

SUPPORT SERVICES CONFERENCE

Professional Development for ABE Support Staff

**Thursday, November 13
&
Friday, November 14, 2025
Virtual via ZOOM!**

Sponsored by:

Minnesota Adult Basic Education Assessment Training

Southwest Adult Basic Education



Minnesota Adult Basic Education

Department of Education



**Minnesota
Adult Education**

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday, November 13th

Click on the [JOIN LINK](#) to access the Zoom link.

NOTE: These sessions are intended for **anyone** who is **NOT** CASAS or TABE certified or **NEW** to ABE. You are welcome to attend this portion of the conference even if you do not have program support duties.

TIME	SESSION
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	CASAS Implementation Marty Olsen, State Assessment Trainer for CASAS & TABE, SW ABE MN ABE Assessment Supplemental Services Grant This session covers selecting and using the appropriate CASAS test, interpreting test scores, and measuring student progress. Discussion will focus on CASAS appraisals, pre- and post-tests, and introduce online instructional resources. Information about CASAS GOALS & STEPS will be included. Participants who complete this session will be authorized to order and administer CASAS multiple-choice assessments.
12:00 - 1:00 PM	BREAK
1:00 - 4:00 PM	TABE Implementation Linda Keller, State Assessment Trainer for CASAS & TABE, Metro North Adult Basic Education, Accountability Coordinator Dave Haugen This session covers selecting and administering TABE 13/14 tests, interpreting test scores, and measuring student progress. Discussion will focus on best practices for using the TABE Locator, and pre- and post-tests. The latest updates on TABE 13/14 will be shared. Print and online instructional resources will be discussed.

Participant materials folders can be found **HERE**.

Please note: Presenter materials will not be available until after the session has concluded. Conference sessions will be recorded and added to this document in place of the **JOIN LINK** afterward.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

Friday, November 14th

NOTE: These sessions are intended for **anyone**. You are welcome to attend the conference even if you do not have program support duties.

TIME	OPENING SESSION
9:00 - 9:45 AM	Brad Hasskamp, Jodi Versaw, MN Department of Education Rachel Stiglitz, SPARC Chair Marty Olsen, SW ABE MN ABE Assessment Supplemental Services Grant Welcome and thank you for participating! Our state leadership will provide updates of the state of Adult Basic Education in Minnesota.
CONCURRENT SESSION 1	
10:00 - 10:45 AM	Overview on Remote Testing in MN ABE Jeff Galbavy, Metro East, Adult Basic Education Facilitator Melinda Doll, Moorhead Adult Basic Education, Administrative Assistant Linda Keller, State Assessment Trainer for CASAS & TABE, Metro North Adult Basic Education, Accountability Coordinator Does your agency have an active CASAS eTest/TOPSPRO or TABE Online/DRC INSIGHT account, with current experience delivering online testing, but want to learn more about delivering remote testing? Then join this discussion with a panel of three different agency staff who have successfully launched remote testing using either CASAS eTests or TABE Online at their agencies here in MN ABE. Bring your questions. Local tips and tools that have been developed will be shared.
	Intake Strategies and Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Sheila Brandes, PANDA Specialist Would you like to identify students with disabilities during the intake process and communicate that information with teachers? Would you like to reduce testing-related anxiety in students? This workshop will offer intake strategies and testing accommodations that allow prospective students to share their challenges and feel more comfortable.

Resettlement in Minnesota: Federal Trends and Local Services

Rachele King, State Refugee Coordinator and Director of the Resettlement Programs Office (RPO) Minnesota Department of Human Service

This session will provide an overview of immigrant and refugee resettlement landscapes, introduce the DHS Refugee and Immigrant Helpline, and share information on key services and supports available to newly arrived individuals and families in Minnesota.

CONCURRENT SESSION 2

11:00 - 11:45 AM

CASAS Recertification

Marty Olsen, State Assessment Trainer for CASAS & TABE, SW ABE MN ABE Assessment Supplemental Services Grant

Minnesota ABE assessment policy states that CASAS test administrators need to be recertified every 5 years. This session will satisfy that requirement and provide updated information on the CASAS test series including STEPS for ELL, GOALS Reading 2 and Math 2. We will review standardized testing, look at tools that CASAS provides to support instruction, and view the reports and resources available to support your testing process. This session is for experienced test administrators.

Adult Literacy Hotline Basics

Caspian Jensen, Hotline Specialist at Literacy Minnesota
Jenny Schlukebier, SiD Coordinator

The Adult Literacy Hotline is an important way for potential students to find ABE programs in their area. In the session Caspian and the SiD Support team will explain:

- how the hotline works
- how SiD delivers ABE program info to the hotline
- how to make sure your information is up to date on the hotline
- how to search for classes on the hotline

We'll also share ways you can help spread the word about the hotline in your area.

