By Dr. Cody Davidson, Director of Administrative Leadership

It’s not time for the Derby yet, but the first two-thirds of the year have flown by and we recently celebrated the first official day of spring. With only a few months remaining in this fiscal year, many of our students are nearing the final stretch of earning their high school equivalency diploma.

As we all know, you can’t earn your high school equivalency diploma without taking the test – eight of them, to be specific. So, here is a report on the current field of GED®-seekers hoping to cross the finish line by June 30 – and many of them much, much sooner than that!

As of March 6, Kentucky Adult Education had more than 4,800 GED®-seeking students who have attempted at least one GED Ready™ test, but have yet to complete their GED® test. Unfortunately, more than 2,800 of all these students have yet to pass the very first GED Ready™ test – that’s more than half! Also, in this group of more-than-2,800 students, there were more than 1,600 students entered at NRS levels 4, 5, or 6.

In addition to these 4,800 GED®-seeking students, there are another 430 students who entered at or are currently at NRS levels 4, 5, or 6 in the reading, language, and/or math. In this group, 190 are now at level 5 or 6 and have not taken a Ready™ test. Another 113 students entered at NRS level 4, but are at an NRS level 6 in reading or math and have not taken a GED Ready™ test.

What our data is telling us is – it’s hard to finish a long race (e.g., an eight-test race) without taking the tests, particularly the first one. Often, the hardest (ready) test to pass is the first one, but it’s also one of the most important.

Local programs that excel at instructing students from start to finish have repeatedly said how important it is to test and to “test boldly.”

Some students are closing in on the finish line. More than 2,000 students have passed one (643), two (635), or three (743) parts of the test. This will come as no surprise to any of you, but the last test for most students is the same test – math. Of the 743 students with only one test left, 14 only need science, 17 only need social studies, 90 only need RLA, but 622 still need to pass the operational math test.

As we near the home stretch, I encourage you to focus in on students who are 1) ready to take that first test and have not done so, 2) students who have passed some, but not all parts, but are certainly candidates for walking in your spring graduation, and 3) students who lack just one more test – particularly those in math.

And they’re off!
On March 13, the new KYAE Lesson Bank launched. The bank, located online at lessonbank.kyae.ky.gov, features more than 100 standards-based lessons created by KYAE instructors.

The lessons and their units have undergone a rigorous vetting process to ensure they are relevant and appropriate to the adult learner. The required use of the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education and the KYAE Employability Standards in these lessons and units helps ensure that students are exposed to the critical skills and knowledge expected and required for transition to college and technical training programs as well as for getting and keeping a job.

Though anyone from anywhere may search and preview lessons on the site, only those who create a free account may download a lesson. Even with an account, only new lesson submissions will be accepted only from KYAE instructors and contractors using the provided digital KYAE lesson templates.

Rachel Etienne of StandardsWork, Inc., says, “The KYAE lesson bank is one of the very few resources of its kind in the adult education space to date. As states and programs begin and continue to roll out CCR implementation efforts around the country, the lesson bank offers vetted and aligned classroom material that can be used to train instructors and for immediate use with students. As a national ELA/literacy coach working to support the efforts of so many educators, I am grateful for this valuable contribution to the field.”

The video of the webinar can be accessed by clicking here.

Kentucky Adult Education’s innovative work in creating and contextualizing employment standards in adult education instruction, as well as the launch of the new-and-improved lesson bank, was recently featured in Connections, a publication of the National Career Pathways Network.

Sharon Johnston, KYAE director of college and career prep, says, “We are so proud and honored that the hard work of talented lesson developers from across the commonwealth – our own KYAE instructors and contractors – is gaining national recognition.”

To read the article, written by Johnston, click here.
his degree. He would go back to the center and mentor other students, encouraging them to keep on pushing themselves.

“Once his confidence had improved and he realized what he was capable of, Dallas began to conquer more issues in his life. For example, he faced the judge in Family Court and fought for his rights to share custody of his daughter. He is now on a positive track with his sobriety, his family, and his education.

“Dallas is currently on track to complete his associate’s degree as a chemical operator at Ashland KCTCS system and plans to search for a job immediately. If a job offer doesn’t occur quickly, he plans to transfer his credits to Morehead State University and continue his education by working towards a bachelor’s degree in physics and engineering. He is now determined and inspired to keep reaching higher and setting new goals for himself.”

Greenup County GED* graduate Jerry “Dallas” Johnson was recently selected as a runner-up for the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Outstanding Adult Learner of the Year Award.

Dallas, nominated by KYAE instructor Lee Ann Branham, enrolled in adult education as a requirement of drug court in order to get his diploma. Lee Ann wrote the following about Dallas:

“While studying to improve his math, he tested for the NCRC and received a silver certificate. He then improved his TABE scores to as high as he could go, and passed his GED* exam with scores well over the 150 benchmark. He enrolled in college in January and tested out of developmental classes.

“Dallas attended class with his identical twin brother and proved to be a role model to him and to others. He was excited to learn new things and was happy to share that enthusiasm with fellow classmates. Oftentimes, you would find him staying after class to help a classmate grasp a concept and complete their work.

