



OREGON ADULT BASIC
SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



All times are Pacific Standard Time

October 28, 2025

9:00 AM Welcome from State Title II Director- Donna Lewelling

9:15 AM Welcome from HECC Executive Director- Ben Cannon

9:30 AM Keynote- Jen Vanek, EdTech Center @ World Education

10:00 AM Agenda and Structure of Virtual Conference

10:15 AM Breakout Sessions #1 (see session information below)

11:15 AM Breakout Sessions #2 (see session information below)

12:15 PM Lunch (1 hour)

1:20 PM Breakout Sessions #3 (see session information below)

2:20 PM Breakout Sessions #4 (see session information below)

3:20 PM Networking and Discussion Rooms (see room information below)

3:50 PM Closing Remarks and Future PD

4:00 PM Conference Concludes



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

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ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Breakout Session #1 (10:15 AM)

Topic	Room
<p>Session Title: Open-Source Math Resources for GED</p> <p>Session Description: In this presentation, we will share open-source materials for math and show how to implement them into the GED classroom. We will also make time to share other open-source materials used by participants.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Melinda Nickas, Clackamas Community College and Lisa Nielson, Clackamas Community College</p>	Room 1
<p>Session Title: Crafting Success: Teaching Fiber Arts to Bolster Attention Skills, Build Community, And Inspire Learning</p> <p>Session Description: There are people who can sit quietly, listen with focus, and retain all the information they hear. I am not one of them - and perhaps your adult students are not either. I began teaching fiber arts as an elective, a fun break in the day for adults who spent their vocation classes learning carpentry or welding and their academic classes learning some of the most difficult subjects - classes they opted out of regular school for. What I found is that the students I teach to knit, and crochet are opening up to embrace the very skills we know are necessary for all of adult ed - persistence, focus, the willingness to try new things and how to handle mistakes. I will share how this elective has positively impacted my students in my classes, and how they have brought their skills into other classes and their lives outside Job Corps.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Andrea Shay, Umpqua Community College and Tom Tylee, Umpqua Community College</p>	Room 2
<p>Session Title: COCC's Bridge to College & Career Program</p> <p>Session Description: Piloted in Spring 2024, COCC's Bridge to College & Career program is now in its second year of existence. Current and/or recent GED students interested in credit coursework co-enroll in a non-credit support or "Bridge" class taught by ABS faculty. The Bridge to College & Career program commits to 1) Supporting</p>	Room 3



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

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ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



students in completing their GED; 2) Assisting students in navigating academic, financial, and support services; 3) Guiding students in career pathway selection and initial credit coursework completion; and 4) Empowering students to secure funding for continued education. Data from the first six terms will be presented, along with perceptions from both Bridge students and faculty. The session will conclude with challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations for future program improvements.

Presenter(s): Carlene Perry, Central Oregon Community College; Seth Johnson, Central Oregon Community College; and Jenn Judd, Central Oregon Community College

Session Title: Fostering a Safe and Welcoming Classroom: Supporting Immigrant and Refugee Students

Session Description: The classroom has always been an important space for immigrant and refugee Oregonians to build community and develop vital skills that would enable them to thrive and integrate into their new home. For the classroom to serve this critical function, students must feel safe and secure. The purpose of this workshop to help educators better understand the needs of immigrant and refugee students and explore ways to foster a more inclusive and effective learning environment with better outcomes. Educators will take away from this workshop an introduction to trauma-informed teaching as well as strategies and resources to build a supportive learning environment centering the safety of immigrant and refugee learners.

