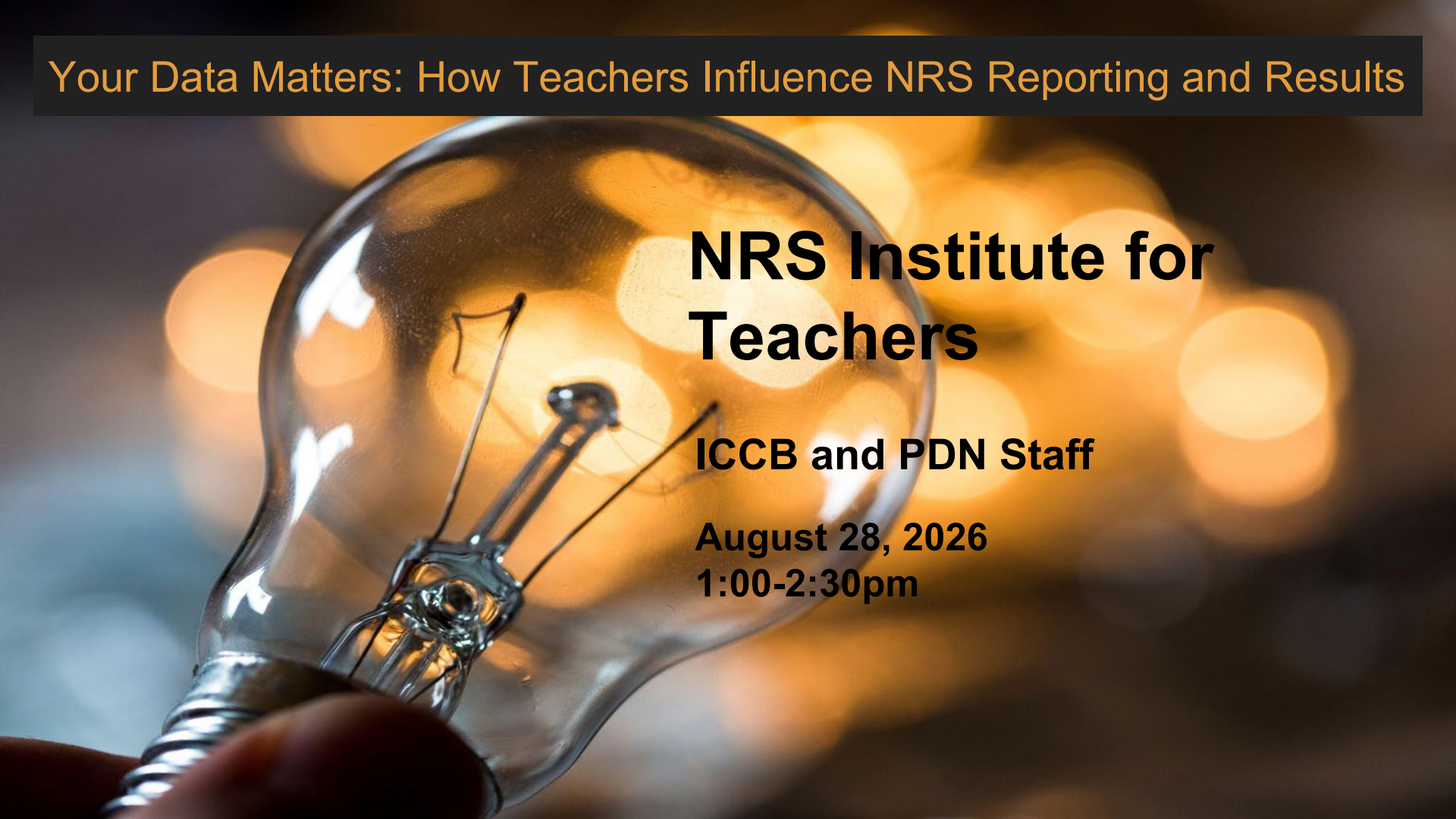


A hand is holding a glowing incandescent lightbulb. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of warm, yellow and orange lights. The lightbulb is in the foreground, slightly to the left, and its glow illuminates the surrounding area.

