TIP SHEET

Using the Professional Development Guide for Adult Citizenship Educators

Adult citizenship education teachers work tirelessly to develop lessons and search for resources to help their students build the knowledge and skills they need to successfully complete the naturalization process. Their passion means that the teachers themselves are one of the most valuable resources that students have. Taking the time to identify each teacher's strengths and to develop their ability to provide quality instruction is key to helping immigrants seeking to naturalize.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has created the *Professional Development Guide for Adult Citizenship Educators* to help administrators and teachers to implement organizational and individual professional development programs. This guide organizes the knowledge and skills associated with adult citizenship education into five domains: *Content Knowledge, Instructional Design and Lesson Planning, Instructional Delivery, Assessment, and the Learning Environment.* Each domain is defined by a corresponding set of specific instructional competencies and the guide provides rubrics that define the skill levels for each competency. Teachers and administrators can use the guide to identify instructional strengths and create strategies for individual and systemic instructional growth.

Teachers

Students often see only the end result of hours of work and years of experience. Similarly an administrator will not be able to observe a teacher's ability to perform all the competencies in this guide in a single setting. Therefore, the primary audience for this guide is teachers. Teachers can use the guide for:

- **Self-Assessment** — Teachers can use this guide to evaluate all areas of their teaching, including areas that students and classroom observers may not easily be able to evaluate. Newer teachers may have more room for instructional development while more experienced teachers may have a more developed instructional skill set.

- **Instructional Growth** — Once teachers have performed a self-assessment, they can use the rubrics and work individually, with colleagues, or with administrators to identify specifically what professional development they need. They can then create an instructional growth plan.

- **Contributing to a Professional Community** — Each teacher contributes a unique skill set to an instructional staff. This guide can help colleagues to collaborate and mentor one another based on the recognized strengths and needs of the teachers on staff.

Program Administrators

Although this guide is targeted primarily at teachers, program administrators can also use this tool to design professional development programs for their organizations and help teachers grow in their field. Please note that this guide is not a performance assessment tool for holding teachers accountable to a program or standardized metric. Program administrators can use this guide for:

- **Hiring** — Administrators are rarely able to observe teacher candidates in an instructional setting before hiring them, but they can use the teacher competencies in this guide to

inform the hiring process in two important ways. They can:

a. Develop application materials and interview questions to evaluate an applicant's knowledge of the content, instructional design, instructional delivery, assessment, and effective learning environments.

b. Establish clear expectations of professional development and instructional growth for applicants and new hires.

- **Individual Professional Development** — Administrators who observe teachers in the classroom can use the guide to help teachers self-assess their strengths and areas for growth, and then work with them to develop an instructional growth plan.

- **Staff Development** — Administrators who perform classroom observations can use the guide to identify patterns of need for the entire program and to design professional development opportunities that benefit multiple faculty members.

To find additional citizenship education materials and instructional resources, visit the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center at www.uscis.gov/citizenship.

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