

THE MICHIGAN ADULT, COMMUNITY &
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION PRESENTS THE

2025 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 11-13, 2025 | Virtual



WELCOME TO THE 2025 MACAE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

A Message from the Director

Dear Conference Attendees,

On behalf of the Michigan Adult, Community, and Alternative Education (MACAE) Association, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 MACAE Fall Conference. This year's theme, "Rooted in Resilience: Strengthening Communities Through Lifelong Education," highlights the vital role we play in empowering adult learners and fostering strong, vibrant communities across Michigan.

This gathering provides an invaluable opportunity for educators, administrators, and partners to share knowledge, strengthen connections, and explore innovative strategies that advance opportunity, equity, and lifelong learning.

As we come together, let us celebrate the resilience of our learners, the dedication of our educators, and the impact of our programs in building thriving communities.

Thank you for the important work you do every day to make lifelong education a cornerstone of growth and opportunity.

Sincerely,



Kristen Swiantek
Director



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.: President's Reception – Location TBD (For registered conference guests only)

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

8:30 – 8:50 a.m.: Welcome & Overview of Conference

8:50 – 9:50 a.m.: Keynote Address – Chris Wilson

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.: Breakout Session 1

11:10 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.: Breakout Session 2

12:10 – 12:50: p.m.: Lunch

12:50 – 1:50 p.m.: Breakout Session 3

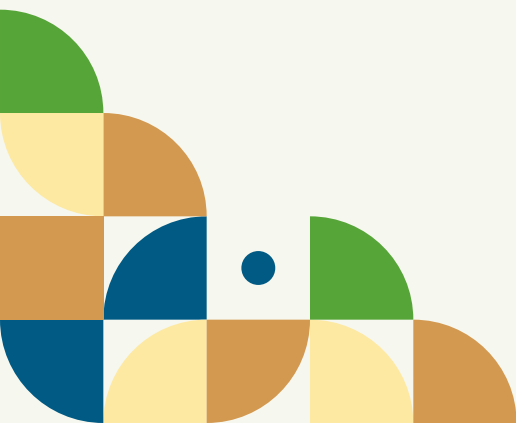
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.: Breakout Session 4

3:10 – 4:10 p.m.: Breakout Session 5

OR

3:10 – 4:40 p.m.: Director's Toolkit (For directors and program coordinators only)

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.: MACAE Night Out! – Location TBD (For registered conference guests only)



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Thursday, November 13, 2025

8:30 -8:50 a.m.: Welcome & Annual Meeting

9:00 – 10:00 am.: Breakout Session 6

10:10 – 11:10 a.m.: Breakout Session 7

11:20 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.: Breakout Session 8

12:20 – 12:50 p.m.: Lunch

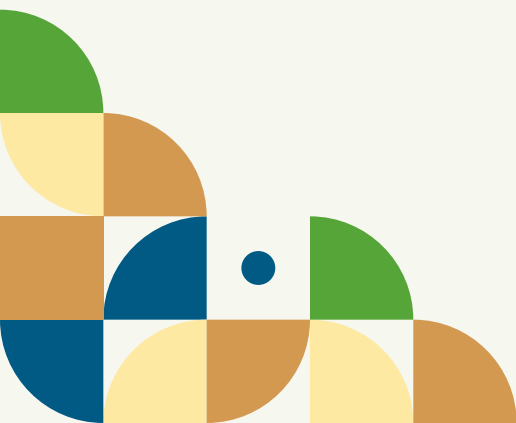
12:50 – 1:20 p.m.: Awards

1:20 – 1:50 p.m.: Keynote Address – MACAE President Ted Kroll

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.: Breakout Session 9

3:10 – 4:10 p.m.: State Updates from LEO-WD's Adult Education Office

4:10 – 4:15 p.m.: Closing



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

DAY 1

Tuesday, November 12, 2025

CHRIS WILSON

Author & Social Justice Advocate



Chris Wilson is an author, mentor, and public speaker whose life embodies the power of second chances. Raised in a tough Washington, D.C. neighborhood, Chris was sentenced to life in prison at eighteen. Refusing to let that define him, he created a “Master Plan” for self-improvement—dedicating himself to education, personal growth, and entrepreneurship. After years of hard work, he earned his freedom and now leads initiatives that create opportunities for returning citizens. His inspiring memoir chronicles his journey from a life sentence to a life of purpose and impact.

