




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

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TO: All NYSED funded adult education programs, WIOA, EPE, ALE, and WEP

FROM: Robert Purga, Director, ACCES Adult Education Programs 

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Guidance

These are unprecedented times. The following is guidance for NYSED-funded adult education programs.

For WIOA, EPE, WEP, and ALE Funded Programs:

Shutdown

If you are notified by your employer that you must close/cancel literacy classes then you must follow that direction. Similarly, if the agency that provides a hosting location for literacy classes notifies that you must close/cancel literacy classes then you must follow that direction. If the Governor provides guidance requiring classes to shut down, that will require compliance. Please note that NYSED's Office of ACCES-AEPP is not making this request on a statewide basis.

Accountability and corrective action

Programs have expressed concern for continuing to build performance toward NYS benchmarks for Measurable Skill Gain, Post Testing, and Follow-Up Outcomes while students are not attending classes. NYSED is prepared to prorate or waive those measures along with enrollment obligations and professional development requirements based on the time frame affected. More information will be released when the severity of the closures is better known.

Online Learning/Distance Education

NYSED does not have an approved universal mechanism to introduce online learning opportunities for our adult literacy students that would be appropriate for all levels of learners, all funding streams, and all capacities within our programs.

For all programs, if literacy programming is suspended or cancelled by the program's employer, that program must comply and suspend services temporarily and follow the direction of their employer. Any time spent directing students from a distance should NOT be entered into ASISTS as it does not represent instructional time. Use of online telecommunication platforms such as Zoom, Google Classroom, etc. do not constitute face to face programming as required under our administered funding sources. These will not be fundable.

However, programs are encouraged to refer students to CollectEdNY.org, TeachingtotheCore.org, or to any one of the RAEN websites for instructional resources that can be shared with students. Programs are also encouraged to keep in touch with your students via email, text, and social media avenues; sharing resources with students is encouraged with the goal of keeping students connected to your program so that when classes resume, you are able to invite students back to class.

Specific information for EPE-funded programs (public school districts and BOCES):

EPE does support a number of distance education programs that could be expanded to serve students currently served by classroom instruction. NYSED can amend EPE applications upon request at any time of year if no

additional funds are requested. Distinctions between traditional distance education programs and FAST TRACK GRASP must be maintained. Only programs with prior approval for FAST Track GRASP will be allowed to expand. The good news is that there are funds to expand FAST TRACK GRASP, but prior approval must be obtained. In all cases, student eligibility limitations must be strictly adhered to. This includes educational levels that are reiterated below.

Given the situation that EPE programs have experienced, should it be necessary to adjust their EPE contact hour distribution, any EPE funded program may submit an amendment via email to the EPE mailbox (EPE@nysed.gov) and it will be considered. The amendment should include the program's original application along with revisions highlighted and page numbers articulated in the email. The amendment should be submitted as soon as possible.

In an effort to minimize the impact on EPE reimbursable contact hours please consider the following for the approved NYSED GRASP (NRS Levels 4, 5, 6), SMART (NRS Levels 2, 3, 4), or Crossroad's Café (ESL NRS Levels 3, 4, 5, 6) programs, we have devised a stop-gate training measure to assist teachers in using one or more of the currently approved NYSED Distance Education programs

For those teachers/programs that are already approved by NYSED to provide one or all three of the NYSED Distance Learning programs, continue providing these services under the current design. Programs can temporarily increase the number of teachers eligible to provide these 3 programs in the following way:

- Stop gate training is being made available to train existing teachers that have not provided NYSED Distance Education in the past
- No students will be pre or post tested during this time as assessments must still be administered in person so the requirement for pre and post testing is waived until April 12, 2020 beginning today.
- Any teacher who will be involved with this process must attend a virtual modified training. This is a temporary measure and will not be counted as NYSED certification training or RAEN PD hours, however it will enable teachers to provide EPE eligible distance education for the period of time being impacted by school and BOCES closures:

Training dates and times:

Tuesday, March 24, 2020

1:00 to 3:00 pm

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

10:00 to 12:00 pm

- If programs intend to use the Crossroad's Café program for their ESL students, they MUST purchase workbooks for their students directly from KET. The publisher has indicated they will fill orders rapidly but orders must be sent as quickly as possible.
- Program Managers must register their teachers for this stop gate training. **A special registration page will be sent from the RAEN to all EPE providers within the next two days.**

Note: this training session does not signal that the teacher is certified for NYSED Distance Education, these teachers will need to attend traditional RAEN training for these NYSED programs once this temporary situation has passed. Also, teachers will not receive RAEN PD hours for this training; this is a very specialized training aimed at preserving EPE contact hour generation as best as possible given the current circumstances.