Presenter(s): Misty Schoene, Oregon Department of Human Services and Oanh Nguyen, Oregon Department of Human Services

Room 4



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Breakout Session #2 (11:15 AM)

Topic	Room
<p>Session Title: Using Coherence to Develop Effective Math Lessons</p> <p>Session Description: Academically, where are our students when they come to us? That's what we ask at the beginning of each term. How do we respectfully take them from an elementary level of education in math, through middle levels and into the GED level seamlessly and with comprehension? The key is in understanding the task, using resources such as the OACCRS Math Standards and CASAS test results, and planning out the content progressions as lessons in class. Participants will engage in a lesson to demonstrate the successful scaffolding through a few levels of math and come away with many useful resources to help them plan their own coherent lessons. The OACCRS lesson plan bank will be shown along with the Achieve the Core coherence map and more.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Lori Lundine, Rogue Community College</p>	Room 1
<p>Session Title: Belonging in Adult Basic Education: A Statewide Conversation Informed by Research and Discussing Best Practices</p> <p>Session Description: Research confirms that a sense of belonging supports persistence, motivation, and success for adult learners, yet few studies reflect the voices or experiences of students and staff in Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs. This session begins with a review of national literature exploring how belonging is defined, cultivated, and measured in higher education. Then, we invite attendees into a statewide conversation: What does belonging look like in your program? What practices are working, and how do we know?</p> <p>Presenter(s): Jesse Watson, Rogue Community College and Elizabeth Cox Brand, Oregon Community College Association</p>	Room 2



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Session Title: Foundational Literacy Building Blocks for Teaching Adults Who Struggle to Read

Room 3

Session Description: Based upon a structured literacy approach, members of the Language and Literacy Fund and Portland Literacy Council will introduce basic tools and resources for teaching native English-speaking students with low (or no) literacy skills. There are many resources available, but each student is unique, so it is critical to select and order the topics into lesson plans that maximize learning for the student. Participants will be encouraged to engage in several activities used to build and strengthen foundational literacy skills in the classroom and tutoring.

As we begin the second year of our program “Foundational Skills in Reading Instruction” in partnership with the Blosser Center and Portland Community College, we will also discuss what we’ve learned about the characteristics of successful literacy tutors & instructors, matching students and teachers, and the support needed for both groups. Participants will leave the session with resources and inspiration to contribute to addressing this critical need.

Presenter(s): Julie Hiefield, Language and Literacy Fund and Lorie Wigle, Portland Literacy Council

Session Title: Youth Student Spotlight: The Silent Demographic in Adult Education

Room 4

Session Description: We will provide a brief overview of the Yes to College program at Portland Community College and the recent partnership with YDD which has enabled more equitable service opportunities. The main focus of the session will be a student panel of youth (16-21) GED® students who participated with the Yes to College program in the past 2 academic years.

Presenter(s): Adam Clark, Portland Community College and Lauren Zavrel, Portland Community College



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Breakout Session #3 (1:20 PM)

Topic	Room
<p>Session Title: Statewide Lesson Plan Bank</p> <p>Session Description: Join us as we share the new Oregon Adult College and Career Readiness Standards (OACCRS)/Oregon Adult English Language Proficiency (OAELPS) - aligned Lesson Plan Bank! Within this workshop, you will: gain access to the lesson plan bank within Google Drive; understand how to use CASAS Goals and NRS levels to choose lessons appropriate for your group of students; access two standards-based lessons that can be used in your classroom; and gain knowledge of at least three reputable sources of standards-based lessons for future lesson-planning needs.</p> <p>This inclusive climate of educators working together and sharing resources will ease workloads and benefit students with relevant, proven lessons.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Britta Walker, Rogue Community College and Liatrix Myers, Clackamas Community College</p>	Room 1
<p>Session Title: Mini Dyslexia Simulation and Adults w/ Dyslexia Panel Discussion</p> <p>Session Description: Participants experience the power of empathy as they take part in a few activities that mimic the learning experiences that students with learning disabilities face on a daily basis.</p> <p>Participants will also have the opportunity to hear from adults with dyslexia and learn where to find more information.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Danielle Thompson, Oregon Branch of the International Dyslexia Association</p>	Room 2
<p>Session Title: Finding Funds - Oregon Financial Aid</p> <p>Session Description: This presentation provides a general overview of the financial aid</p>	Room 3



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



process including key terms and concepts, an overview of Oregon Grant programs, and the OSAC Scholarship Application.

