-ring, 2-pocket binder system with subject dividers and the use of highlighters, index cards, a spiral notebook for math as the developing class math book ("goodbye to scrap paper").
- ◆ Time management skills, which include at the beginning of the school year making a weekly schedule with 1/2 to 1 hour study slots, keeping a monthly wall calendar, using daily to-do lists, learning to prioritize one's daily tasks, and delegating responsibilities so that there is time allocated for attending class, doing homework, and studying. (Taking on a new commitment, such as

*Continued on page 8*

## Helping Adult Learners...

*Continued from page 7*

going to school, may require giving up some chores and previous commitments.)

One of the best ways that we adult educators can help our students handle stress is by taking care of ourselves emotionally, psychologically, and physically. By controlling our own stress, we can be more present for our students and give the compassion, kindness, and quality instruction that they need.

*Marjorie Jacobs has been an adult educator for 30 years at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She is also a stress management consultant and health educator. She gives workshops and trainings on the mind/body/learning connection, stress reduction, meditation, Qigong, and the External Elixir of Kung Fu. She can be contacted at <mlmljacobs@yahoo.com>.*

### Resources for Stress Reduction

Stress Relief Strategies from the Holistic Med Page  
<[www.holisticmed.com/stressfree.html](http://www.holisticmed.com/stressfree.html)>

Managing Stress  
By Cindie Leonard, MA  
<[www.wnow.net/stress](http://www.wnow.net/stress)>

Stress Reduction Tips from the University of Illinois  
<[www.mckinley.uiuc.edu/health-info/stress/gearshft.html](http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu/health-info/stress/gearshft.html)>

# Letter to the Editor

BY JUDITH NAGATA

Not long ago I read the article, "I Took the Communication and Literacy Skills Test and Lived (I Also Passed)" by Carey Reid [*Field Notes*, vol. 12, no. 4, Spring 2003]. The article's stance surprised me. My experience indicates that the test is difficult for teaching professionals who do not have English as their first language. The people I tutor have taken the test at least twice (and one person four times) without passing it. They have taken classes, bought and studied practice texts, and have worked hard to gain the knowledge they need. After working with these adults, I cannot agree with some of the article's conclusions.

Vocabulary knowledge is tested in two ways: multiple-choice questions on words taken from the passages themselves and "write-your-own definition" for six words. The vocabulary is not at the level of usual magazine and newspaper writing. Newspaper articles generally do not use words such as "disparage," "ubiquitous," "pernicious," "ennui," or "obsequious." In fact, the booklet provided by the Massachusetts Department of Education says that the reading passages are drawn from college-level texts. One practice book lists approximately 550 words for review. Of these words, English speakers will recognize some of the words and will need to learn how to write the definitions. Non-native English speakers have to memorize much more since they will not recognize the words and might not know all the words in the definition. In fact, even the multiple-choice questions are difficult for ESL adults with a good command of

English because they need also need to understand most of the words in the passage in order to use context clues.

Like the vocabulary words many of the reading passages are complex and difficult to read (even for native English language speakers). I suspect, based upon the practice books that I've seen, that the reading passages vary in complexity and comprehensibility. Some current passages, often with graphs, may have a lot of detail, but are easier to understand. However, some of the reading passages are written by 19th century writers such as Mark Twain or Nathaniel Hawthorne. These authors use a distinct, somewhat florid writing style. In addition, the reading passages also can use obsolete words or describe older cultural scenarios. While these passages may be hard for most English speakers, non-native speakers will need to work through a complex writing style, and an earlier historical period's culture. Non-native English speakers might have a strong reading ability, but when faced with a variety of test passages, they will have much more difficulty in reading comprehension.

Another concern is the language that is used in the questions themselves. Some words like "bias" or "infer" are not words used in everyday English. In addition, tone and purpose are literary terms that may not be known to someone who has not studied literature or textual analysis in English. The ESL adults, therefore, also have to learn the vocabulary (and innuendo) of the test itself so that they can understand the questions.

