SHOP TALK # 64: TISESL
A Pathway to Collaboration and the World of Work

The Texas Industry-Specific English as a Second Language (TISESL) curricula are alive and well in the Fort Worth ISD’s Adult Education Program. Sofia Zamarripa, Director of Adult Education, and Aida Morossini Martinez, Program Coordinator, make a habit of partnering with a variety of industries to deliver TISESL instruction.

In 2009, Fort Worth implemented the TISESL manufacturing curriculum with Traulsen, a manufacturer of commercial grade refrigerators and freezers. Thereafter, the company saw a 25% increase in safety among its employees. In 2010, the program served the school district’s cafeteria employees, and in 2012 the district’s custodial staff requested an ESL class. The district’s maintenance manual was used to integrate instruction with the vocabulary skills from the TISESL manufacturing curriculum. In addition, adult education is currently implementing the stand alone Employability curriculum in 50% of its ESL classes and some ABE classes as well.

One of Fort Worth’s most recent TISESL successes has been a joint venture with Stone Academy, which grooms students for the real world of healthcare occupations. It provides simulated and hands-on training, routine testing, evaluation and virtual-aided training necessary to increase students’ participation, thus ensuring that each student comprehends and retains the information necessary to succeed in becoming a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA). Graduates are then eligible to take the Texas Skills Examination and National Nurse Assessment Program (NNAAP) Exam.

Stone Academy’s Director Nikki Pollard approached adult education to partner in the instruction for students wanting CNA training. The TISESL healthcare curriculum was used to introduce a group of seven ESL students, two ESL transition students, and one student with a GED® certificate to the applications of healthcare, industry-related terminology, and basic body systems. Pollard herself started out as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) and is now a licensed vocational nurse (LVN) and owner of Stone Academy. Knowing that adult learners would face multiple obstacles to successful participation and completion, Pollard and her adult education partner set about finding solutions. Through a 21st Century Grant, Clayton “Yes” Center was able to provide childcare. Christ Church Assembly of God provided space for the classes, and the Women’s Center of Tarrant County covered tuition costs through a United Way grant. Workforce Solutions paid for eight weeks of on-the-job training/employment with Trail Lake Nursing and Rehab. Klarus Home Care provided job placement. Ten students enrolled in the pilot; nine completed CNA training; eight received their CNA certification, and four were employed at the beginning of the summer.

Lessons learned during the pilot:
- Further tweak the TISESL curriculum for low level ESL learners
- Extend the CNA training for English language learners
- Make sure expectations of all partners are clear

New TISESL initiatives for 2012-2013 include partnerships with Meadow Burke, a concrete construction firm, and the Ismaili Center. For more information, contact Sofia Zamarripa (sofia.zamarippa@fwisd.org) or Aida Martinez (aida.martinez@fwisd.org).