Your Data Matters: How Teachers Influence NRS Reporting and Results

NRS Institute for Teachers

ICCB and PDN Staff

August 28, 2026

1:00-2:30pm



Data is how we tell our students' stories as they progress through their adult education journey.

The Student Journey - Data Tells the Story

Enter program;
proper placement
through assessment

Complete IL High
School Diploma

Improve
employment
outcomes



Instruction to improve
basic literacy skills, as
measured by post-test

Complete ICAPS
and earn credential

Increase
median
earnings

Introduction to WIOA & NRS

Partners, Funding, and the Role of AE



The **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** is the **federal** legislation that directs all Adult Education programs. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services needed in the labor market and to match employers with workers.



WIOA requires each state to have a [unified state plan](#) that describes how it will work across the **four titles**. Illinois has:

Title I: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Adult, Dislocated Worker, & Youth programs

Title II: Illinois Community College Board **Adult Education** and Literacy

Title III: Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) Employment Service program

Title IV: Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Vocational Rehabilitation program

Why This Matters!

WIOA legislation provides funding to states.

States must follow the terms of the grant and prove they are meeting the requirements with the data they report.

Testing, attendance, level gains, retention, student completions - it ALL MATTERS!

We must do our best to serve our learners, help them meet their goals, and make sure we remain here to do so!

Defining Some Key Terms



OCTAE: **Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education** - *National decisions about adult education policy (including assessment and funding) are made by this office*

NRS: **National Reporting System** - *Collects student demographics, assessment, student attendance hours, and measurable skill gains*

EFL: **Educational Functioning Level** - *The NRS defines 6 EFLs for ABE/ASE Reading, 6 EFLs for ABE/ASE Math, and 6 EFLs for ESL. These are sometimes referred to as **NRS Levels**.*

MSG: **Measurable Skill Gain** - *Measurable progress toward performance outcomes that are reported while students are participating in adult education.*

Ways to Make a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)

- **MSG Type 1a:** Educational Functioning Level Gain (from pre-post test pair)
- **MSG Type 1c:** Entering postsecondary education
- **MSG Type 1d:** Successfully completing/passing one individual subtest (GED® or HiSET)
- **MSG Type 2:** Attainment of IL High School Diploma
- **MSG Type 4:** Successful completion of training portion of ICAPS
- **MSG Type 5:** Earning an Industry Recognized Credential (for students in a Bridge or ICAPS program)



Our IL Performance Targets for FY27

Performance Targets	FY27
Employment 2 nd quarter	23.6%
Employment 4 th quarter	24%
Median Earnings	\$6,250.00
Credential Attainment	23.6%
Measurable Skill Gains	44.5%

Failing to Meet Federal Targets

Consequences

- All WIOA Title partners fail when one fails to meet targets
- Federal funding may be impacted when performance targets are not met in two consecutive years.

Explanations

- Employment targets are demonstrated by a data match using Social Security Numbers
- When IL AE students don't have or don't report a SSN, there is no data match, even if the student began or retained employment

Student Names, SSNs and Barriers to Employment

Why this information matters so much

The ICCB adheres to all federal privacy laws and works diligently to protect student data.

The Social Security number is used for data matching to meet federal and state requirements and initiatives.

Barriers to Employment data is used to calculate outcomes.

Names Matter!

TOPSpro Enterprise	Student GED.com or HiSET account	IL Constitution Module
Student name and birthdate should match in each system		



*hiset.



MSG Type #2 - Attainment of HS Diploma or Equivalent Captured through **data match** between TOPSpro & GED® Manager/HiSET

10132253 - Roselia...