*Continued on page 13*





# Win a Prize! Fill in This Survey!

At the last Advisory Board meeting for *Field Notes*, Susan Arase shared a practical idea with us. She places a copy of *Field Notes* near the phone. When she is placed on hold during a phone call, she often has time to read an article or two. Other practitioners keep a copy of *Field Notes* in their knapsacks/briefcases

for reading on the T. How do you find time to read it? We like to get feedback from people and share their "time management" ideas with others, especially because we don't want to hear too many stories of *Field Notes* ending up on the bottom of a "to read" pile! We would also like to know more about how

you use *Field Notes*. Please take a few minutes to respond. The first 50 practitioners to respond will receive a prize!!!

Fill out this survey and mail to Lenore Balliro, Editor, *Field Notes*, World Education, 44 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210. Or send information via email to <lballiro@worlded.org>.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **This Is When I Find Time to Read *Field Notes***

- When I take a bath
- When I ride the subway
- When I am sitting at my desk
- When I set aside time for professional reading
- Other (Please explain, and feel free to use extra paper!)

## **This is How I Use *Field Notes***

- I read selected articles that interest me.
- I read it all.
- I never read it.
- I try out some of the ideas/lesson plans.
- I look up the web sites mentioned on the Resources page.
- I have written an article.
- I look up/order some of the articles, books, and resources I find on the Resources page.
- I have connected with the authors about their articles.
- I use certain issues or articles for staff development purposes in my program. (Please explain.)

Yes, I would love to write for an upcoming issue of *Field Notes*! I understand that I can get hands-on support for writing an article, it looks great on my resume, and I can get PDPs for getting an article published! Please email me to discuss an article for an upcoming issue.

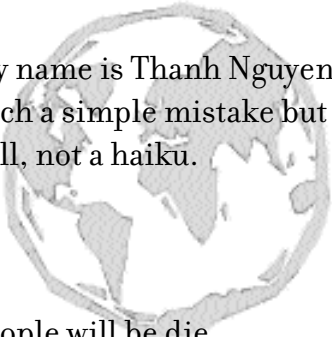
- Counseling
- Social justice issues in ABE
- GED, EDP, and ADP programs
- I have my own topic, and it is \_\_\_\_\_

# How Do You Feel About the War? Haiku From Students' Responses

By KHUET LUONG

Recently our ESOL class at the Vietnamese American Civic Association has been discussing the USA's military action in Iraq. I asked the students to respond in writing to a question: "How do you feel about the war?" Their responses were brief—no more than one paragraph—and I took some license in paraphrasing the written responses into Haikus.

My name is Thanh Nguyen.  
Such a simple mistake but  
still, not a haiku.



People will be die  
a lot of children will have  
no dad no mom. Sad.



If people like  
to live in peace they will hate  
If war is coming.

If the war happen  
every people miss too much  
I hope no the war.



I don't like the war.  
In my country has many  
many I can't tell—



If in your country  
terrors will be press people  
reverse within life.



USA do right  
But I feel sad...people dead  
I will pray for them.

*Khiet Luong is the English literacy and civics program coordinator at the Vietnamese American Civic Association. He can be reached at <kluong@vacaboston.org>.*

# Hopes and Wishes of Parents: A Video on Parenting Issues in an ESOL Classroom

By LYNNE ANDERSON

The theme of parenting in the US is one that invites all of my students to participate by sharing their knowledge while challenging themselves to use their second language. The parenting theme emerged in one of my ESOL classes where my students are parents of Boston Public School children. Parents of disparate language abilities shared their struggles and concerns about caring for their children in a new country, which often presents very different challenges than those in their native countries.

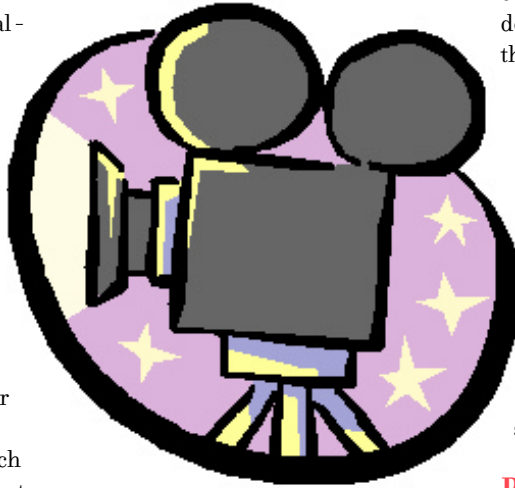
McKay and Weinstein-Shr (1993) discuss the practice of employing "parent circles" in their classrooms where immigrant adults discuss the dilemmas of caring for children in the US and build strategies to better cope with these issues. I became interested in taking this one step further by encouraging my students to share what they learned from each other with other immigrant parents facing similar issues. As I discussed ideas for a class project, creating a video appealed to students and seemed to be the perfect vehicle to allow them to share their findings with others.

