



Tarrant Literacy Coalition

opening the door to opportunity.

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Upcoming Events

- Alcon Kids' Vision Fest (2/3)
- Valentine's Day (2/14)
- TCC Service Fair (2/15-16)
- Metroplex Literacy Conference (3/10)
- Corporate Spelling Bee (5/2)

Check the website for a complete calendar of events and contact [Jennifer Paré](#) to have your event added.

Welcome Our Newest Board Members

In December the Tarrant Literacy Coalition welcomed three new members to our board: Alice Allen, founder of Allen and Associates Financial Consulting Service, Allan Crawford, a freelance web developer, and Rob Morris, the Senior Minister at Ridglea Christian Church. To read more about these wonderful people check out their [bios](#). To view a listing of all of our current board members check out the [list](#) on our webpage.

Alcon Kids Vision Fest

Written by: Jennifer Paré

January 13, 2012

[Kids Vision for Life](#) addresses a frequently overlooked national crisis: the number of U.S. school children who have unaddressed vision problems. According to experts, one in four children has a vision problem and, of those, ninety percent do not wear glasses. Children who cannot see well have difficulties reading and learning which often results in consequences for the child, society, and the overall economy.

When children can't see the white board during class, they disengage from learning and are more likely to drop out of school and get into trouble. It is estimated that ninety percent of low literate adults have vision problems as well. One cannot help

but wonder how the lives of individuals in these circumstances might have changed had they received vision care when they were young children.

Kids Vision for Life brings together non-profit organizations, schools, businesses, and community leaders to actively address the issue. In an

effort to eliminate poor vision and its lifelong consequences, Alcon and the Kids Vision for Life Coalition will host

Kids Vision Fest from 11 a.m.—3 p.m., Friday, February 3, at TCC-Trinity River, located at 300 Trinity Campus Circle. Free and open to the public, the event will offer free eye exams and glasses to qualifying children.



Have you heard the buzzzzzzzz?

On Wednesday, May 2, 2012 the Tarrant Literacy Coalition will host its fourth annual Corporate Spelling Bee to generate funds for outreach to community and faith based literacy programs. More than 20 teams of adults from local businesses, organizations and higher education will compete for thousands of dollars in prizes and the coveted "Traveling Trophy". The Bee will be held at 6 pm at TCU's Brown-Lupton University Union. For more information about the Bee, contact [Kathryn Thompson](#).



Spotlight on YOU!



We want to feature you in upcoming issues of the Coalition newsletter. You get to hear about our efforts and events all the time but we really want to hear from you!

Possibilities include:

- Adult learner success stories written by adult learners
- Stories of learner success written by teachers
- Teacher description of instructional strategies or activities that led to student success.
- Stories of professional development
- Highlight an outstanding volunteer
- Recommend articles to be written about a program that you feel is doing a great job.

Please submit stories and articles to: [Jennifer Paré](#)

Be sure to include a short author bio and your program's information .

GED® Next Generation Update

Written by: Jennifer Paré

January 19, 2012

We keep hearing that the GED will be changing in the next couple years, but what do these changes really mean for literacy providers? How will students' needs change once the new test comes out? How can we begin to prepare now?

These were some of the questions we asked of Ann Beeson, sales consultant and founder of Adult Education Specialists, at our community training event on January 17th.

The GED® Next Generation is scheduled to be launched sometime in 2014. The new test will be designed to assess the Common Core State Standards and therefore will be more rigorous than the current assessment which is based on 1999 curriculum standards. It will consist of four parts: literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies and is suspected to no longer include the traditional five-paragraph essay. Instead several extended response questions will be integrated into the four sections. Additionally, the test will be administered only via Computer Based Testing (CBT).

Why are these changes occurring? Pearson VUE and the American Council on Education are joining forces to create the updated GED® test. Once a non-profit entity, the new GED® is now a for-profit enterprise. It is estimated that by 2018, 63% of all jobs will require some college or better (Center on Education and the Workforce, 2010). This does not bode well for the 39 million Americans currently without a high school diploma or the equivalent.

The Next Generation GED® differs from its predecessor in several ways. Interdisciplinary skills and higher-order thinking will be critical for the GED® Next Generation. Shift will be

toward writing about reading, more varied reading passages, and a more concentrated focus on non-fiction pieces. Writing prompts are expected to be less introspective and more argumentative and informative. Additionally, the science and social studies sections will require more content knowledge as well as reading comprehension.

In summation, the test will be changing, the standard will be raised, and it will fall on Adult Educators to bring our students up to the new level. As daunting as this task may seem, the reality is that this new level will ultimately help our students succeed in community colleges, tech schools, and in the workforce. Let us continue climbing the mountain one step at a time and always remember it is ultimately for our students.



The demand is expected to increase for the current exam as we move closer to the new GED® release date. Do not delay in having your capable students register for the test since testing centers will be filling up quickly. And be sure to check out the [free keyboarding program](#) that Ann recommended to help your students become comfortable with using computers.



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You can find us on Twitter & Facebook. If you or your organization has a [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) account, sign up to follow the Literacy Coalition and keep up to date with our efforts to fight low literacy!

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