



# Moving Beyond Student Persistence to Student Success

Wed, Nov 20, 2024

1-4pm

Watertown Free Public Library

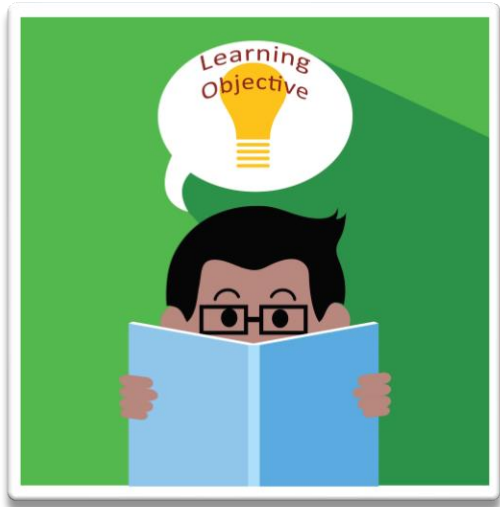
Workshop Presenter:

Emile R. “Mike” Boutin, Jr., EdD, ACC

Asst. Dean of Faculty & Student Success

MGH Institute of Health Professions

Charlestown, MA



# Learning Objectives

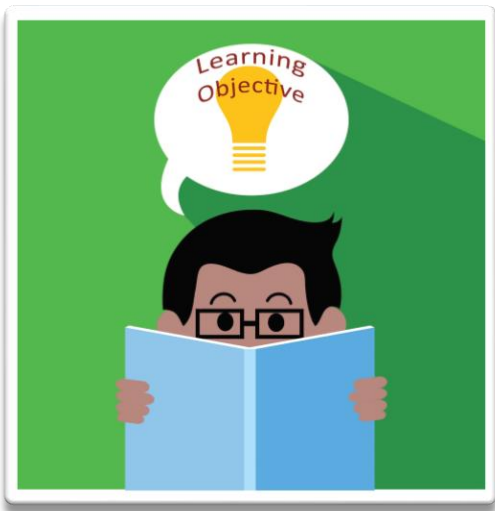
- ▶ By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

## 1. Identify the Six Drivers of Adult Learner Persistence:

- ▶ Recognize the six key drivers from the New England Adult Learner Persistence Project.
- ▶ Understand how these drivers impact the persistence of adult learners

## 2. Analyze Barriers to Persistence:

- ▶ Identify common challenges faced by ABE and ESOL students related to each persistence driver (e.g., work-life balance, motivation, lack of resources).
- ▶ Evaluate how these barriers manifest in their classrooms or programs and affect student retention.



### 3. Apply Strategies to Support Persistence:

1. Develop and apply specific, practical strategies for each of the six drivers to improve student persistence in ABE and ESOL contexts.
2. Use case studies to explore how these strategies can be adapted to meet the unique needs of their learners.

### 4. Collaborate with Peers to Develop Actionable Solutions:

1. Participate in group discussions to share challenges and exchange ideas on supporting persistence among adult learners.
2. Collaboratively design and refine action plans to enhance persistence, incorporating feedback from peers.



## 5. Develop a Personalized Action Plan:

1. Create a tailored action plan for enhancing learner persistence in their own ABE or ESOL classrooms or programs.
2. Identify 2-3 persistence drivers that need strengthening in their educational context and propose actionable strategies for improvement.

## 6. Reflect on Instructional Practice:

1. Reflect on their current teaching practices and how these might be adjusted to better support adult learner persistence.

**In a word, what is your greatest worry as an educator right now?**

# What's our Current Reality?

## *Where are our students at right now?*

- ▶ Lack of socialization due to pandemic
  - ▶ Financial/employment/childcare concerns
  - ▶ Food insecurity
  - ▶ adult learners juggling multiple priorities
  - ▶ Immigration issues
  - ▶ Mental health challenges
  - ▶ have tried and perhaps failed before
- ▶ *What else do you want to name?*

# Student Persistence

***The New England Adult Learner Persistence Project:***

<http://nelrc.org/persist/report09.pdf>

***What is it?*** 2009: 18 New England institutions studied their context-specific interventions to improve persistence

***Why?*** “The underlying assumption of the Project is that *persistence* is the underpinning for academic progress that results in positive outcomes and an improved quality of life for adult learners. When low-income adults’ life circumstances improve, their children do better in school, their health improves, the tax base increases, the pool of qualified workers increases, and our communities become stronger. ***None of this is possible*** if we do not become better at supporting adults to complete their education and meet their goals.”