All About GED Accommodations

Debbie Bergtholdt, Manager of GED Accommodations, GED Testing Service
Melissa Hultstrand, GED State Relationship Manager

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 the GED 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. 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.
12:00 - 1:00 PM	BREAK
CONCURRENT SESSION 3	
1:00 - 1:45 PM	TABE Recertification Linda Keller, State Assessment Trainer for CASAS & TABE, Metro North Adult Basic Education, Accountability Coordinator Minnesota ABE assessment policy states that TABE test administrators need to be recertified every 5 years. This session will satisfy that requirement and provide updated information on the TABE test series including the new 13/14 series. We will review standardized testing practices, look at tools that TABE provides to support instruction, and view the reports and resources available to support your testing process. This session is for experienced test administrators who have already attended TABE Implementation training in the last 5 years.
	Basics of Using Canva: Marketing & Flyer Design Erienne Nelson, Program Assistant at Mounds View Adult Education You have a great program - let the world know with eye-catching flyers to match! This short informational session will teach you the basics of Canva for flyer design. We will discuss simple design principles, get familiar with Canva's user interface, and share tips for creating cohesive, effective marketing materials.
	Become a Distance Learning Support Pro Jessica Ess, Distance Learning Specialist, Hubbs Center (St. Paul ABE) Nicholas Houlson, Digital Navigator, Open Door Learning Centers - Literacy Minnesota In this session we will review some core elements of distance learning: What are proxy hours? Why are some platforms time-on-task and others are not? How do we correctly set up classes in SID and count all the hours we're entitled to? We will delve into best practices and pro tips for collecting and reporting DL hours, keeping rosters clean, reducing barriers to implementation, and running reports for some of the most popular platforms.

CONCURRENT SESSION 4

2:00 - 2:45 PM

GED Data Detective: Solving the Readiness Puzzle with AI

Chrysti Nielsen, ABE Specialist, Northwest Service Cooperative, Adult Education Specialist

Put on your detective hat and learn how to crack the case of GED student readiness using AI. In this session, you'll follow a real-life investigation—turning messy spreadsheets into clear, actionable insights. We'll use AI tools to uncover hidden patterns, spotlight students who need extra support, and close the case with strategies that save time and improve outcomes. No tech background required—just curiosity and a willingness to solve the puzzle.

Best Practices for Intake & Support Staff Serving

Beginning ESL Literacy Learners

Rebecca Jarvis, EL Coordinator, Metro South ABE

Patsy Egan, ATLAS Director, Hamline University

Intake for students without much English and without literacy in their primary languages is a distinct challenge! Beginning ESL literacy learners can be tricky to register and place efficiently, and the process can be stressful to staff and overwhelming for students. Join us to identify barriers, discuss tools, and learn best practices identified by a recent ATLAS task force. We aim to ease the process of registering, placing, and testing low literacy adult learners!

SiD: Back to Basics on Level Gains/Measurable Skill Gains

Jenny Schlukebier, Minnesota ABE

Mary Zimmerlie, Minnesota ABE

In this session, we will cover all the Measurable Skill Gains for state and federal reporting, from testing level gains to IET/Credentials, GED/HiSET, and more. You'll strengthen your understanding of all the MSG options and learn ways to improve reporting on student outcomes.

*Participant materials folders can be found **HERE**.*

Please note: Presenter materials will not be available until after the session has concluded. Conference sessions will be recorded and added to this document in place of the **JOIN LINK** afterward.

Thank you to our sponsors!!!

Southwest Adult Education and MN ABE Assessments

(visit the assessment website to learn more about CASAS & TABE testing and SPARC!)

Home CASAS TABE SPARC Supplemental Services

Assessment Training all across Minnesota
Training Adult Basic Education professionals in the art of standardized testing

Trainings
We offer trainings in the proper administration of both CASAS and TABE standardized tests. These trainings are supported through a Supplemental Services grant, and are available at no cost to Minnesota ABE consortia and their partners.

CASAS TABE

Training Catalog

Instructional Links
In addition to proper administration of the tests, it is important to understand how to appropriately use the assessment results to inform lesson planning. Click on the button for each assessment to learn about the many available resources to support lesson planning.

CASAS TABE

Presentations Approved Tests

SPARC
The Support Professionals Resource Advisory Committee (SPARC) is comprised of ABE Support Staff who seek ways to help support staff all across Minnesota. Each November they sponsor the Support Staff Conference, and have been instrumental in developing the ABE Support Professionals Certificate.

More info

Minnesota Adult Education

Visit the MN ABE website to learn about Adult Education in our state!

Minnesota Adult Education

Search Site

Resources News Adult Literacy Hotline

Adult Education System Grants & Funding Law & Policy Accountability Transitions & Partnerships Diplomas & HSE

Empowering adults with the literacy skills to thrive as workers, family members, and citizens.

