



Preserving Your Most Precious Resource

Best Practices for ESOL & ABE Teacher Retention

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Getting to Know You

- ▶ Please rename yourself on Zoom and include:
 - ▶ your name
 - ▶ organization
 - ▶ location
 - ▶ role
 - ▶ if you work with tutors or instructors
- ▶ Example: Jane Smith, Boston, First Literacy, Program administrator (tutors)

Housekeeping and Ground Rules

- ▶ Housekeeping!
 - ▶ Two 10-minute breaks
 - ▶ Please keep cameras on unless we are working independently
 - ▶ Please mute yourself unless asking a question
 - ▶ Questions are welcome, please raise your hand or put it in the chat!
- ▶ Ground Rules!
 - ▶ Try to be fully present
 - ▶ Share the air - make space for everyone to participate
 - ▶ Share your thoughts and experiences - let us learn from each other!
 - ▶ Keep your mind open to new ideas



Please share!

From your own experience,
please share:

- ▶ TWO things that motivate instructors
- ▶ TWO policies or practices that administrators could implement to increase teacher retention

A little about me

- ▶ Part-time program manager for immigrant resource center - **11** years.
- ▶ **50%** of my time allocated for English programs, plus a half-time assistant.
- ▶ Effectively **.75** FTE for a program serving **200** learners per session
- ▶ Offered **10-12** enrollment classes per 8-week session, and **10** drop-in classes per week, year round. Moved online for COVID, then to mix of in-person and online.
- ▶ All classes filled in **8-12** hours of registration opening. Student retention over **75%**.
- ▶ **40-plus** volunteer instructors and assistants.
- ▶ **Retention = 90%:**
 - ▶ Most stayed at least **2** years, many stayed **5-10** years
 - ▶ Most sessions had to recruit only a **3-4** new instructors, usually assistants
 - ▶ Most drop-in instructors stayed more than **5** years



What instructors told me

Volunteers can often feel somewhat isolated from an organization's professional staff, but never have I felt anything less than an integral part of The Center

The trust you place in me

Balanced approach of providing guidance and direction

collaborative leadership

You made it possible for us to grow and touch the lives of so many



Your most precious resource

- ▶ Effective instructors are key to the success of educational programs
- ▶ Retaining effective instructors helps programs:
 - ▶ Build a strong reputation among learners and instructors
 - ▶ Cultivate trust, return students, and word of mouth referrals
 - ▶ Grow in quality, resilience and size
 - ▶ Increase efficiency



High turnover undermines student engagement
through reliance on substitutes, untrained staff, canceled classes, and larger class sizes.

Learning Objectives

In this session, participants will:

- ✓ Learn what motivates ESOL and ABE instructors and tutors
- ✓ Gain awareness of what programs can do to increase teacher retention
- ✓ Evaluate their own program's practices that impact retention
- ✓ Select one or more best practices and draft an implementation plan.

Retaining Teachers and Tutors

Teacher retention refers to the proportion of teachers in one year who are still teaching in the same school the following year.

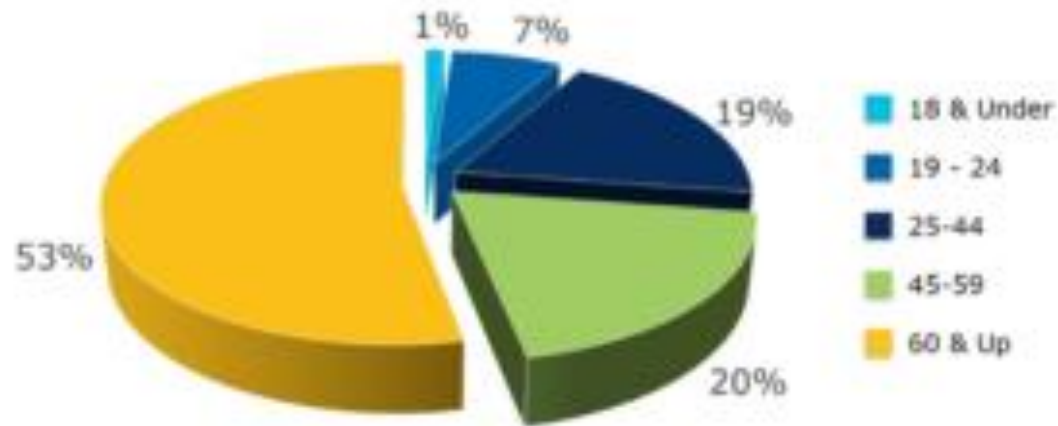
Proliteracy's member organizations reported an average of **84%** retention in 2018-19 (latest data available).