DAY 2

Wednesday, November 13, 2025

TED KROLL

MACAE President & Director of Adult and Alternative Education at Livingston ESA



Ted Kroll has over 25 years of experience in K-12 and adult education. He spent 17 years with Pinckney Community Schools as a teacher, Assistant Principal, and leader in student activities. Now Director of Adult and Alternative Education at the Livingston Educational Service Agency (LESA), he oversees the WAY Livingston Plus+ School and Livingston ESA Adult Education. Ted also serves on the Livingston County Literacy Coalition board and as Education Liaison with the Livingston Juvenile Treatment Court. As President of MACAE, he champions inclusive, high-quality education for learners of all ages.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Key:

Adult Basic Education/Literacy/Community Education 
Alternative Education 
English as a Second Language 
High School Equivalency/High School Completion 
Mental Health 
*Denotes Vendor

Tuesday, November 11, 2025:

6:00 - 9:00 P.M.

President's Reception - Location TBD
(For registered conference guests only)

Wednesday, November 12, 2025:

8:30 - 8:50 A.M.

Welcome & Overview of Conference

8:50 - 9:50 A.M.

Keynote Address

Chris Wilson, Author & Social Justice Advocate

10:00 - 11:00 A.M.

Breakout Session 1 (Choose 1):

Welcome to GED 101!* 

Mellissa Hultstrand, Michigan GED State Relationship Manager, GED Testing Service

This session is for those NEW to preparing students for the GED tests. We will detail “the basics” of the GED program: key components and structure of the exam, research data and student outcomes, tools for the classroom, content overview and key strategies, and invaluable resources found on our website for both educators and students! Participants will leave with the fundamental knowledge of the GED Testing Program to support student success to earn their high school diploma/equivalency credential.

Career Lab Overview: Bridging Adult Education & Workforce Success

Danielle Barrette, Career Navigator Coordinator, Troy Continuing Education and Katie Thompson, IET Coordinator, Troy Continuing Education

The Career Lab provides adult English as a Second Language learners with the tools and support needed to successfully transition from education into the workforce. Through employer partnerships, one-on-one coaching, and career-focused workshops, participants gain the skills and confidence to navigate today's job market. This session will showcase the Career Lab model and its role in strengthening connections between classrooms, careers, and communities.

A Critical View of Adult Learning to Lifelong Learning: Rethinking Data, Theory, and Practice in a Twofold Learning Ecosystem

Hamid Ahari, Literacy Coordinator, Literacy Center of West Michigan

This presentation critically examines the shift from adult learning to lifelong learning, drawing on comparative data, theoretical perspectives, and adaptive learning strategies in both offline and online contexts. While adult learning has traditionally focused on specific developmental stages and formal settings, lifelong learning emphasizes an ongoing, self-directed process that extends beyond these boundaries.

The session also explores the role of digital transformation and the integration of AI in our learning journeys, highlighting the implications for individual empowerment, workforce adaptability, and social transformation.

Microlearning for Workforce Success: Small Lessons, Big Impact

Brianna Kerth, Senior Instructional Designer, EDSI

Discover how microlearning is reshaping skill-building for adult learners and jobseekers. Explore short, targeted learning experiences that boost engagement and knowledge retention, see real examples for workforce readiness, and learn best practices for design and delivery. Participants will receive a microlearning template and create a module to take back to their programs.

11:10 A.M. - 12:10 P.M.

Breakout Session 2 (Choose 1):

Co-Designing a Health Literacy Class for Refugee Learners

McKenna Cook, Family Literacy Program Coordinator, Literacy Center of West Michigan

Navigating the U.S. healthcare system can be overwhelming for anyone, especially refugee newcomers facing language, cultural, and system barriers. This session explores how health literacy strengthens communities through co-designed programs, deep listening, addressing common barriers, and measuring impact with meaningful data.

Increase GED Scores with Aztec*

Shomari Miller, Senior Account Manager, Aztec

Aztec dynamic GED programs make learning engaging and effective! This session will cover how current educators are using Aztec's program features to create personalized study plans that fully support students every step of the way. Aztec's innovative tools build confidence and skills, helping learners pass the GED with ease!