Adult Education System

We appreciate your taking the time to participate!

The conference is organized by the members of [SPARC](#) (Support Professional Advisory Resource Committee). **Thank you** to all who planned and supported the conference, including:

Rachel Stiglitz, Metro East ABE
Linda Jacobs-Buse, South Suburban ABE
Cindy Morgan, Minneapolis ABE
Ruth Rodriguez, Saint Paul ABE
Diana Vladimirova, Robbinsdale ABE
Jeff Galbavy, Metro East ABE
Astrid Liden, MN Department of Education
Melinda Doll, Moorhead ABE
Jenny Schluebier, SiD support

Chrysti Nielsen, Northwest Service Cooperative
Marty Olsen, SW ABE
Alec Lunneborg, Metro South ABE
Charlene Vang, Minneapolis ABE
Linda Keller, Metro North ABE
Michael Redman, Metro North ABE
Laura Cotterill, Robbinsdale ABE
Madeleine Dia, Robbinsdale ABE

A very special THANK YOU goes to the following:

[ATLAS](#) (ABE Teaching & Learning Advancement System) for lending assistance and technical support.

[Literacy Action Network](#), for providing the 2025 ABE Stock Photo used for this agenda. If your program would like to use photos for your marketing materials, the 2025 ABE Stock Photos can be found on the Resource page.

We appreciate the support and resources from our Minnesota ABE [Supplemental Service Providers](#).

Thornton Young, a graduate of the Microsoft Office Specialist certificate training program, contributed to the design of this agenda. If ABE support staff would like to learn more about using Microsoft applications, [free online workshops](#) are offered by Metro East Career Pathways and Mounds View Adult Education.

Thank you to our presenters for sharing their time and expertise!

Debbie Bergtholdt is currently the Accommodations Manager for Pearson VUE, having managed the team since 2016. Her ultimate goal is to ensure that test-takers with disabilities can access their exams. She specializes in finding solutions to and implementing non-standard accommodation requests.

Debbie.Bergtholdt@Pearson.com

Sheila Brandes became the PANDA Specialist in 2025. She has taught English Language and the *Classes for Stroke and Brain Injury Survivors* in the Robbinsdale Adult Academic Program since 2011.

sheila_brandes@rdale.org

Melinda Doll **PENDING** mdoll@moorheadschoools.org

Dave Haugen, **Pending** dave.w.haugen@gmail.com

Patsy Egan, PhD, works in teacher professional development and is the Director of ATLAS, the ABE Teaching & Learning Advancement System, www.atlasABE.org in Minnesota, housed at Hamline University. More information available at <https://www.hamline.edu/faculty-staff/patsy-egan>. Patsy was the first President of LESLLA, an international organization that supports adult language learners who are new to print literacy.

Jeff Galbavy has been in community education for 7 years, adult education as an ABE Facilitator with Metro East for 3 and a half years, working with CASAS eTesting remotely for the past 3 years. jgalbavy@isd622.org

Mellissa Hultstrand is a GED State Relationship Manager. She is responsible for coordinating all GED® matters for ABE within MN. Mellissa has been with GEDTS since 2012, and prior to her SRM role, she was a high school teacher and senior member of the GEDTS Operations & Training Team.

Mellissa.Hultstrand@GED.com

Brad Hasskamp is the State Adult Education (ABE) Director at the Minnesota Department of Education. With his work on the state ABE team, his primary responsibilities include state high school equivalency test administration, standard adult high school diploma administration, and federal and state policy implementation.

brad.hasskamp@state.mn.us

Rebecca Jarvis is the Lead Teacher/EL Coordinator for Metro South Adult Education in Bloomington, MN.

rjarvis@isd271.org

Caspian Jensen is the Hotline Specialist at Literacy Minnesota. They have enjoyed connecting a diverse community to ABE programs across the state of Minnesota for over two years. cjensen@literacymn.org

Linda Keller is currently a state certified trainer for CASAS and TABE in MN ABE. Linda has been in support staff roles in adult Ed, since joining Metro North in the mid-1990s, and has been the Metro North Accountability Coordinator since 2005. Lindam.keller@ahschools.us

Rachele King leads the Minnesota Department of Human Services Resettlement Programs Office where she has served as State Refugee Coordinator since 2015. rachele.king@state.mn.us

Erienne Nelson joined Mounds View AE via AmeriCorps CTEP in 2019. After two years, she was hired for graphic design and support, transitioning all flyers to Canva for accessibility.