## Building on the Parenting Theme

I elicited parenting issues in weekly journal entries where students were free to read aloud to the class. When I posed the question, "How is your family changing?" many students responded with

poignant, heartbreaking responses such as: *My son speak English in my home. My husband work full time. He isn't in the dinner with we.* While another student laments: *Job changed. Kids attitude changed. Here they don't pay attention. They fight . . . too many friends.*

As students read their journal entries aloud, others would comment with stories and concerns of their own.



Soon we had a list on the blackboard of the ways in which their families were changing. We condensed the list to reflect the six most problematic issues for them. The class posed questions to address these issues. The questions included:

- ◆ How can we help our kids with their homework and help them in school?
- ◆ How can we encourage our kids to speak their native language?
- ◆ How can we best discipline our kids?

- ◆ How can we find time for each other when parents work too much?
- ◆ How can we help our kids avoid the violence in our neighborhoods and in the media?
- ◆ How can we learn English?

## Developing Strategies Together

Students broke up into groups according to the issue that concerned them the most; they then devised strategies for handling these issues. The conversations, in both English and Spanish at this point, were lively as students argued about the best ways for parents to respond to these concerns. As the lists of strategies were completed, I copied them onto a master list and made duplicates for everyone. We then spent several class periods revising this together as a large group until students felt it was complete.

## Preparing for the Video

After much discussion about how we would organize the information for the video, students decided to present a series of vignettes in which they would pose as parents seeking advice from other parents. They then reconvened into their smaller groups to write dialogues. The dialogue writing was one of the most difficult tasks of the entire project. Many students struggled with ways to make the dialogue seem like a natural conversation between friends as opposed to

*Continued on page 12*

## Hopes and Wishes...

*Continued from page 11*

simply presenting a list of information. If I were to do this type of project again, I would model a dialogue for the class beforehand or ask several students to do so.

However, after several class sessions each group was able to compose a dialogue to act out. When all

the video, creating a title, and choosing background music to be played during the opening and closing credits of the video. A professional cameraperson did the filming. However, an interesting component to this type of project might be for students to do the filming and editing themselves, something I would be eager to try in the future.

4. The video later served as a vehicle for students to view their own effectiveness as second language speakers as we watched their performances numerous times together.

Students' efforts throughout the video project never ceased to impress me or other colleagues and students to whom I have shown the video. Many viewers have suggested that the video raises important concerns for all American parents and caretakers as they struggle to work and raise families in a culture that presents so many challenges.

A copy of *Hopes and Wishes of the Parents* will be made available at the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Boston, 617-782-8956.

## *It presented significant issues and problems for immigrant parents living in America...*

of the dialogues were completed, I as well as some of the more advanced students helped to edit scripts. These scripts often served as mini grammar lessons for the class.

Students worked for several days to memorize their scripts. They then recorded themselves into tape recorders and listened to their pronunciation while critiquing it in their groups. Most students seemed to consider clear pronunciation the most important aspect of their role in the video and spent considerable time rehearsing both in and out of class.

One of the final steps, where students rehearsed for the entire class before filming the video, was the most fun for me; I watched many weeks of intense classroom work come to fruition. Students listened intently to each other and cheered loudly after each group performed.

The students also spent time writing text that would appear on

The video was a great success for several reasons:

1. It presented significant issues and problems for immigrant parents living in America and, through thoughtful discussion, explored ways in which they might attempt to handle them.
2. Through a participatory approach to language learning, (Auerbach, 1992) students gained significant exposure to and practice in both spoken and written English by using it as an authentic means to communicate about personally meaningful issues.
3. Although it was a multilevel class, students were able to challenge themselves appropriately. For example, a student might assume the role of the group scribe if they wanted writing practice, or as a consultant on pronunciation if their oral/aural abilities in English were particularly strong.

