



# Mindquest Matters

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A Mindquest Academy Newsletter

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## **Mindquest Academy in State's Three-Year Initiative**

The new three-year state initiative, ABE Transition to Post-Secondary, is underway. First year activities begin with the upcoming ABE Transition to Post-Secondary Conference on October 5.

Mindquest Academy (MQA) will play a vital role in the Initiative. The MQA courses fill an important need for curriculum at the college prep level.

In addition to trainings for new MQA teachers and seminars for pilot teachers, Mindquest staff is available to assist ABE programs in connecting with college personnel.

Three Mindquest pilot teachers, Anne Suchomel, Karen Wolters, and Rita Koon, are on the ABE Transitions Initiative Advisory Committee. The committee is charged with assisting in the planning of Initiative activities. Their first task has been to plan the October 5 state conference.

We will be reporting on happenings in the Initiative in Mindquest Matters.

## **Mindquest Training in 07-08**

We are excited about our new delivery of Mindquest training for new teachers this year. We will be using a blended model!

Our first training will be a face-to-face training on December 6-7 at the Minnesota Literacy Council.

We then move to the Internet with teachers participating in six online training modules from February through April.

We will meet face to face in February and again at our final training in May.

At this time, twelve teachers have indicated interest in participating in the training program.

Spread the word to interested teachers!

## **Trainers on Board**

We received very positive feedback about the assistance of the trainers in the training and in independent coaching, and they will be carrying out

that role again with new teachers in the training. Sue Ann Rawlins will join the group from last year: Melissa Chaffee, Paula Freiermuth, Rita Koon, Tammy Twiggs, and Karen Wolters.

### **Pilot Teacher Seminars**

Plans are underway for three seminars for phase one, two and three pilot teachers. The first seminar will be held on October 26 at MLC.

We are looking forward to the rich experience in sharing and learning that occurs when we are all together.

Teachers will be receiving information about the first seminar in mid-October.

### **ABE Transition to Post-Secondary Conference**

The ABE Transition to Post-Secondary Conference will be on Friday, October 5 (all day) at the University of St. Thomas.

The theme is one we can all relate to based on our MQA experience: "The Next Big Dream: Adult Transitions to Post-Secondary."

The keynote will be given by Cynthia Zafft from the National College Transitions Network (NCTC).

There will be two concurrent sessions in the afternoon on these topics: ESL, Accuplacer, academic readiness, career pathways, life skills, Mindquest Academy, and advising.

Registration forms are on the Literacy Training Network: <http://ltn.themlc.org/calendar.html>

### **Transition-to-College Study**

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation is launching a study, the Adult Transitions Longitudinal Study (ATLAS), designed to document educational and economic outcomes for adult students who participate in the New England Adult Basic Education-to-College Transition Project.

The project will follow more than 300 ABE-to-College Transition Project participants enrolled in fall 2007 and spring 2008 programs to determine the factors that contribute to or stand in the way of their success in postsecondary education.

Nellie Mae Education Foundation president, Nicholas Donohue, states that "Thanks to the success of the ABE-to-College Transition Project, we no longer simply talk about a GED when we talk about adult education. This study will help us better understand the barriers to

postsecondary success for program participants, and, ultimately, to move toward a system that allows for continued growth, academic achievement, and success at the highest level for all adults."

### **MQ Meeting with GED Teachers**

A meeting is scheduled with MQ pilot teachers who teach GED students on Friday, September 21 at 1 p.m.

We will discuss ideas for modules and courses to fit various learner profiles in GED and strategies to integrate MQ into a GED curriculum.

The discussion is open to anyone else who does not at this time have GED students.

### **Mindquest Academy Evaluation**

An evaluation of year three (06 - 07) of the pilot and an evaluation summary of the entire three year pilot will soon be available for you to read.

### **Thoughts about Reflective Teaching Practice**

Mary Ann Cunningham Florez, National Center for ESL Literacy Education, has some insights about reflective teaching practice in her article, "Reflective Teaching Practice in Adult

ESL Settings," ([www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)). She notes that reflective practice is an evolving concept which has been influenced by various philosophical and pedagogical theories and says, "One influence is constructivism, which views learning as an active process where learners reflect upon their current and past knowledge and experiences to generate new ideas and concepts."

One of her four steps integral to the reflective process for teachers is to create a plan that incorporates new insights: "Because reflection is conducted not for its own sake but to improve instructional practice, practitioners must link information and insights gained from the reflective process to changes they are making in the classroom. The changes need not be huge—small changes can have an impact on teaching and learning. The important thing is that practitioners incorporate their new insights in their ongoing planning and decision making, observe the impact, and continue the reflective cycle."