Community Education Roundtable: Sharing Ideas, Tackling Challenges

Brian Puffer, Community Education Director, Saline Community Education and Nancy Crandell, Director of Community Education Services & Operations, Bedford Public Schools, & Connie Cox, Coordinator, Milan Community Education

Join us for an engaging roundtable on key areas of Community Education, including Facilities, Before and After Care, Summer Camp planning, Registration Software, and more. We'll spotlight the work of the Community Education Committee—meeting monthly both virtually and in person—and share ways to get involved. The session will also cover strategies for helping your superintendent and school board understand the value and impact of Community Education. Bring your questions and ideas for discussion—and don't miss the door prizes!

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and How They May Affect Us Throughout Life - Part 1

Zoe Lyons, Capacity Building Consultant, Nonprofit Network & Robert Powell, Chief Executive Officer, Family Service and Children's Aid

This 2-hour presentation is on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood can affect us long term. ACEs can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs are linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. However, ACEs can be prevented. Preventing ACEs can help children and adults thrive. The science and research show that children who have high ACEs, may face a life of risky health and social behaviors, chronic health conditions and even early death, without intervention. This presentation will educate on ACEs and how each of us can make a difference moving forward and how ACEs affect our population. It also includes information on brain development, epigenetics, potential interventions, and how to build resilience in the lives of our children and our communities.

12:10 - 12:50 P.M.

Lunch

12:50 - 1:50 P.M.

Breakout Session 3 (Choose 1):

Updates from GED Testing Service*

Mellissa Hultstrand, Michigan GED State Relationship Manager, GED Testing Service

Come learn about the many GED® updates we have made in the last year and then we will focus on the GED® Educator Portal. Let us show you how easy it is to locate valuable teaching resources, recordings of professional development sessions, classroom materials and print ready guides (all of which are free!) for GED® Instructors. We will also highlight student accounts so you have a better understanding of what Students see when they log into their accounts.

Best Practices for Beginning ESL: Tools, Tips, and Activities That Work*

Anne Damiecka, ESOL Specialist, Cambridge University Press & Assessment

Teaching adults at the beginning level of English proficiency—especially those with limited or interrupted formal education—requires thoughtful strategies and intentional design. This interactive session will highlight best practices for working with beginning-level ESL learners, with a focus on helping students start speaking from day one and develop foundational writing skills. Participants will explore several low-prep, high-impact activities they can implement immediately, as well as instructional resources and research-informed approaches. The session will also examine how the Ventures curriculum supports instruction for this population. Walk away with a clearer understanding of what works—and why—for beginning-level learners.

AI in Alternative Education Classrooms: Practical Tools That Work

Renae Gowen, Dean/Community Liaison, Asher/Southgate & Karl Khoury, Principal/Director Tri-County Education Center, Ferndale Public Schools

AI is here—and it's built for busy educators! Explore Brisk, NotebookLM, and other AI tools that make lesson planning, study guides, and quizzes easier than ever. Get hands-on tips to bring AI into Alt Ed classrooms with confidence and creativity.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and How They May Affect Us Throughout Life - Part 2

Zoe Lyons, Capacity Building Consultant, Nonprofit Network & Robert Powell, Chief Executive Officer, Family Service and Children's Aid

This presentation is on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood can affect us long term. ACEs can include violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Preventing ACEs can help children and adults thrive. The science and research show that children who have high ACEs, may face a life of risky health and social behaviors, chronic health conditions and even early death, without intervention. This presentation also includes information on brain development, epigenetics, potential interventions, and how to build resilience in the lives of our children and our communities.

2:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Breakout Session 4 (Choose 1):

From Classroom to Capitol: Empowering Educators to Advocate

Alexandra Stamm, Education Policy Analyst, Michigan League for Public Policy

In this session, Alex will empower educators with the tools and strategies they need to feel comfortable and confident advocating at the Capitol. Participants will learn the fundamentals of advocacy/lobbying and practical ways to influence state budget decisions that impact education.