## References

Auerbach, Elsa (1992). *Making Meaning, Making Change: Participatory Curriculum Development for Adult ESL Literacy*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

McKay, Sandra Lee; Weinstein-Shr, Gail (1993). "English literacy in the U.S.: National policies, personal consequences." *TESOL Quarterly*, 27 (3), 409.

*Lynne Anderson currently teaches ESL at Bunker Hill Community College and Brighton High School. She may be reached at <lcanderson10@hotmail.com>.*



The Massachusetts  
Adult Literacy Hotline

## Letter to the Editor

*Continued from page 8*

Non-native speakers of English need to prepare in a different way for the Reading Subtest of the Communication and Literacy Skills. They have a larger learning curve, for a test that expects a high level of proficiency in the English language. They need to practice answering questions that reflect an actual test as much as possible. I also think that the preparatory classes are structured to help native English speakers who have gone through the U.S. education system. The instructors help as much as possible but cannot slow down or adjust a course to meet the needs of a few people. In addition, the non-native speakers that I tutor also must combat the stress of potentially losing their jobs if they do not pass. The test might not be impossible for ESL adults, but preparation for the test cannot be compared to that of a native English-language speaker.

The Massachusetts Department of Education is looking for teachers and administrators to model correct English to the students and to be able to communicate with parents and others in the community. Is a mandatory test without prior coursework or assistance the answer? Is a test that uses college-level texts (including literature) appropriate to determine English language ability of a guidance counselor? In sum, the test as given may weed out those who do not have strong academic comprehension and grammar skills in English, but it may also unfairly eliminate those to whom teaching and education is a passion and a gift.

*Judith Nagata tutors ESL students in Amherst, MA. She can be reached at <jmnagata@amherst.edu>.*

# In Plain Language: Reliable Health Information for ABE Students

BY SABRINA KURTZ-ROSSI



World Education's Health and Literacy Initiative and the Massachusetts System for Adult Basic Education and Support (SABES) are pleased to announce a new collaboration with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM) in support of the Plain Language Health Information Project.

This project will train adult basic education staff to access, evaluate, and use health information relevant to the needs of adult learners and will enhance the ease of use and access to health resources via the Internet through MEDLINEplus and the LINC'S Health & Literacy Special Collection.

The goal of the project is to build the capacity of the adult basic education system in Massachusetts and New England to access reliable, plain language health information for adults with limited English literacy skills.

The Plain Language Health Information Project is a unique collaboration between World Education, John Snow, Inc., and SABES; and builds on the success of the LINC'S Health & Literacy Special Collection funded by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and its Literacy Information and Communication System (LINC'S).

## Trainings for ABE Practitioners

Next fall, with support from the Plain Language Health Information Project, SABES regional resource centers will be offering trainings for ABE practitioners on how to access, evaluate, and use relevant health resources in the classroom. The project will also help enhance access to health resources relevant to the adult basic education community via the LINC'S Health & Literacy Special Collection <[www.worlded.org/us/health/lincs](http://www.worlded.org/us/health/lincs)>. If you haven't been to the site recently, visit the LINC'S Health & Literacy Special Collection site and check out our new link to MEDLINEplus interactive tutorials with sound and pictures on over 150 different health topics.

*Sabrina Kurtz-Rossi is the LINC'S Health Special Collection coordinator and the NLM Plain Language project coordinator at World Education, Boston. She can be reached at <[skurtz@worlded.org](mailto:skurtz@worlded.org)>.*



# Janitors and ESL Teachers: Kindred Spirits

By LINDA WEBNER

Last October, the janitors of Boston were on strike for the same things that adjunct faculty and adult basic education teachers are denied. I remember stopping to watch a small but vocal cluster of sign-wielding Service Employees International Union members on Boylston Street. One sign caught my eye: \$39 is not enough. Witnessing this earnest plea for a living wage hit home and part of me wanted to throw down my titanic book bag, pick up a sign and join them. For I, too, would love to have a full-time job, higher wages, and a modicum of health benefits. In many ways, we are kindred spirits.

