MCAEL
Adult English Learning for a Stronger Community

Circle Community Conversations

What is a Community Conversation?

Community Conversations are member-led meetings hosted through the MCAEL Circle. They provide an opportunity for program managers and instructors in Montgomery County, MD to bring people together around a topic, question, practice, or resource that is relevant to the adult ESOL field.

Community Conversations can be a great way to:

- Share ideas, resources, and teaching practices
- Learn how other programs approach common challenges
- Ask questions and learn from peers
- Explore a topic of interest to ESOL instructors and administrators
- Build connections across the Montgomery County ESOL community

MCAEL will help coordinate the meeting through the Circle, but the person requesting the meeting is responsible for hosting and facilitating the conversation.

Community Conversation Guidelines

To help make the Circle a welcoming and useful space for everyone, please follow these guidelines:

1. Keep conversations relevant to our community
2. Create a respectful and inclusive space
3. Share resources and ideas—don't promote products or services
4. Protect learner and colleague privacy by not sharing identifiable or confidential information.
5. Respect intellectual property
6. Keep the conversation professional
7. Remember that Community Conversations are member-led and do not necessarily represent the views or positions of MCAEL

MCAEL reviews Community Conversation requests to help ensure that they are appropriate for the Circle and aligned with its purpose. MCAEL reserves the right to decline a request, ask for changes to a proposed conversation, or remove or end a conversation if it does not follow these guidelines or is not an appropriate fit for the Circle.

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How to Host a Community Conversation

1. Submit the request form at least 1 week prior to your meeting.

2. MCAEL will review the request and follow up with you about the meeting.

Submitting a request does not automatically guarantee that the meeting will be scheduled. MCAEL may contact you to make adjustments as needed.

3. MCAEL will set up the meeting, provide the virtual link to the requester, and add it to the events page on the Circle to promote attendance.

4. You host the conversation and are responsible for facilitating the meeting and helping participants stay on topic.
    - Prepare a few questions or discussion prompts
    - Introduce the topic and explain the purpose of the meeting
    - Give participants an opportunity to introduce themselves
    - Make sure everyone has an opportunity to participate
    - Share relevant resources or materials
    - Keep the conversation moving and within the scheduled time
    - You do not need to be an expert on the topic. Community Conversations are intended to be opportunities for peer learning and sharing, not formal presentations or trainings.

5. Feel free to keep the conversation going. After the meeting, consider using the Circle to:
    - Share resources discussed during the meeting
    - Post a helpful takeaway
    - Continue the discussion
    - Share questions that came up during the conversation

Things to Keep in Mind

	Community Conversations are not formal MCAEL trainings.
	You don't have to have all the answers.
	Think about who would benefit.
	Come ready to share.
	You are responsible for starting the meeting at the appropriate time.
	Have fun and connect!