New

Save

Cancel

Delete

Duplicate

6 / 2083

Go To Linked

Disconnect

Student Information

GED 2014 Scores: Science (160 - 8/5/2026) / Reasoning through Language Arts (155 - 8/5/2026)

HiSET Scores: N/A **TASC Scores:** N/A

Identification

Student ID:	10132253	Gender:	Female	ITIN:	N/A
Name:	Roselia Y. Arcila	Birth Date:	5/5/1979	SSID:	N/A
Preferred Name:	N/A	Age:	47	GED ID:	N/A
Has Notes:		SSN Status:	N/A	HiSET ID:	N/A
Has Compulsory Attendance Release:		SSN:	N/A	TASC ID:	N/A

Strategies for Verifying Names and Collecting SSNs

Teachers can **review their student files** / information quarterly - it's great to do it as a team, when possible! Review student data, check for missing information, and help capture and report it.

Teachers could assist with the review of student data submitted via online portals and help identify missing or incorrect information.

Create an intentional **follow-up process** several weeks after student intake to collect Social Security Numbers. Students who did not provide their SSN initially may feel more comfortable providing it to their teacher after they've been in class a while.

Relationships are the key!

Importance of Relationships

Building Trust: Establishing trust with students is critical to gathering accurate biographical data. When students feel their information will be used respectfully and for meaningful purposes, they are more open to sharing personal details.

Engagement: When students feel valued in the learning environment, they are more willing to provide detailed and honest biographical data. By actively engaging with students and showing interest in their stories, educators can collect more complete and reliable information for NRS reporting.

Safety and Privacy: Creating a secure environment where students understand their personal data will be kept confidential will encourage them to disclose it. Adhering to privacy standards and clearly communicating data-use protocols helps students feel safe.

Explain what you need and why during intake / registration



Hello and welcome to our ESL program! Our program is free thanks to the money we receive from the government. One of the conditions for us to continue to receive this support is that our students complete 40 hours of attendance, or approximately 10 weeks of classes, and then take another test.



Step 1: The Application



- Our application asks for your social security number so we can submit it to our school. You can enroll in our program with or without providing a Social Security number on the form, but if you have one, it helps us transition you to other programs at our school AND it helps our school maintain our funding to continue offering free courses.



Barriers to Employment

Teachers help by asking and reporting

Barriers to Employment

- Demographic measures that may affect a participant's ability to obtain employment after exiting the program
- Defined by WIOA
- Participants with barriers may require additional or more intensive services
- Collect at intake and reported for each Period of Participation

The 11 Barriers in WIOA

Displaced homemaker	Individual with disabilities
English language learner, low literacy level, cultural barriers	Single Parent
Exhausting Temporary Aid for Needy Families within 2 years	Ex-offender
Low income	Homeless or runaway youth
Migrant and seasonal farmworker	Long-term unemployed
Youth in foster care or who has aged out of the system	

*Jodi Sue Kelly
- Motivational
Interviewing*

Revealing Challenges

“If it is okay with you, I would like to talk about any situations or challenges you are facing that need to be planned around.”

When you learn a student has one of these barriers to employment, who do you share the information with and how?



NOT A BARRIER...

Just a consideration that needs planning

Turning Closed Questions Into Open-Ended Questions

Closed Question

- Do you have childcare needs that would prohibit your participation in the program?
- Do you have childcare in place for your children?

Sort of Open

- What kind of assistance do you need for your children?
- Will childcare present any issues that you need help with?

Open Question

- If you enroll in class, what options do you have for childcare?
- In the past when you needed to go somewhere, how did you arrange for your children to be cared for?
- How have you solved childcare issues in the past?

Co-Enrollment

What it is and how we can help document it

What is Co-Enrollment?

Co-Enrollment is an individual who is a Participant and/or Reportable in **more than one WIOA partner program** within a program year. *Co-enrollment is not trying to share students across CBOs, school districts, or community colleges. It is also not an alternative method of credentialing.*

Co-Enrolled AE students should be recorded in TOPSpro.