Of course, part-time ESL teachers make slightly more than the pittance Boston janitors receive, but we also have no benefits, no health insurance, no 401K plan, no vacation time, no tuition reimbursement, no promise that there will be a job next semester. In short, we are as expendable as Kleenex. Many of these men and women are immigrants from Latin America or Haiti. They could be my

students at the immigrant and refugee program where I teach. Perhaps they have sat in ESL classes taught by part-time teachers who, like me, teach at three different institutions to make ends meet.

## Our Numbers Are Growing

Adjunct or part-time teachers are not a minority and our numbers are swelling while the pool of full-time jobs shrinks from year to year. Figures from the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) estimate that in Massachusetts alone there are between four and five thousand adjuncts (compared to only two thousand full-time faculty) teaching at the state's 15 community colleges. In Boston, there are close to 10,000 adjunct instructors working at the community colleges. Clearly, we are a force, a majority, yet a vulnerable and often exploited majority.

## Without a Net

As an ESL teacher with nearly a decade of experience, I have taught at many different programs, from city- and state-funded nonprofit to

private, for-profit schools and institutions. At most of these schools and programs the majority of the ESL teachers were part-time employees. Most were women, some were married and received health care through their husband's work, but most were single or divorced and paid for their health insurance from their own pockets.

At one time, I received Mass Health and free care at Boston Medical Center but I no longer qualify because, according to the state, I earn too much. I am essentially living without the net of health care that most Americans take for granted. As a Peace Corps volunteer in the former Soviet Union seven years ago, I came down with a nasty case of bronchitis one winter and had to seek medical care at one of the polyclinics. Yes, it was crowded and I had to wait a long time, but I received a first-class evaluation from a harried yet knowledgeable physician, and X-ray and homeopathic medicine free. As a teacher, I was considered an asset to society and was treated

*Continued on page 15*



## Janitors and ESL...

*Continued from page 14*

with dignity and respect. Russia, with all its problems and upheaval, was still able to provide universal health care to its citizens, regardless of whether they were full- or part-time.

## The American Dream Deferred

In one of my ESL composition courses at one of the universities where I teach, we were reading an

ing funny about the dangers of high-stakes testing, of course, but a slide illustrating the range of average salaries for high school dropouts all the way to those with doctoral degrees made me shake my head and laugh with despair. According to Orfield's data, I earn the same salary as a high school dropout despite my master's degree and years of teaching.

Like many, someday I want to own a house, maybe have a child, and pay off my student loans that have hung around my life like an

to business school or law school, like some of the graduates from my teaching program have already done.

I remember reading once that Martin Luther King, Jr. was in Memphis that fateful day in 1968 to show solidarity with black janitors who were not getting a fair deal. It seems sadly poignant that more than 30 years later the janitors and educators are still being shut out of the American dream.

## Signs of a Shift?

At the end of October, a month after declaring a strike, the union and Mayor Thomas M. Menino emerged from Boston's Parkman House with a contract that gave 1,000 part-time janitors health benefits. When I heard this news, I was jubilant, moved, and inspired. Perhaps this capitulation by big business to the embattled working poor signals a shift in the economic climate for part-time workers. Perhaps adjunct teachers will mobilize once and for all, as they are already doing in California, and march along Boylston Street. We will sit with Mayor Menino in the Parkman House and tell him what we do, why we are important, and he will sign a contract granting us health benefits. Stay tuned.

*Linda Werbner is an adjunct ESL instructor at the International Institute, Suffolk University, and Boston University. Currently, she is involved in a grant-funded teacher research project looking at her responses to student writing. She can be reached at <lwerbner@hotmail.com>.*

*For I, too, would love to have a full-time job, higher wages, and a modicum of health benefits.*

essay in *The Bedford Reader*, an argument for a shorter work week in America. We went over terms like "work ethic," "yuppies," and "workaholism." One student wanted to know what epitomized the American dream and I explained the classic and somewhat cliched notion of American success: a good job, a house, a car, a dog, and 2.5 children. "That's it?" the student's bemused expression seemed to say. For this accounting major attaining this "dream" will be no problem. As I was erasing the board after class, it dawned on me that after nearly a decade in the classroom, I have none of the ingredients in the American dream.

## A Troubling Statistic

At MATSOL 2002 last October, while the janitors picketed stolidly on Boylston Street, I remember getting an unintentional laugh during keynote speaker Gary Orfield's provocative speech. There is nothing

unwanted guest. I don't want to have to do what my mother had to do at the height of devastating Proposition 2 1/2 in the late 70s—leave teaching.