“Dallas continued his enrollment at the Greenup Learning Center during his first semester in college. At that time, he did not have the confidence in himself to succeed on his own. He took his coursework in to have AE instructors check it over and provide guidance—although he needed very little. Eventually, his confidence grew when he started receiving the highest scores in his electrical classes while working toward

New WIOA-related verbiage required for recruitment materials

You will begin to see some new verbiage under the KYAE logo on recruitment and other materials, “A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network.” This verbiage is the “common identifier” established by the U.S. Department of Labor, as required by WIOA. This common identifier will be used by all partners in the one-stop system as a “brand” of sorts to help job-seekers and employers readily access services.

Please include this common identifier on any materials your program produces and distributes to the public. For more information about the common identifier, contact Missy Brownson at missy.brownson@ky.gov or (502) 892-3014.
Resources for incarcerated students reentering society

By Natalie Cummins, Associate, Administrative Leadership

Programs have asked what resources are available to help incarcerated students reenter society upon their release. We’ve recently begun discussion with the Department of Corrections (DOC) on the issue, and they shared a couple of websites that should be of interest:

- [http://corrections.ky.gov/reentry/Pages/default.aspx](http://corrections.ky.gov/reentry/Pages/default.aspx)
- [http://www.kentuckyreentry.org/](http://www.kentuckyreentry.org/)

One program has already been able to help a student exiting jail by using these links.

One of the Program Administrators from the Re-Entry Branch, Kerry Mears, will present information related to their services at the May Directors’ Meeting.

In the meantime, I encourage you to check out these links and find the Re-Entry Council for your area. You can sign up for your Council’s meetings and get a better understanding of the providers who are working together in your area to serve this population. Additionally, more program administrators are being hired by DOC in the near future.

We hope to have the names and regions put together in a reference map for you at the May meeting as well, so that you will have a contact person for further situations.

KYAE leadership participates in national initiatives

- **Reecie Stagnolia**, vice president for adult education, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, contributed to a report that was recently launched by Digital Promise, a nonprofit organization committed to accelerating innovation in education to improve opportunities to learn. The report, *Accelerating Change: A Guide to the Adult Learning Ed-Tech Market*, demystifies the adult learning market landscape by identifying customer segments, defining their needs and pointing to the untapped potential to make a significant impact. To read the report, [click here](http://corrections.ky.gov/reentry/Pages/default.aspx).

- **Dr. Jacqueline Korengel**, assistant vice president of Kentucky Adult Education, is a new member of the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) professional development committee. As a member of the committee, Korengel will help with the promulgation of resources and the planning of the National Training Institute, among other things.

- **Dr. Cody Davidson**, director of administrative leadership for Kentucky Adult Education, has been selected to serve on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Information Technology Support Center (ITSC) Steering Committee. According to the Office of Workforce Investment, “The WIOA ITSC will engage with states to explore and support strategies and approaches to enabling integration of data and applications across programs relative to integrated service delivery, shared case management, and performance accountability processes, including providing support to states as they engage with their Local Workforce Boards on technology infrastructure issues.”
KYAE staff awarded grant to attend training from PIAAC

Kentucky Adult Education was recently awarded a training grant to attend a three-day training regarding the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Survey of Adult Skills data. This international survey is conducted in more than 40 countries and measures the key cognitive and workplace skills needed for individuals to participate in society and for economies to prosper.

Kentucky Adult Education is partnering with the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS) to develop education- and workforce-related briefs to inform the work around implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), as well assist adults in gaining the educational level and workforce skills necessary to successfully gain and retain employment.

Natasha Murray, KYAE senior associate for administrative leadership, wrote and received the grant. Dr. Cody Davidson, KYAE director of administrative leadership, and Scott Secamiglio and Devin McGhee, both of KCEWS, are members of the research team.

How do you make your promotional materials disappear at an event?

When you consider your audience at an event and provide materials targeting that audience, you’ll help ensure that your promotional materials disappear!

Dr. Kay Combs, program director for McCracken and Graves counties, has been using the recently created KYAE-branded coloring sheets at kid-heavy community outreach events at churches and kindergarten registration events. Kay, who has been purchasing large packs of crayons from the Dollar Tree and handing out one crayon per sheet, says, “I am finding the kids are really liking the coloring sheets and are more excited about taking these at the events.” Kay was pleased to discover that, while these color sheets are more adult-focused, there are also kid-focused coloring/activity sheets available on the KYAE Recruitment Resources page (“Color-in placemats,” under “Restaurant-Related.”)

You may be asking, why are we concerned with kids picking up promotional items? Well, where there are kids, there are adults – adults who may hang up their child’s latest masterpiece (along with your program’s information) on the refrigerator!

The photos to the right were taken at the WKCTC Kindergarten Ready Fair. Kay says, about the event, “The kids and parents took a lot of our stuff … We have received a few calls from this event, but (we did) a lot of networking with the local HANDS program at the Health Department – part of their requirement is the mothers have to be working on their GED* while in their program.”

Check It Out!

By Gayle Box, Senior Associate, College and Career Prep

It’s not often that a national lesson repository includes adult education lessons in addition to K-12 lessons, but Open Educational Resources does. OER is a digital library containing lessons on any subject at any level. When I searched for adult education lessons using their advanced search menu, I found only 14 lessons for English/Language Arts, but found 242 adult education math lessons listed. It allows me to then refine the search to a particular math topic, material type or standard. Users may even rate the lessons.