Understanding College for Adult Learners

Patrick Brown, Director of Adult Student Attainment, Michigan College Access Network

Are adult learners able to go to college in Michigan with resources and support? This session will explore what resources are available for adult learners as it relates to supports as they transition to college. We will explore the statewide financial aid scholarship programs including Promise Zones, Michigan Reconnect and the Michigan Achievement Scholarship.

Child and Adult Development Basics

Kristen Allen, Adult Education Coordinator, Warren Woods Public Schools

Loosely based upon Ruby Payne's "Emotional Poverty" and "Navigating Emotional Realities with Adults", this session can be taken as a stand-alone session or part 1 of 3 in a series on the emotional lives of our students. We will explore child development stages as well as adult development stages and how both impact the adult student and the teacher in the classroom.

From Coffee to Careers: Supporting Learners in Alternative Education

Karl Khoury, Principal/Director Tri-County Education Center, Ferndale Public Schools & Renae Gowen, Dean/Community Liaison, Asher/Southgate

This session will highlight best practices for engaging and supporting today's alternative education students. Participants will explore strategies to strengthen relationships, address barriers to learning, and create pathways that lead to academic achievement and career readiness.

3:10 - 4:10 P.M.

Breakout Session 5 (Choose 1):

Learning Without Limits: GED, Reentry, and Lifelong Education in a Correctional Setting

Liz Alpert, LLMSW, Transition Manager, Washtenaw ISD/Washtenaw County Jail & Jenna Blair, School and Interagency Transition Supervisor, Washtenaw ISD

This session will explore how adult education inside correctional settings can transform lives and communities. Presenters will share firsthand experience managing a comprehensive GED and high school completion program within a county jail, serving a population that includes students with special education needs, adults re-entering society, and learners with significant academic gaps. Using a trauma-informed and restorative lens, the team integrates Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), special education accommodations, and transitional services to foster not just academic achievement, but personal resilience and long-term reintegration success. Attendees will gain insight into instructional strategies, partnership building, and the unique challenges and successes of delivering lifelong education in a jail setting. This session emphasizes how even in the most restrictive environments, education can be a vehicle for healing, empowerment, and community transformation.

From Prompt to Practice: AI Tools for Adult Educators

Abbey Weathers, Volunteer & Internship Manager, Kalamazoo Literacy Council & Dr. Elizabeth Isidro, Associate Professor of Literacy Studies, Western Michigan University

Discover how artificial intelligence can help you create engaging, personalized learning materials for adult learners. Using real-life scenarios, you will design activities and exercises for different literacy and language levels, build interactive games and conversation prompts, and apply AI ethically while keeping learning human-centered. You'll leave with practical tools, creative ideas, and the confidence to use AI in a way that supports every learner.

Pairing Competency-Based Education with Project-Based Learning: A Powerful Approach*

Maidie Baker, Director of Instruction, Centric Learning

This presentation explores how combining Competency-Based Education (CBE) with Project-Based Learning (PBL) creates a dynamic and personalized learning experience, particularly suited for alternative education students. By focusing on mastery of specific skills and knowledge through hands-on, real-world projects, this approach empowers students to take ownership of their learning journey. Attendees will learn how CBE allows students to progress at their own pace, ensuring they fully understand concepts before moving forward, while PBL encourages critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Together, these models foster deeper engagement, academic growth, and practical readiness, making them an ideal framework for supporting diverse learners in alternative education settings.

Talent Pipeline Management

Tiffany Graden, Director of Workforce and Education, Focus HOPE

Adult education needs to be at the table with employers and be a viable solution for critical talent needs for businesses. This session explores and introduces TPM- Talent Pipeline Management, an innovative movement through the Chamber of Commerce and apprenticeship programs throughout Michigan.

Language for Life: Building Workforce and Community Participation Skills with Ventures*

Anne Damiecka, ESOL Specialist, Cambridge University Press & Assessment

Adult ESL learners enter the classroom with a wide range of goals—from securing employment or entering training programs to engaging more fully in community life. This session demonstrates how the fourth edition of Ventures series meets those needs by combining academic language instruction with practical, real-world application.

Participants will explore how lessons develop transferable skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and digital literacy, while preparing students for CASAS and directly aligning with ELPS. The session will highlight flexible strategies and classroom-ready activities that can be adapted across levels and modalities (in-person, hybrid, or remote).

