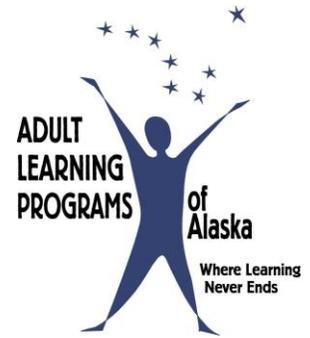


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ADULT LEARNING PROGRAMS TO LAUNCH 1st ONLINE GED PREP CLASS IN APRIL



March 28, 2017 (Fairbanks, AK)--Preparing for the General Education Diploma (GED) from the comfort of home will soon to be a reality for residents of interior Alaska, as Adult Learning Programs of Alaska's Fairbanks office launches its first distance-learning course on April 11. The 12-week, web-based course will be led by a live instructor, who will communicate with learners via webcam to prepare them for the Social Studies GED exam.

"This brings live GED instruction to people who can't take classes in Fairbanks," says Bill Mattson, executive director of ALPA. The agency developed the class to serve people whose job schedule, childcare needs, or lack of transportation prevent them from taking classes at its resource center in downtown Fairbanks. "We can now help stay-at-home moms, working folks, and rural residents prepare for the GED," says Mattson.

The agency will use Canvas, an online learning platform that allows instructors to remotely stream videos, presentations, and other media onto students' computers, says Mattson. Quizzes will be conducted online and each class will be recorded and available for two weeks for students who miss a class. In June, the agency plans to launch distance learning GED classes in Science and English, too.

Online math classes may take longer to set up, as teaching math is different from the other subjects, says Dawn Mealey, education director for ALPA. The agency recently revamped its math offerings to month-long, skills-based courses. "But even within one math class, students have diverse learning styles and needs," she says. "The best math instruction is hands-on, and that can be harder to achieve with distance learning."

To participate in the online GED Social Studies class, students must have a computer, webcam with microphone, and Internet connection. They also must take the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), a 3-hour test that assesses their math and reading skills, before enrolling in the class. This can be done by appointment at 60 Hall Street in Fairbanks. Students who sign up for the online Social Studies class starting April 11 can also elect to take the class on site in ALPA's computer lab.

New students can schedule the TABE test by calling Sandra Carter at 907-452-6434, ext. 219 or emailing her at scarter@adultlearning.org. Former and existing ABE students who have taken the TABE test after 3/1/2016 simply need to contact Carter to register for the class.