



SHOP TALK # 32: Five Adult Education Models for Transitioning Adults to Postsecondary Opportunities

Addressing transition issues for adult learners is receiving growing attention. The New England Literacy Resource Center at World Education, Inc.¹ has identified five distinct models emerging: Advising, GED-Plus, ESOL, Career Pathways, and College Preparatory. Each has its strengths and limitations. Which of these models best articulates your services and considers resources and the needs of your students?

Advising Model

The goal is to raise awareness of postsecondary options, including financial aid and admissions procedures. Information is shared through presentations and workshops as well as individual advising sessions. This model cultivates ongoing relationships among adult education programs, students, and colleges.

GED-Plus Model

The goal is to accelerate learning for adult education students interested in postsecondary education and training. This model provides some alignment of the GED curriculum to include additional academic and/or student success skills and concurrent preparation for the GED and college entrance. It usually operates as part of an established educational pathway for adults and can impact a large number of students. (Note: in Texas, the Intensive Summer Program may be considered a GED-Plus Model.)

ESOL Model

The goal is to reduce the time and expense of additional English language study at the start of college academic studies. It focuses on advanced language skills required for academic settings and has well articulated curricula with clear academic benchmarks. It is usually an intensive program.

Career Pathway Model

The goal is to get students with limited education into advanced training and college level programs in high wage, high employment sectors. It contextualizes teaching and learning of basic education and technical skills around a specific employment sector, delivers curriculum in manageable stepping stones to career preparation and credentials/certificates, and ensures relevance to available jobs when accompanied by employer involvement.

College Prep Model

The goal is to enable students to transition successfully into college level courses or at the very least to begin their college career at the upper tier of developmental education. It simulates college in its delivery format and integrates academic preparation in reading, writing, and math, career and personal counseling, and practice using technology.

¹ *Transitioning Adults to College: Adult Basic Education Program Models* (Zafft, Kallenbach, and Spohn, 2006). A NCSALL Occasional Paper. Models shared at COABE 2009. To access the full report, visit the National College Transition Network website and click on Program Development, www.collegetransition.org