***Definition of persistence:*** “Adults staying in programs for as long as they can, engaging in self-directed study when they must drop out of their programs, and returning to a program as soon as the demands of their lives allow.”

# Student Persistence: 6 Drivers of Persistence



1. **Sense of Belonging and Community**
2. **Clarity of Purpose**
3. **Agency**
4. **Competence/Self-Efficacy**
5. **Relevance**
6. **Stability**



# Student Persistence

## 1. Sense of Belonging and Community:

- ▶ group and team learning, cohort designs, virtual study spaces, relationships with cohort, advisors, educators

## 2. Clarity of Purpose:

- ▶ setting goals-both instrumental goals (short term) and aspirational goals (long term, big picture), review of goals, assessment of goals

## 3. Agency:

- ▶ Bandura's social cognitive theory: adults learn in a social context and are self-developing, so give them choices and options

# Student Persistence

## 4. Competence/Self-Efficacy:

- ▶ a person's belief in their ability to learn or perform a particular task, to show mastery or competence; metacognition-knowing about knowing, study skills, learning how to learn, scaffolded learning, computer and Zoom skills

## 5. Relevance:

- ▶ learning needs to feel authentic, examples, images, etc grounded in their experience, culture, interests. Does the learning have meaning, relevance, and emotion to the learner?

## 6. Stability:

- ▶ moving through a curriculum in an intentional and deliberate way; create psychologically safe space to learn; factors that mitigate against stability: unemployment, lack of childcare, poverty, food insecurity, diversity question-how do diverse students have a voice in their learning?

# Developing Persistence



1. **Sense of Belonging and Community**
2. **Clarity of Purpose**
3. **Agency**
4. **Competence/Self-Efficacy**
5. **Relevance**
6. **Stability**

*What practices have you found helpful in developing each of these drivers of student persistence?*

# Identifying Challenges to Persistence

- **Objective:** Identify barriers to persistence specific to ABE and ESOL learners, grouped by the 6 drivers.
  - Divide participants into 6 groups. Each group will focus on 1 driver:
    1. **Sense of Belonging and Community**
    2. **Clarity of Purpose**
    3. **Agency**
    4. **Competence/Self-Efficacy**
    5. **Relevance**
    6. **Stability**
  - Task: Discuss the challenges your group has observed in students related to their assigned driver
  - List top 3 challenges and be prepared to discuss

# Report Out & Group Discussion

**Objective:** Share challenges and facilitate group discussion to encourage brainstorming.

1. **Sense of Belonging and Community**
2. **Clarity of Purpose**
3. **Agency**
4. **Competence/Self-Efficacy**
5. **Relevance**
6. **Stability**

▶ *Do you notice any similarities or difference in challenges across the various drivers?*

# Applying Strategies: Case Studies

Maria is a single parent with 2 toddlers at home. She works at a local nursing home as a PCA and helps out with a couple of elderly folks who live in her neighborhood and need some homecare. She has been working on getting her GED so that she can then apply to the local community college to get into a nursing program. Her literacy skills are holding her back. She just found out that her youngest child has autism. She wants to quit the GED program: “I just can’t manage it all.”

How can the 6 drivers help Maria to persist?

1. **Sense of Belonging and Community**
2. **Clarity of Purpose**
3. **Agency**
4. **Competence/Self-Efficacy**
5. **Relevance**
6. **Stability**



# Action Planning: Enhancing Persistence in Your Classroom

- **Objective:** Design actionable strategies for promoting persistence in participants' own classrooms and programs.

*Learner Persistence Program Self Assessment by Drivers of Persistence:*  
<https://nelrc.org/persist/pdfs/Self-assessment%20by%20driver.pdf>

- **Step 1:** Reflect on the persistence challenges in your own setting
- **Step 2:** Identify which of the 6 drivers needs the most attention
- **Step 3:** Highlight strategies that you can implement to support that driver

# Group Sharing and Feedback

- **Objective:** Share ideas, gain peer feedback, and refine action plans.
  - Who wants to share their action plan?
  - Any reactions? Feedback?



# Wrap-Up, Questions, & Reflection

- ▶ **Objective:** Summarize key insights and provide resources
  - Share one thing they'll do differently in their teaching practice moving forward.



# REFERENCES

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