

## Advanced-Level ESOL Students

Promising Practices 26

### Program Puzzler

In 2006, NRS (the National Reporting System) changed the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) levels, which eliminated the higher advanced-level students. As an ESOL instructor, you know that the population of students you once served has not disappeared just because the level has. Now you are faced with the predicament of non-native English speakers who place beyond the accepted NRS ESOL levels but still very much need ESOL services. Many are eager to enter postsecondary institutions, but they do not yet have the English language skills to succeed in that environment, nor do they seem to fit into a classroom full of native English speakers preparing to take the GED (General Educational Development) test. Where does this student population fit? How can your Aspire (Adult Basic and Literacy Education) program help students transition? What transition services could you offer?

### Peer Perspective

Students may attend any Aspire classes regardless of the status of how they are being tracked in AspireLink. A student who places into an ABE (Adult Basic Education) level but is a non-native English speaker may attend an ESOL class. For reporting purposes, the student must be tracked in ABE and, therefore, tested accordingly using either CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems), the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) 9/10, or WorkKeys.

Start with goal-setting! Conferencing with the student about his or her goals allows teachers to determine where to appropriately place a student. ESOL students can transition to any of the following: ABE–basic skills or GED preparation classes, TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) preparation classes, postsecondary education, or the workplace. Some programs are offering a formal transition class to serve the advanced ESOL population. Transitions classes simulate a postsecondary environment in order to prepare students for entering college. Other programs are choosing to embed transitions strategies into existing classes.

### Timely Tips

Consult your program's NCTN (National Career Transitions Network) Toolkit, which addresses such topics as program models, partnerships and collaborations, recruitment, assessment, counseling, curriculum and instruction, and planning your program. The toolkit provides reproducible resources and planning tools on those topics for transitions work in the classroom.

### Transition Strategies

- Provide academic skills such as essays, high vocabulary, reading, critical thinking skills, note-taking, study skills, and advanced listening and speaking skills.
- Use a class syllabus so students know what is being taught each class period.
- Consider managed enrollment such as an eight-week class where students can see the class has a beginning and end date.
- Assign regular homework.
- Invite guest speakers from the local college and have college information available in the classroom.

- Provide advising services for postsecondary preparation such as helping students understand the education system and financial aid and visit colleges.
- Teach interviewing skills and orienting to the workplace culture.
- Integrate computer instruction into the curriculum.

### Added Insights

The *Ohio Aspire Transitions Framework* is available for programs to help students transition from Aspire to postsecondary education and training and/or to work.

To download a copy, visit the Ohio Board of Regents (OBR) Aspire website at <http://uso.edu/network/workforce/able/reference/transition/Transitions-Framework.pdf>

The NCSALL (National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy) models provide more examples of transition components that teachers can integrate into ESOL classes. Basically, creating a classroom that simulates a community college environment, contextualizing teaching and learning to reflect necessary skills and current trends in the workplace, and ultimately providing intensive learning opportunities will all better prepare students for a transition.

For more information, visit [http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/op\\_collegetransitions.pdf](http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/research/op_collegetransitions.pdf)

“The Transition from Adult Literacy ESL Programs to Academic Reading and Writing: Next Steps for English Language Learners.”

By Lisa Gardner Flores, April 2007. *Literacy Links*, 11(1). Available from the Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning (TCALL), Texas A&M University, College Station, TX. <https://tcall.tamu.edu/library.html>

*Supporting Adult English Language Learners' Transitions to Postsecondary Education..* CAELA Brief

By Julie Mathews-Aydinli, September 2006. Available from the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA), Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC. [www.cal.org/caela/esl\\_resources/briefs/transition.html](http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/briefs/transition.html)

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