- ▶ Instructor quality is the most important factor in student achievement.
- ▶ Experienced instructors are more effective.
- ▶ Retaining instructors allows program managers to spend time on other tasks.
- ▶ When instructional teams believe they can make a difference, they deploy their skills better, collaborate more, and stay longer.

Who are ESOL and ABE instructors?

- ▶ In 2021, 77% worked part-time*
- ▶ Internet search, the average hourly wage in Massachusetts is \$27-\$31
- ▶ Many instructors and tutors are volunteers
- ▶ According to Proliteracy's 2022 Annual Member Statistical Report, 42% of its members use some paid instructors.

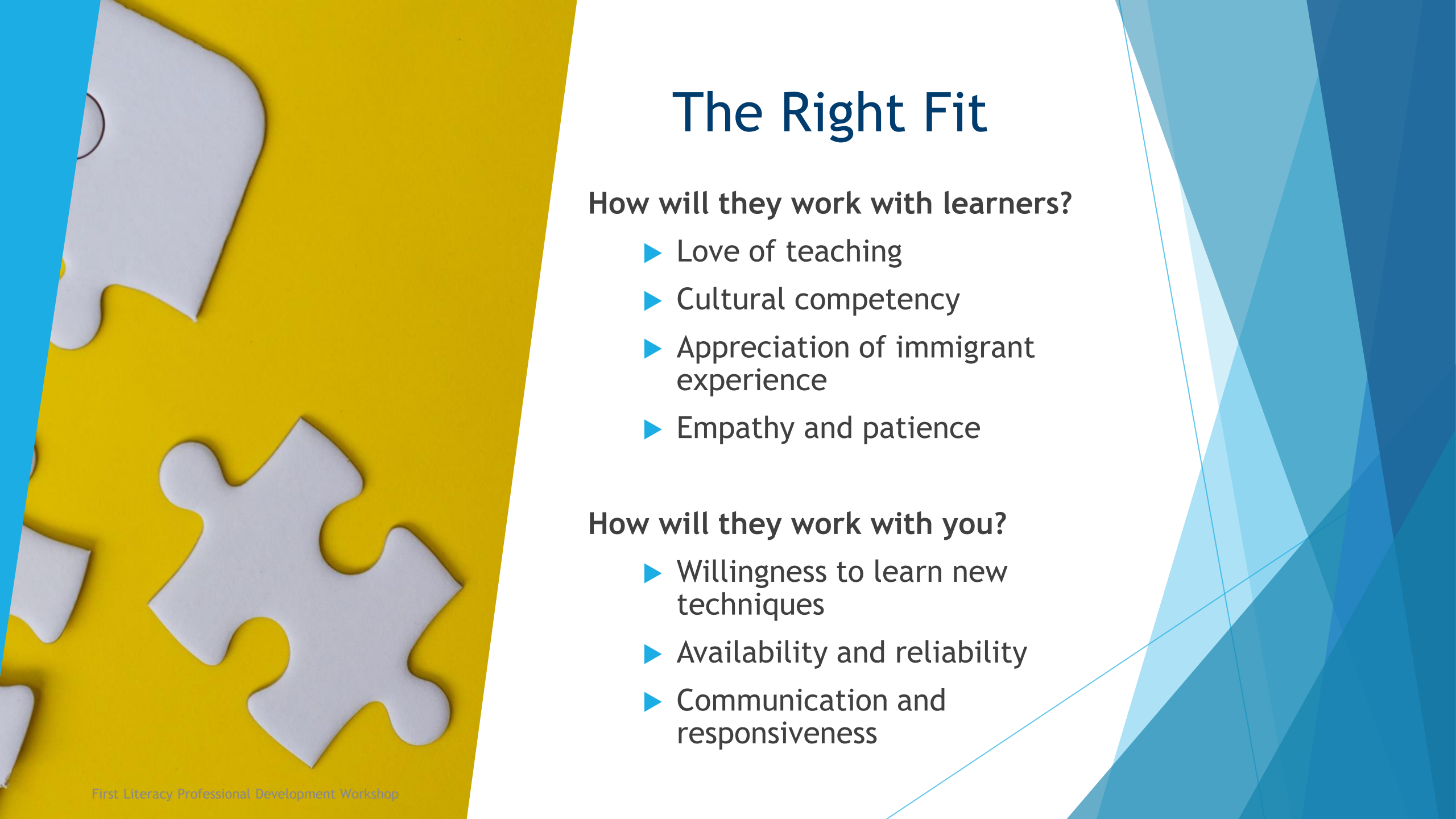
Age of Volunteers



Motivations

- ▶ Love to teach
- ▶ Enjoy getting to know people from different cultures
- ▶ Appreciate language learning
- ▶ Want to give back
- ▶ Want to teach overseas someday
- ▶ Career exploration/change
- ▶ Need service learning hours
- ▶ Lonely or bored
- ▶ Practicum hours for certificate program
- ▶ Complement their day job





The Right Fit

How will they work with learners?