Educators will leave with tools to help learners build stronger language skills, greater confidence, and the ability to participate more fully in their workplaces, families, and communities.

3:10 - 4:40 P.M.

Introducing the Director's Toolkit: The New Command Center for Adult Education Programs (For directors and program coordinators only)

Brianna Kerth, Senior Instructional Designer, EDSI & Jennifer Blanchard, Senior Instructional Designer, EDSI

This engaging, hands-on session will guide directors through the Director Toolkit, equipping them with the skills to quickly locate critical resources for program management. Participants will receive a take-home reference sheet to maximize ongoing use of the toolkit and will take part in an in-depth guided tour. They'll then explore the toolkit's sections at interactive stations around the room, building familiarity through active exploration. Finally, attendees will apply their knowledge to solve complex, real-world scenarios, practicing how to find the exact tools, policies, and resources needed for success.

6:00 - 9:00 P.M.

MACAE Night Out! Social Night - Location TBD (For registered conference guests only)

Thursday, November 13, 2025:

8:30 - 8:50 A.M.

Welcome & Annual Meeting

9:00 - 10:00 A.M.

Breakout Session 6 (Choose 1):

All About GED Accommodations* 

Debbie Bergtholdt, Manager of GED Accommodations, GED Testing Service/Pearson VUE

Requirements for testing accommodations on exams are ever-changing. It is important for students, parents, advocates, and instructors to understand what accommodations are available on high stakes tests and that they may differ from what is available in an educational setting. This session will discuss the types of accommodations available and how to assist test takers to secure the proper documentation to request them. The importance of leaving high school with an updated IEP will be discussed. We will talk about lower cost testing clinics and agencies that can assist with providing funding for the necessary testing to diagnose and document disabilities. We will preview new issues such as Bluetooth enabled devices and assistive technology. In addition, we will talk about how to work with students with disabilities to ensure that they practice with the accommodations and are comfortable with them before they test. This will be an interactive session and there will be lots of time for questions.

Count on Funding: Maximizing Count Day and Beyond in Alternative Education 

Karl Khoury, Principal/Director Tri-County Education Center, Ferndale Public Schools & Renae Gowen, Dean/Community Liaison, Asher/Southgate

From Count Day attendance to creative grants and low-cost strategies, this session helps you stretch every dollar. Learn how to boost your Count Day numbers, tap into additional funding streams, and get the most for your program and your students.

Digital Literacy Skills For Low Level ESL Learners 

Jessi Pavey, Operations Manager, Kalamazoo Literacy Council & Charles Miller, ESL Adult Learning Services Navigator, Kalamazoo Literacy Council

The Kalamazoo Literacy Council recently completed a 12-week series on teaching digital literacy skills to low level ESL learners. Through that class we discovered several best practices that we are eager to share with you. In this session we will share best practices, our handbook, and curriculum. Join us as we explore the multiple ways you can assist the lowest level English speaker in improving their digital literacy skills.

IET Demystified

Mandi McDonald, Special Initiatives Coordinator, Iosco RESA, Heather Holland, Program Director, Sparta Adult Education, and Karyn Goven, Senior Director of Workforce Development, MiSide

All programs should incorporate or begin to create an IET that supports participants as they move towards a career path. This group will review the IET documents from the state office and learn how to start an IET program.

MAERS Drop-In Q & A Session with LEO-WD

Sue Johnson, Departmental Specialist, LEO-WD and Brian Frazier, LEO-WD

Join us for an open drop-in session focused on the Michigan Adult Education Reporting System (MAERS). Representatives from LEO–Workforce Development (LEO-WD) will be available to answer your questions, provide clarification, and offer hands-on guidance related to MAERS data entry, reporting, and system updates. Whether you're new to MAERS or looking for help with a specific issue, this informal session is your chance to connect directly with state experts and get real-time support.

10:10 - 11:10 A.M.

Breakout Session 7 (Choose 1):

Better Together: Using Ellii+Ventures for Stronger Learner Engagement*

Anne Damiecka, ESOL Specialist, Cambridge University Press & Assessment

Adult ESL educators often navigate the dual challenge of maintaining learner persistence while addressing varied proficiency levels and life demands. This session explores how the Ventures series provides a strong, standards-based foundation for building language, life skills, and classroom community. Discover how integrating Ellii's dynamic digital content—aligned with and extending Ventures core lessons—can boost engagement, support differentiation, and reinforce learner confidence. Together, Ventures and Ellii offer a balanced, flexible instructional partnership that empowers teachers and learners alike, fostering stronger outcomes and a more connected learning environment.