Co-Enrollment

Enrolling a participant in more than one WIOA Title program at the same time

Not just a referral - student must meet eligibility AND be accepted into another Title program

Purpose: Maximize services, avoid duplication, and support success

Example: A student can be served under Adult Education (Title II) and also Title I Workforce or Title IV Voc Rehab

WIOA Partners Have the Same Goal - IWDS 2.0

Co-enrolled Across Partner Programs ▾

🔍 Search programs (e.g. Veterans Employment)

0 selected

 **Adult Education** ⓘ

Yes No

**Career & Technical Education
(CTE/Perkins)** ⓘ

Yes No

CSBG Employment & Training ⓘ

Yes No

**Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs
(DVOP)** ⓘ

Yes No

Employment First - EFSLMP ⓘ

Yes No

Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser) ⓘ

Yes No

HUD Employment & Training ⓘ

Yes No

Job Corps ⓘ

Yes No

Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) ⓘ

Yes No

WIOA Partners Have the Same Goal - TOPSPro

Start Page In Program Years Agencies 50201 - ICCB: Coll... Entry/Update Record

Save Cancel Section List Collapse All (Default) Edit Schema Design Mode

☐ Student Update Hours: Minutes: Hours since last update

Date Entered Class: Class Status: ☒ N/A ☐ Completed
☐ Active ☐ Inactive

Date Exited Class:

Personal Status and Results

Labor Force Status:

☒ N/A
☐ Unemployed
☐ Employed
☐ Employed, with notice
☐ Not in labor force

Personal Status Entries:

☐ WIOA, Title I ☐ Enrolled in high school / K12 ☐ Refugee
☐ WIOA, Title III ☐ Dislocated worker ☐ Other
☐ WIOA, Title IV ☐ Veteran
☐ TANF ☐ Physically disabled
☐ Other public assistance ☐ Learning disabled

Personal Status Exits:

☐ Off TANF
☐ Off Other Public Assistance
☐ Exit High School/K12
☐ No longer Dislocated Worker

What can this look like in Illinois programs?

Co-enrollment Examples

([IWDS Referral Guide](#))

Example 1

Title II:

Jim takes adult education classes at the local community college in preparation for an HSE.

Title IV:

At the same time, he receives vocational training through rehabilitation services.

Example 2

Title II:

Cora participates in an ICAPS program for HVAC certification. She takes adult education ELA/ESL classes.

Title I:

Cora is getting funding from her local American Job Center for her HVAC classes.

I believe at least one of my recent ESL students could benefit from job search and placement assistance through a WIOA partner. Some of my students learn English because they want to find better employment or advance in their current jobs. I previously focused primarily on improving their English skills, without realizing I could connect them with employment services.

A student with limited English proficiency could be referred to a Title partner for help with job searches, participation in job fairs and workshops for job seekers, or access to Illinois Job Link services.

Knowing about these resources will help me look beyond the classroom and connect my students with services that support their educational and career goals. I am very pleased to have this information, as it will be of great help to the participants in my classes.

Post-Testing Practices & Student Persistence

Why it matters that students stay AND test

Ways to Make a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)

- **MSG Type 1a:** Educational Functioning Level Gain (from post-test)
- **MSG Type 1c:** Entering postsecondary education
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EFL Gain Examples

Educational Functioning Levels		Reading GOALS 2 Scale Score Ranges
1	Beginning ABE Literacy	165-203
2	Beginning Basic Education	204-216
3	Low Intermediate Basic Education	217-227
4	High Intermediate Basic Education	228-238
5	Low Adult Secondary Education	239-248
6	High Adult Secondary Education	249 & above

NRS Educational Functioning Levels (EFLs) for ESL		Reading STEPS Scale Score Ranges
1	Beginning ESL Literacy	160-183
2	Low Beginning ESL	184-196
3	High Beginning ESL	197-206
4	Low Intermediate ESL	207-216
5	High Intermediate ESL	217-227
6	Advanced ESL	228-238



NRS EFLs correlate to our adult education standards

The EFLS correlate to:

- Illinois Adult Education Standards for ABE/ASE Language Arts & Math
- Illinois English Language Acquisition Standards

Current, widely used textbook series correlate to the standards and the EFLs.

TABE, CASAS, and BEST tests correlate to the standards and the EFLs.

Therefore, **quality instruction that is standards aligned**
is your biggest contribution to student, program, and
state-level success!

Message: Teachers to students

Why do you need to test?