What makes this question so complex and frustratingly circular is that I love teaching. It sustains me, fulfills me, challenges me and I wouldn't want to do anything else. It is infinitely rewarding and no day is ever the same.

Yet, sometimes I stare at my gleaming diploma with its gold foil insignia and some Latin gibberish at the bottom. Is this why I borrowed \$20,000 and put the stone of debt to SALLIE MAE around my neck for the next ten years? How long until the "inevitable burnout," the searing epiphany that all poor teachers like me are supposed to have, where one morning they see with brutal clarity the inanity of their pursuit and cast it aside for more profitable ventures. Or apply

# Service Learning for ABE students

BY LISA PIERCE

Adult Basic Education classroom and tutoring programs are always looking for ways to bring the learning experience to life for students. Service learning is a means through which students can develop their language skills while at the same time giving back to their communities. The National Service Learning Clearinghouse defines service learning this way:

"Service-learning combines service objectives with learning objectives with the intent that the activity change both the recipient and the provider of the service. This is accomplished by combining service tasks with structured opportunities that link the task to self-reflection, self-discovery, and the acquisition and comprehension of values, skills, and knowledge content." <sup>1</sup>

Service learning can provide excellent material for journal and essay writing; it also provides interesting content for conversation practice.

Through service learning, students can use language and literacy skills in a realistic context; they may also find that they can do something they never knew that they could do.

## Possible Settings

Look around your own community to learn about available opportunities for service learning. A good place to start is with agencies or organizations that students are familiar with and perhaps even have received services from. Food banks, hospitals, or convalescent homes, libraries, and schools offer volunteer opportunities. It is

acceptable to approach them directly and about available opportunities for volunteering. Most community service agencies have a volunteer coordinator with whom you can arrange the volunteer service. If you contact an agency through a clearinghouse, then the volunteer coordinator will then follow-up with you to work out the details. It is a good idea to keep a list of the organizations and agencies that you have contacted and a note on how well it was working with each. This will help you when building lasting relationships.

## Practical Considerations

1. Evaluate the language and literacy requirements of any service learning setting to make sure it's a good match for your students. For example, volunteering at a food bank requires a minimal amount of reading, the ability to understand somewhat complex verbal instructions, and little interpersonal communication.
2. Consider the level of commitment required for a learning service placement. One can opt for long-term or short-term commitment—one day, a few days, or many days.
3. Teachers or tutors should help students assess their interests, language and literacy skills, and availability to find good matches for service learning. From there, it is useful to help students set up their experience.
4. A student who doesn't have all of the language skills necessary to work as a volunteer on her

own might benefit greatly if paired up with a more advanced English speaker who could act as a mentor. So, placing two students in the same setting has advantages.

"At their best, service-learning experiences are reciprocally beneficial for both the community and students...(they) foster a concern for social problems, which leads to a sense of social responsibility and commitment to public/human service." <sup>2</sup>

## Footnotes

1. <[www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/35/](http://www.servicelearning.org/article/archive/35/)>
2. Brevard Community College, *The Power*. July, 1994.

*Lisa Pierce is the training and technology program coordinator for the Eastern Massachusetts Literacy Council in Medford, MA. She can be reached by email at <[lpierce@emlc.org](mailto:lpierce@emlc.org)>.*

## Service Learning Web Sites:

<[www.volunteersolutions.org](http://www.volunteersolutions.org)>

<[www.idealists.com](http://www.idealists.com)>

<[www.seniorcorps.org](http://www.seniorcorps.org)>



# State of the State

## *I Did a Little Dance, But There Was Sadness Too...*

INTERVIEW WITH BOB BICKERTON BY LENORE BALLIRO

*I never thought that I'd hear about a cut in the state budget of any size as good news, but when the House came out with a 1% cut for adult basic education, I celebrated; I did a little dance...*

So opened the interview with Bob Bickerton about the recent state budget situation and its affect on the adult basic education system in Massachusetts.

