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Where student success is everyone's business.



Reflective insights from a new director, Patricia Schroeder Submitted by Valerie Fischer

I Never Promised You a Rose Garden



If you have ever heard this song, you have a complete understanding of a cliché. But my understanding has become even deeper after my first year as Director of the Fargo Adult Learning Center. It all started last summer when it seemed as though this job had a lot of “down time.” As I started to learn and understand it better, all that changed. Rather than “getting my feet wet,” I did a total belly flop.

Three staff members left just as our fall classes were to begin. Everyone had to “bend over backwards” and respond to “all hands on deck.” It was also time to write the Human Service Grant. Now whoever came up with TAG, which is a refugee here less than one year, and social services, which means you’re here from 1 to 5 years, could have at least created something that rhymed, so I wouldn’t “bang my head against a brick wall” every time I tried to remember which was which. I was also introduced into the culture of scanning GED tests. It is true that if you can learn all the codes, numbers, passwords, sounds, dates and tiffs, you can also successfully enter Fort Knox.

As the year progressed, I learned that I could write quarterly reports at the “midnight hour,” give GED tests to 100 students in one month like a “flash of lightening, and convince the FPS that investing in the ALC for technology and

computer programs would make them “shine like a star.”

I met and worked with hundreds of people in various agencies and community programs; and although I was often like a “deer in the headlights,” I finally started to see the “big picture.” Has anyone ever tried to get into Oklahoma Scoring or SIMS when you need to enter or retrieve data quickly? Those programs are “slower than molasses” when everything is urgent. Winter was not kind to us this year. Grouchy, grumpy, and doc appeared when we hit our 15th blizzard and our 60th foot of snow. I led the way as whiney.

The spring brought new challenges like follow-up, which was as “clear as mud,” and LACES which only required 429 multiple and duplicated entries. It was a minor task to prepare for and carry out graduation for any number of our 133 graduates. Oh, I forgot to mention the three grants I needed to write, while juggling ten water-filled balloons. When “it rains, it pours.”

Needless to say the year has been busy and full of new learning experiences, but what make this job special is the people. The staff who always goes the “extra mile,” whether it was collecting winter clothing for students, substituting for someone ill, or attending a student’s wedding, is a group of dedicated professionals who believe in a holistic approach to their students. My wizard secretary is the one who makes it possible for me to succeed. She opens doors, clears paths, and always amazes me. I am a Macintosh computer person, but I now have imbedded in my brain—“Right Click, Right Click, Right Click” If I am ever “down in the mouth,” I look at our students.

They are determined, courageous, usually poor, happy, and always, always, wonderful. They truly are as “beautiful as the day is long.” They make my position absolutely perfect!

I promise that I will NEVER use a cliché again.

McGraw-Hill Research Foundation

A paper released by the McGraw-Hill Research Foundation says that funding adult basic education programs is critical to the nation's economic recovery.

You can read the press release about the paper at:

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/mcgraw-hill-research-foundation-policy-paper-cites-urgent-need-for-investment-in-adult-education-121500609.html>

Death By Powerpoint

The focus is more and more on including technology into the classrooms and workplace. At a Special Projects class last fall the instructor asked how many of the class felt that Powerpoint was old and boring.all hands went up! This link gives some information for using PP for effective presentations:

<http://www.cls.utk.edu/pdf/Handout%20Effective%20Presentations.pdf>

New GED Test

The American Council on Education and Pearson, a major education and testing company, are starting a partnership to design and deliver a computer-based G.E.D. test,

aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The new business, which will continue to use the G.E.D. Testing Service name, will not offer the new G.E.D. until 2014. State Core Standards can be found at: <http://www.corestandards.org/>

More information:

<http://www.pearsoned.com/2011/03/15/ace-and-pearson-collaborate-to-transform-ged-test-aligned-with-common-core-state-standards-based-on-ged-21st-century-initiative/>

http://www.pearsonvue.com/about/release/11_03_15_gedtest.asp

New Citizenship Public Education and Awareness Initiative Provides Resources for Adult Education

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro Mayorkas recently announced the launch of the Citizenship Public Education and Awareness Initiative. USCIS serves as an official source of information and resources on citizenship and naturalization. This service helps individuals make informed decisions about citizenship and provides materials and initiatives to support them through the naturalization process.

The new initiative represents USCIS' growing commitment to inform the public about the benefits of citizenship and how shared citizenship rights and responsibilities unify all Americans. It promotes awareness of the rights, responsibilities and importance of U.S. citizenship, and provides free resources to permanent residents as well as immigrant-serving organizations. Individuals and organizations can learn more about citizenship through the USCIS Citizenship Resource

Center—a one-stop Web portal offering free educational tools. All of the initiative’s materials—including a video public service announcement—are available for download at the links above. Organizations are encouraged to use them in their efforts to reach permanent residents with citizenship information. A Civics and Citizenship Toolkit is available for eligible organizations, including adult education centers, which must first register at the toolkit site to receive it.

Math

Dividing with Pictures

<http://zerosumruler.wordpress.com/>

This website has examples on how to use pictures while dividing fractions. It also has links to other math blogs and sites.

Zerosum ruler is explained here and you can order in pdf more lessons and a template for making a zerosum ruler.

Divisibility Rules

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Mastering-Mathematics---Divisibility-Rules&id=6212676>

To master mathematics, you have to know the rules. The more tools you have in that tool shed, the more likely that one will get the job done. Here we explore divisibility properties for the the numbers up to 11. Once you add these properties to your arsenal, you will be that much further along to mastering this most difficult subject.

Hold the Calculators: Let’s Talk About Math!

Many children, when learning to read, are encouraged by their teachers to retell all they remember about a story in order to build their comprehension skills. But can similar comprehension strategies be applied to mathematics? Researchers at **North Carolina State University** say that when teachers work with kids to talk through math problems, kids do a better job of absorbing and understanding the content.

<http://news.ncsu.edu/releases/mathtal/>



In this country-- it is either a snowman or a mudman!!

Happy Summer!