- The money to offer free classes comes from test results. Your test helps us continue to have classes in the future.
- Pre-test results help us know how to put students in the correct classes and what information and skills to teach.
- Post-test results help you see how much progress you have been making and they help the teacher see where you still need more work.

Why should you give your best effort on the test?

- When we know exactly where you are strong and where you have challenges, we can adapt our teaching for your needs and get you to your goals on your timeline.

Why should you not guess on your pre-test?

- On a pre-test we are trying to learn where you are strong and where you have challenges. If you guess a lot and happen to get some questions correct, we won't know all the information we need to help you reach your goals. So if you don't know the answer, you can leave it blank.

Teachers: Use eTest sampler / sample questions to prepare students for what the test will be like, particularly before they post-test. Each test publisher also offers a simulation of what the test looks like when taken on a computer. Allowing students time in class to discover the tools, features, and structure of the computer-based test can help ease test anxiety.

How does student persistence impact MSGs?

Students must achieve at least 40 hours of attendance in a class before they can be post-tested.



If students don't persist until 40 hours of attendance, they cannot be post-tested.



If students don't post-test, they cannot earn a Measurable Skill Gain #1a.

What can teachers do to help students persist in class?

One idea to help students persist...

- When students miss a class...
- When students struggle with a specific skill...
- When students need to stop out...

Use distance education platforms, like Burlington English and i-Pathways!



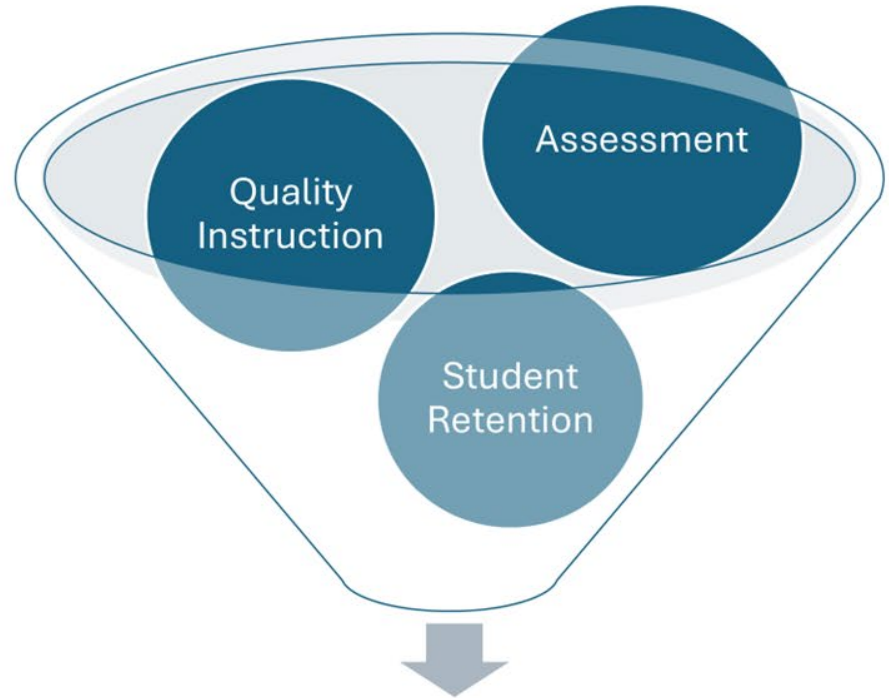
We're all on the same team, striving for student success!



When IL Adult Ed students take a post-test, they do GREAT! (**61%** of post-tested students showed a level gain and earned an MSG in FY25)
Let's help our students be part of that success!

Keys to Student MSGs

- ✓ Quality Instruction
- ✓ Assessment
- ✓ Student Retention



Measurable Skill Gains and
Student Success

Knowing our goals ... Knowing our data

- Do you know your program's goals?
- Do you have goals for your own classroom?