Utilizing AI in Your Job Search

Jennifer Blanchard, Senior Instruction Designer/Facilitator, EDSI

This interactive workshop, Utilizing AI in Your Job Search, equips participants with practical strategies to harness artificial intelligence tools for career success. Participants will learn to define artificial intelligence and chatbots, identify popular AI platforms, and effectively apply them in job searching, resume and cover letter development, interview preparation, and employer research. Objectives include helping job seekers understand AI applications, use chatbots to strengthen application materials, and explore AI-driven tools for personalized job recommendations. The session integrates polls, discussions, and hands-on experimentation with AI chatbots to reinforce learning. Attendees will be able to leverage AI technologies to streamline and enhance their job search process.

Innovative Strategies for Workplace Literacy and Career-Focused English Upskilling*

Tadd Wamester, Senior Director of Workforce & Government Partnerships, EnGen & Katie Thompson, Program Coordinator, Troy Continuing Education

The U.S. adult education system serves 1.5 million learners each year, yet less than 3% of adult English language learners access the instruction they need to fully participate in the workforce. Expanding contextualized, career-aligned English upskilling is critical to workforce inclusion.

Join Tadd Wamester, Senior Director of Workforce & Government Partnerships at EnGen, for a discussion on models that integrate language learning with pre-apprenticeships, IET and pre-IET programs, and employer-based training. Hear how Troy Continuing Education/TRAC's MGTI program is using these strategies to support learner success, and explore how your program can apply these approaches to strengthen local talent pipelines.

Motivational Interviewing in Adult Education

Joy Zug, Adult Education Coordinator, Royal Oak Continuing Education

In this presentation, we will provide a brief overview of what motivational interviewing is and how to implement the basics of the practice. The plan is to break up into groups and put the theory into practice! If you attended this session a few years ago, this would be a great review! Also, there will be updates given and more practice time allowed.

HOPE - Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences

Zoe Lyons, Capacity Building Consultant, Nonprofit Network

This interactive workshop introduces participants to the Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) framework, which emphasizes the powerful role of positive childhood experiences in promoting resilience and lifelong well-being. Participants will explore the four building blocks of HOPE, learn to recognize and amplify strengths in children and families, and gain practical strategies for applying a HOPE-informed, strengths-based approach in their work. Ideal for professionals in education, healthcare, social services, and child welfare, this session offers a refreshing shift from a deficit-based lens to one focused on nurturing hope, connection, and opportunity.

11:20 A.M. - 12:20
P.M.

Breakout Session 8 (Choose 1):

TABE 13/14 and TABE CLAS-E, Forms C & D Updates*

Mike Johnson, National Adult Education Director - TABE, Data Recognition Corporation

This session highlights for teachers and testing administrators the innovative features and updates of these assessments, designed to enhance adult education accuracy and effectiveness. Participants will gain an in-depth understanding of TABE 13 & 14, which comprehensively evaluates reading, mathematics, and language skills. Additionally, we will explore the TABE CLAS-E, focusing on assessing adult learners' English language proficiency in Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking.

A Map is Worth a Thousand Statistics

Joel Render, Adult/Alternative Education Specialist, Livingston ESA

When someone says data, you probably think of statistics or charts, but geographic data can be no less useful. In this session, you'll be introduced to the Google My Maps tool and how it can be used to construct basic maps that model geographic data. We'll also discuss several ways these maps can be used to help programs plan, organize, and facilitate growth.

Use of the TI-30XS MultiView for Algebraic Problems

Pete Roe, Teacher, Detroit Public Schools Adult Education

Many students have trouble with evaluating Algebraic Expressions and Algebraic Equations - especially quadratics. I have had GREAT success with teaching students how to use the TI-30XS MultiView calculator in solving complex Algebraic problems.