- ▶ Love of teaching
- ▶ Cultural competency
- ▶ Appreciation of immigrant experience
- ▶ Empathy and patience

How will they work with you?

- ▶ Willingness to learn new techniques
- ▶ Availability and reliability
- ▶ Communication and responsiveness

Impacts on Retention

Studies of adult education and K-12 teacher retention reveal that these factors can impact retention:

- Induction/orientation
- Mentoring
- Collaboration
- Professional development
- Belonging and community
- Acknowledgement
- Professional respect
- Opportunities to contribute to policy
- Administrative support
- Feeling of self efficacy
- Collective efficacy

Factors *outside of our control*



Instructors

- ▶ Family or health issues
- ▶ Financial pressures - need higher pay or full-time work
- ▶ Class schedules conflict with work or other commitments
- ▶ Retirement, moves, life

Program managers and administrators

- ▶ Limited funds, staff, and time
- ▶ Little opportunity for professional development on this topic
- ▶ Lack of experience - not unusual to fall into the role, or inherit a system

Proven Practices

- ▶ Frequent meaningful, 2-way communication
- ▶ Welcoming environment and community building
- ▶ Orientation
- ▶ Requests for feedback



- ▶ Invitations to present, train, or guide policy
- ▶ Teacher meetings with opportunities to share lessons learned
- ▶ Recognition and Appreciation
- ▶ Staff debriefings

A Model for Instructor Retention

Instructors who feel:	Are more likely to stay because:
Respected	Their work and expertise is being acknowledged
Capable and supported	They feel like they are able to make a difference
Part of a community	They are connected to others and part of something bigger than themselves

Implementing the Model

For instructors to feel	Administrators will:
Respected...	1. Maintain standards of quality 2. Give them autonomy in the classroom 3. Invite their input 4. Acknowledge their contributions
Capable and supported...	1. Provide detailed orientation and on-boarding 2. Clearly define instructor roles 3. Handle logistics smoothly 4. Offer ample professional development opportunities
Part of a community...	1. Share the mission 2. Maintain an “open door,” communicating frequently and responsively 3. Build connections among instructors via team teaching or mentoring 4. Hold regular gatherings

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Improve retention in your program

A Model for Improving Teacher Retention

For instructors to feel:	Administrators will:	Self Evaluation Questions	_____ 's Ideas (your name here)
Respected...	1. Maintain standards of quality 2. Give them autonomy in the classroom 3. Invite their input 4. Acknowledge their contributions	• How do we maintain the quality of our programs? Do instructors feel comfortable coming to leadership with concerns about quality? • How much freedom do we offer our instructors in lesson planning? • How often do we ask instructors for their input about policies, procedures, curriculum, or professional development? • Are instructors invited to share their techniques with other instructors? • How do we express appreciation to our instructors? How often do we acknowledge them?	
Capable and supported...	1. Provide detailed orientation and on-boarding 2. Clearly define instructor roles 3. Handle logistics smoothly 4. Offer ample professional development opportunities	• How do we welcome new instructors? How are policies and procedures conveyed? • How do instructors know what they are responsible for? How well do they understand how registration, attendance, and other logistics are handled? • How smoothly are logistics handled? How does that impact instructors? Do instructors know our staff? • How often do we offer trainings? How often do we encourage instructors to attend MCAEL workshops or other free professional development opportunities? • What guides or other materials do we provide?	
Part of a community...	1. Share the mission 2. Maintain an "open door," communicating frequently and responsively 3. Build connections among instructors via team teaching or mentoring 4. Hold regular gatherings	• Are instructors able to articulate our organization's mission and goals? • How frequently do we touch base with instructors? • How long does it take us to respond to their queries? • Are instructors comfortable reaching out to us? • What opportunities do our instructors have to get to know each other, collaborate, or learn from each other? • How often do we gather as a team in person or virtually? • What are some new ways we could facilitate connection?	

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- ✓ Reflect individually on the self evaluation questions.
- ✓ Note a few ideas for improvement in your program
- ✓ Discuss your ideas in groups

Make it happen!

- ✓ Write down up to three ideas.
- ✓ On your worksheet, jot down some notes about how you could proceed.
- ✓ Get out your phone or planner.
- ✓ Schedule time on your calendar:
 - ▶ Solo time to think or research
 - ▶ Meeting with colleague
 - ▶ Meeting with another program administrator (*maybe someone in this workshop!*)

Steps to Improving Teacher Retention at _____			
Improvement Ideas	Who do I need to meet with?	What information do I need?	Tentative Plan and Schedule

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Questions?

Feel free to contact me!

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Thank you!

We want your feedback.

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