Enrollment

Persistence

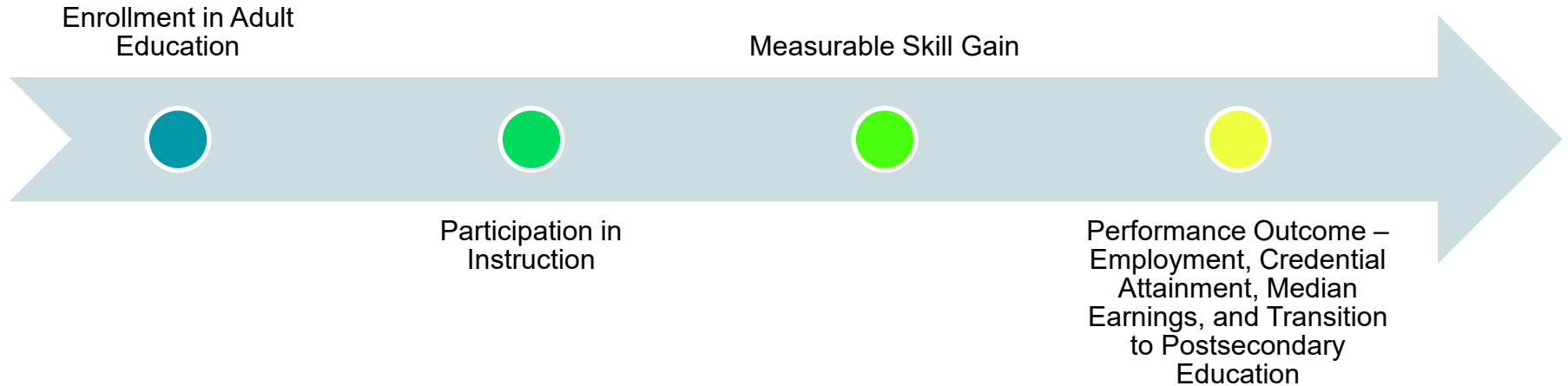
Post-testing

Bridge & ICAPS
Class Completions

High School
Diploma Tests
Passed

**So much of
this ties back
to quality
instruction!**

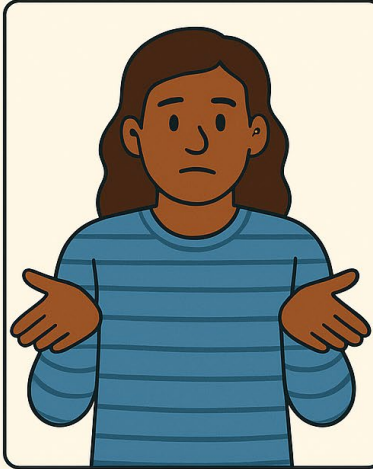
The Student Journey



Let's Check In...



Confident



Not sure



**Don't
know**



Help our students
succeed, our AE
programs to succeed,
and Illinois to share
the value of Adult
Education

Resources to Review and Share

- WIOA and AE Foundations [iLEARN course](#)
- Orientation to AE for Instructors [iLEARN course](#) - Lesson 3.2 on Data
- Lesson Bank [Responsible Internet Use](#) lesson - includes guidance for handling personal information
- [WIOA 11 Barriers to Employment](#)
- WIOA Partner [Referral Guide](#)
- Assessment Messaging [document](#)

These training slides and a time-stamped recording of today's presentation will be shared with the field.

PD & Resources for Quality Instruction

[The Teacher Exchange](#)

[Persistence Virtual Learning Community](#)

Lots of asynchronous choices!

- [Design with AI and UDL](#) – iLEARN course
- Standards and AI – iLEARN course *****Coming soon!*****
- [From Contact to Connection: Digital Tools for Adult Educators](#) – iLEARN course
- [PDN Lesson Bank](#)
- [Student math videos and lessons](#)

Talk to your supervisor and ask for guidance as you make your PD plan!

iladedpdn@gmail.com

GET ON THE LIST!



Subscribe to the Professional Development Network's email list to find out about great PD opportunities for Illinois adult educators!

<https://rebrand.ly/pdnlist>

We do not share our email list and promise not to fill your inbox!





Wrap-up

Survey Time



Certificates

Look for these in your email next week!



Questions?



Thank you for your time!