Non-routine problems are typically reserved for elites while working class students are relegated to mind-numbing drill and practice. Join the New York City Math Exchange Group (MEG), a teacher collaborative in Adult Basic Education, to explore the pedagogical stance of teaching through problem solving. The workshop will examine some non-routine problems that focus on elections generally and specifically on the United States electoral system. These problems pose mathematically the historical question of social justice: What’s fair?

What happens when a class of ABE learners in New York City explores the mathematics of various electoral processes? As they deepen their understanding of the quantitative and social situations of the elections, they see the manipulation of political power and make connections to their own lives. Video-clips of adult students engaged in the proportion problem which is at the heart of the denial of the democratic principle of one person, one vote in the U.S. Electoral College are shared.