*The fact that ABE got cut only 1% is a real vote of confidence for the system, Bickerton said. The state was faced with the need to cut 25% off the parts of the state budget that aren't "fixed in place," and ABE suffered far less than many other services. (In fact, the governor proposed a 3% increase in the ABE budget for next fiscal year, but the House modified that to a 1% cut.) This support suggests that ABE has much more visibility and has become a more central part of our state's policies than it was a few years ago. There are several reasons why we've become more central.*

*The field of ABE does a wonderful job of making our work understandable to the public. We have focused on our accomplishments, including data and results. We need both stories and numbers to show people that we have an effective system. Some people are moved by stories; others want numbers. The SMARTT system has helped us pull numbers and use them for effective quantitative data. We've worked with other organizations like MassINC and Nellie Mae in a very open fashion. We accepted the "risk" of opening our books to them and it's paid off! Through our connection with*

*agencies like these, our stories have been put in the spotlight; the attention we receive from public policy leaders through reports from organizations like MassINC and Nellie Mae have helped advance support for our work.*

Bickerton reminded us that as ABE has become an emerging public policy priority in the state, we need to take advantage of that

is a net 3% loss of ABE funding for FY 2004. (Note: That's because we receive almost three times as much state as federal funding.)

### **How Will the Cuts Be Taken?**

*Research has shown, and we know from our own experience, that when you try to serve more people than*

---

*We need both stories and numbers to show people that we have an effective system. Some people are moved by stories; others want numbers.*

---

momentum, continuing to educate the general population and policy makers about the value of our work so we can continue to flourish.

Bickerton noted that he also feels tremendous sadness about the ABE budget. *By holding the line on one area (in this case, ABE) we are still losing necessary social and post-secondary education services for the same people we serve, he said. We need a broad view to help the disenfranchised get the services they need and deserve.*

### **Federal Cuts**

In addition to the 1% cut in state funding, Massachusetts ABE is also losing 7.5% in federal money, purely as a result of the 2000 census figures, where Massachusetts showed limited growth. The net result of these cuts

*the funding and support allows, you are short-changing students, so we are striving for a balance in budget cuts across all areas: administration, instruction, and staff development. We will base our information on the ABE Rates system; all areas will see a reduction in funds. There's no way we can assure the majority of our enrolled students of success without reducing the quantity of services overall.*

### **Governance Issues for ABE**

As mentioned, the governor originally proposed a 3% increase on ABE budget, a clear display of support in troubled fiscal times. The governor had also proposed another change: moving ABE under the auspices of the Board of Higher Education. This proposal was

*Continued on page 19*

## New and Noteworthy



### **Take on the Challenge: A Source Book from the Women, Violence, and Adult Education Project**

Written, edited, and compiled by Elizabeth Morrish, Jenny Horsman, and Judy Hofer. (2002). Boston: World Education

This collection of ideas and activities addresses the impact of violence on women's learning in adult basic education and is intended primarily for teachers. The sourcebook is one of the results of a three-year project involving six ABE programs in New England where violence in ABE was explored.

Free download of PDF version at <[www.worlded.org/publications.html#TakeOnTheChallenge](http://www.worlded.org/publications.html#TakeOnTheChallenge)>. To order a hard copy, contact Sabrina Kurtz-Rossi, <[skurtz@worlded.org](mailto:skurtz@worlded.org)>.

### **Reading and Adult English Language Learners: A Review of the Research**

Miriam Burt, Joy Kreef Payton, and Rebecca Adams. (2003). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE).

This short (43 page) new publication summarizes the research on reading for adult English learners from 1980 to 2000. It discusses the reading process and offers teachers and administrators suggestion for instruction.

Order the free booklet online at <[www.cal.org/store](http://www.cal.org/store)>.

### **New Resources from NCSALL:**

---

#### **Focus on Policy**

*The GED and Beyond*. Volume 1, Issue 1 (April 2003). Boston: NCSALL

The premier issue of *Focus on Policy* was published in April by NCSALL, the National Center for the Study of Adult Language and Literacy. The purpose of this new companion publication to NCSALL's *Focus on Basics* is to synthesize research findings and highlight policy implications of these findings. The first issue focuses on GED.

#### **Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom: A Handbook for Practitioners.**

Erik Jacobson, Sophie Degener, Victoria Purcell-Gates. (2003). Boston: NCSALL.