Attachment Style Basics

Kristen Allen, Adult Education Coordinator, Warren Woods Public Schools

Loosely based upon Ruby Payne's "Emotional Poverty" and "Navigating Emotional Realities with Adults", this session can be taken as a stand-alone session or part 2 of 3 in a series on the emotional lives of our students. We will explore attachment styles as researched by psychologists John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. With a basic understanding of attachment styles, we will discuss how to use this knowledge in our interactions with adult students and colleagues in the classroom and workplace.

Navigating the Future of High School Equivalency: Testing, Policy, and Credentialing

Tricia Kane, HSE Coordinator, LEO-WD, Adult Education

Join us for an in-depth session designed for educators, workforce professionals, and policy stakeholders focused on the evolving landscape of high school equivalency (HSE) in Michigan and beyond.

This presentation will explore:

- GED® Testing Updates and HiSET® Testing Trends: National and State level testing trends and analytics.
- Policy Updates in High School Equivalency (HSE): Latest updates to HSE policies, including eligibility criteria and state-level initiatives aimed at increasing access and equity in credential attainment.
- Understanding TotalTranscript™ Credentialing: Discover how the TotalTranscript™ system is transforming the way HSE certificates are documented and shared. Learn how this comprehensive credentialing tool supports learners in transitioning to postsecondary education and employment.

This session will provide practical takeaways, data-driven insights, and opportunities for discussion to help you better support learners on their path to high school equivalency.

12:20 - 12:50 P.M.

Lunch

12:50 - 1:20 P.M.

Awards

1:20 - 1:50 P.M.

Keynote Address

Ted Kroll, Director of Adult and Alternative Education, Livingston ESA

We will explore practical strategies to strengthen resilience within your program—among staff, instructors, and participants alike. Building a resilient culture means more than just bouncing back; it's about developing a positive mindset that embraces change, fosters collaboration, and sustains motivation even in challenging times. Participants will learn how to cultivate supportive environments, model adaptive leadership, and embed resilience practices into everyday operations to enhance both individual and program-wide success.

2:00 - 3:00 P.M.

Breakout Session 9 (Choose 1):

Alternative Education Town Hall: Your Questions, Your Voice 

Renae Gowen, Dean/Community Liaison, Asher/Southgate & Karl Khoury, Principal/Director Tri-County Education Center, Ferndale Public Schools

Join fellow alternative educators in an open roundtable conversation. Bring your questions, share your challenges, and leave with new ideas and connections to strengthen your work.

The Michigan State Budget: Process, Priorities, and the Economic and Revenue Factors that Shape It

David Zin, Chief Economist, Michigan Senate Fiscal Agency

An overview of Michigan's State Budget, including both the budget process, where the revenue originates and where it is spent. The presentation will also cover key economic factors that shape both the Michigan economy and the budget, including budget, economic and demographic trends that relate to adult, alternative, and continuing education.

Remote Testing for Proctors on Zoom*

Elizabeth Gotschall, National Programming & Onboarding Specialist, CASAS

Are your proctors afraid to remotely test more than one student at a time? Join us for a training on remotely testing multiple students at the same time. We will be discussing remote testing on Zoom using the <https://etestsonline.org/eTests2/remote/> link. If your program wants to offer more remote testing options for students this fall, this training is a great opportunity for your proctors. We will also cover the student intake process, test security, and offer tips for proctors to intervene if they suspect any test integrity issues.

Corrections Roundtable

Whitney Dettmer, Director of Adult Education, Iosco RESA and Nicole Hatch, Program Coordinator, Iosco RESA

Each year, the "Corrections Roundtable" session is a huge hit, so we're getting the gang together again to share best practices. This is a great space to share and gather ideas from around the state for this unique sector of education. This will also help us to connect and grow our corrections committee.

Identity Development Basics

Kristen Allen, Adult Education Coordinator, Warren Woods Public Schools

Loosely based upon Ruby Payne's "Emotional Poverty" and "Navigating Emotional Realities with Adults", this session can be taken as a stand-alone session or part 3 of 3 in a series on the emotional lives of our students. We will explore some basic concepts on how an individual develops their sense of self and how this impacts interactions in the classroom and workplace. We will also touch on creating a safe space for others as we lead our classrooms and schools.

3:10 - 4:10 P.M.

State Updates

4:10 - 4:15 P.M.

Closing