Presenter(s): Olivia Z Perez Escalera, Higher Education Coordinating Commission and Walter Recinos, Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Session Title: Retention Through Leadership & Community Building

Session Description: In this session we will talk about the importance of community building, leadership opportunities, and relationships as a program retention tool. I will share ideas for engaging students outside of the traditional academic classroom setting as a way to help students persist towards their educational/career goals. I will have a current student in attendance with me in this session to share their experiences and perspective. Sharing of ideas will be encouraged throughout the session.

Presenter(s): Tracie Memmott, Portland Community College

Room 4



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Breakout Session #4 (2:20 PM)

Topic	Room
<p>Session Title: An Informed Plunge into the Workforce</p> <p>Session Description: As ABS students start jumping into the workforce, better outcomes can be expected if the leap is an informed one. This session will highlight some of the narratives driving current, and long-term demand for workers. We'll also show free tools and resources that can help students and jobseekers get informed about job openings and career opportunities in Oregon.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Jason Payton, Oregon Employment Department</p>	Room 1
<p>Session Title: BurlingtonEnglish and ODOC: What's Really Working?</p> <p>Session Description: Building off of last year's panel presentation, BurlingtonEnglish will co-present with instructors from the Oregon Department of Corrections on best practices for teaching and tutoring AICs with BE. Pre-selected instructors will demonstrate how they use BE in their settings and there will be time for attendees to ask questions and share their strategies. The goal of this session is to discuss what really is happening inside adult education spaces at correctional facilities across the state of Oregon and collaborate with fellow instructors on interpreting new techniques to use in their own practice.</p> <p>Presenter(s): Daphne Lagios, BurlingtonEnglish; Rachel Rodeman, Two Rivers Correctional Institution; Ricky Plaisance, Oregon State Penitentiary; and Shannon Schuette, Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution</p>	Room 2
<p>Session Title: GED Option for Underage Youth</p> <p>Session Description: In Oregon, GED Option Programs provide vital alternatives for 16- and 17-year-old students who are disengaged from traditional high school pathways. These programs, offered through school districts, community colleges, ESDs, and community-based organizations and approved by the Oregon Department of Education, support youth in earning a GED while receiving instruction, guidance, and wraparound</p>	Room 3



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

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ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



services. This session will highlight Oregon's approach to GED Option programs and promising practices from the field. Attendees will leave with tools and insights to strengthen or develop programs that meet state requirements and re-engage youth in meaningful, student-centered learning.

Presenter(s): Annie Marges, Oregon Department of Education

Session Title: Welcoming and Valuing the Stories of Our Students to Build a Supportive Learning Environment

Session Description: Research tells us the importance of our stories to (re)construct narratives about ourselves and to (re)gain a sense of authorship over our lives, as well as to build community. In this workshop, we will look at some of the research around how our personal narratives can break barriers and build community. We will discuss the implications of this research for our students, and practical ways to value and welcome the stories of our students. Participants will leave this session with a greater understanding of the power of personal narrative, as well as with ideas on how to welcome the stories of their students to create a more supportive learning environment.

Presenter(s): Angie Ebba, Mt Hood Community College

Room 4



OREGON ADULT BASIC SKILLS CONFERENCE

Growing and Enriching Foundations

ONLINE - OCTOBER 28TH



Networking and Discussion Rooms (3:20 PM)

Topic	Room
Digital Education and Digital Literacy <p>Explore strategies and tools for building digital literacy and integrating technology into teaching and learning. Discuss best practices for supporting learners in navigating online platforms, accessing digital content, and developing the skills they need to succeed in today's tech-driven world.</p>	Room 1
Educator Resources <p>Connect with colleagues to share and discover resources that strengthen teaching and program outcomes. Learn about curriculum tools, professional development opportunities, and open educational resources (OER) that can enhance instruction and expand access for learners.</p>	Room 2
Integrated Education and Training (IET) <p>Join peers to discuss innovative approaches to implementing IET models that blend basic skills, workforce training, and support services. Share successes, challenges, and ideas for building pathways that prepare learners for careers and continued education.</p>	Room 3
Data-Informed Decision Making <p>Engage in conversations about using data to guide instruction, program design, and policy decisions. Explore how data collection, analysis, and visualization can improve learner outcomes and support continuous program improvement.</p>	Room 4