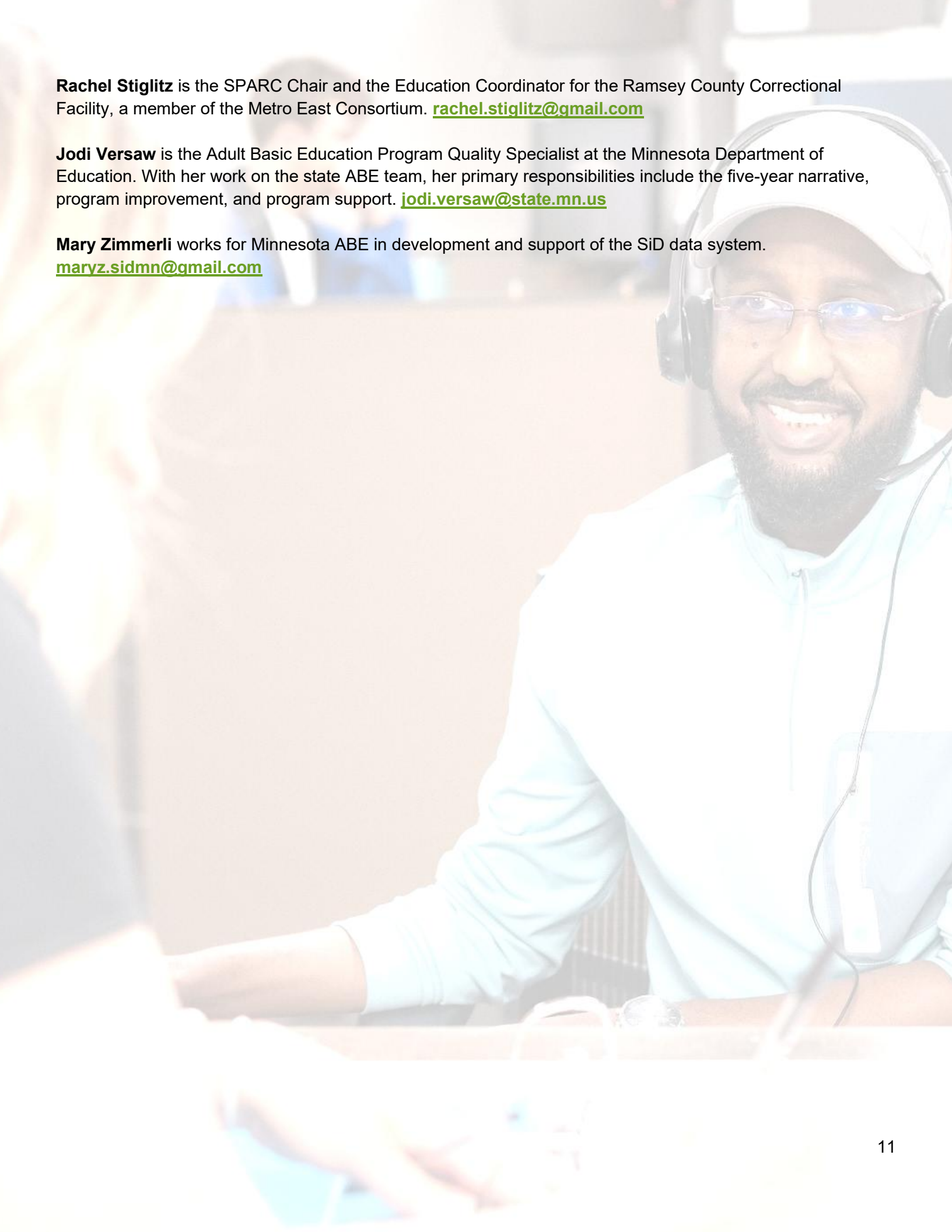
erienne.nelson@moundsvIEWSchools.org

Chrysti Nielsen is an Adult Basic Education Specialist with 20+ years of teaching experience, skilled at turning data into stories that guide instruction and improve student outcomes. cnielsen@nwservice.org

Marty Olsen is a nationally certified CASAS trainer and a state-certified TABE assessment trainer. She manages the Assessment Training supplemental services grant for Southwest ABE.

martha.olsen@gmail.com

Jenny Schlukerbier works for Minnesota ABE in development and support of the SiD data system. Jenny comes from a background of working on accountability in ABE at St. Paul Public Schools ABE (Hubbs Center) and MLC. jenny.sidmn@gmail.com



Rachel Stiglitz is the SPARC Chair and the Education Coordinator for the Ramsey County Correctional Facility, a member of the Metro East Consortium. rachel.stiglitz@gmail.com

Jodi Versaw is the Adult Basic Education Program Quality Specialist at the Minnesota Department of Education. With her work on the state ABE team, her primary responsibilities include the five-year narrative, program improvement, and program support. jodi.versaw@state.mn.us

Mary Zimmerli works for Minnesota ABE in development and support of the SiD data system. maryz.sidmn@gmail.com