Based on the findings of NCSALL's Literacy Practices of Adult Learners study, this handbook is an introduction to providing literacy instruction based upon the literacy needs and interests learners have outside of the classroom.

#### **Expanding Access to Adult Literacy with Online Distance Education.**

Eunice N. Askov, Jerome Johnston, Leslie I. Petty, Shannon J. Young. (2003). Boston: NCSALL.

This monograph examines the potential of online learning to meet the educational needs of adult learners. It identifies a number of issues central to making distance education succeed in adult education.

To access these publications online or to order bound, printed copies please visit the NCSALL web site at <[ncsall.gse.harvard.edu](http://ncsall.gse.harvard.edu)> or contact Caye Caplan, <[ccaplan@worlded.org](mailto:ccaplan@worlded.org)>.



National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy

## State of the State

*Continued from page 17*

ultimately rejected by the House. Why did the governor propose this change?

Bickerton explained: *It had nothing to do with dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the present work or administration by the Department of Education, he noted. By locating ABE in the higher ed system, the administration was hoping to create a stronger sequence of ABE from basic skills through higher education. They recognize that a GED is no longer enough of a credential for people who want to advance beyond basic entry level work.*

Though ABE will remain within ACLS, Bickerton noted that he has already begun discussing possibilities with the Board of Higher Ed to ensure that ABE students successfully transition to the community colleges and other postsecondary institutions.

## Wider Implications: With Visibility Comes Responsibility

That ABE has become a policy priority in the state reflects well on us as a system. As such, we are poised to expand on our successes and to accomplish the work that still needs to be done: eliminate waiting lists, reach out to greater populations, and professionalize the field. With this increased visibility, however, comes an increased expectation for accountability. Once we become a funding priority, we are faced with more acute scrutiny to measure the successes of our work. Increased expectations by legislators, the governor's office, and the state will necessarily require more thorough reporting to illustrate our outcomes. This kind of expectation for increased accountability, added to the requirements we already face from the federal National Reporting System of the Workforce

Investment Act, has changed the field of ABE dramatically.

A big question looms as we do work under these conditions: is there a way to deal with accountability that is true to teaching/learning needs and is not just to satisfy funding sources? Can we still make accountability benefit our ABE system and not take us off course? Can increased accountability requirements work for students, teachers, and funders reliably? If so, how? In the next "State of the State," Bickerton will discuss the topic of accountability. In the meantime, you are encouraged to voice your opinions, experiences, frustrations, and possibilities in a letter to the editor for the next *Field Notes*.

*Bob Bickerton is the director of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) at the Massachusetts Department of Education. He can be reached at <rbickerton@doe.mass.edu>.*

## Back Issues of *Field Notes*

- ◆ Open Issue
- ◆ Reading in ABE
- ◆ Assessment
- ◆ Health Issues in ABE
- ◆ Summer Reading
- ◆ Math in ABE
- ◆ Management
- ◆ Youth in ABE
- ◆ How I Got into the Field of ABE, And Why I Stay There
- ◆ Science in the ABE/ESOL Classroom
- ◆ ABE in Prisons
- ◆ ABE Licensure

(with special Sept. 11 insert)



These back issues are available, free of charge. Email Heather Brack at <hbrack@worlded.org> if you'd like back issues.

# Help Shape *Field Notes*!

*Field Notes* needs a new Advisory Board for 2003–2004. As a board member, you

- ◆ Give input on the shape and content of upcoming issues.
- ◆ Work with colleagues from around the state.
- ◆ Prepare for and attend two meetings: one in the fall and one in the spring, in a central location.
- ◆ Help locate appropriate writers and possibly write an article yourself (not mandatory).
- ◆ Receive a stipend of \$150 for each meeting

Upcoming issues include social justice in adult basic education and counseling. If you'd like to be considered for participation, mail the following information to Lenore Balliro, *Field Notes* Editor, World Education, 44 Farnsworth St., Boston, MA 02210 or email it to her at <lballiro@worlded.org>.

Yes, I'd like to work as part of the *Field Notes* Advisory Board for 2003–2004. Please consider me.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a few words explaining why you'd like to participate. Thanks!



Nonprofit Org  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Boston, MA  
Permit 50157

44 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210

Return Service Requested



WORLD EDUCATION



SABES

System for Adult Basic Education Support