

## COVID-19 Guidance for Adult Education and Literacy: Volume 3

### Purpose

This guidance responds to questions from the field and provides further information regarding the COVID-19 response. For additional information, see [Volume 1](#) (Issued March 18, 2020) and [Volume 2](#) (Issued March 27, 2020).

### HSCP Tech Funds

Tech Funds will be paid for new students with GEPs assessing at NRS 4, for Quarter 3 and Quarter 4. The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) considered the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers' request for this and determined that these funds are especially important to support technology access at this time. The funds may be used to provide any AEL-enrolled student with devices needed to access their education remotely. No action on the part of the AEL providers is needed for this invoicing to occur, as the system generates the Tech Funds automatically for all new Graduation Education Plans (GEPs) entered into the system.

### HSCP New Plan Development Reimbursement

The AOE will issue a decision regarding the payment of plan development funds for those students assessing at NRS 4 in FY20 by May 29, 2020.

### New Students

Supervisory Unions/Districts (SUs/SDs) are responsible for providing remote learning to students during school closure. AEL providers are not to enroll students directly from the high schools in FY20 Quarter 4 until after the end of the school year as there is no mechanism to baseline assess at this time. The SUs/SDs must ensure that all enrolled students receive an equitable education.

Other potential students requesting services should be given remote orientation. AEL providers must begin to transition to online TABE 11/12 assessments for all new students. The AOE will provide guidance for virtual online proctoring.

### Prior Approval Requests

The AOE is not accepting new requests to graduate until May 1, 2020, for July 1, 2020, and later graduations. The requirement to request prior approval for students scoring NRS 4 on the M level is waived for Quarter 4, but these students will not be able to graduate before July 1, 2020, and only with AOE-approved requests to graduate. Prior Approval Requests for private PE and

### Contact Information:

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driver's education will not be accepted until July 1, 2020. (Note that VTVLC will be offering health/PE courses.)

## **Timeline for Re-opening**

The AOE is developing resources and considerations for when schools and education programs re-open. Although AEL providers are not required to be closed for the remainder of the school year, learning centers must remain closed while the Governor's Directive to stay home is in effect. The Governor's order has been extended to May 15, 2020.

## **GED Updates**

As previously advised, all AEL providers must communicate with Pearson VUE the status of their GED testing center closures. The GED Testing Service is developing procedures that will allow remote proctoring of the GED tests with a targeted implementation timeline set for mid-May. Note that the GED conference of 2020 has been postponed.

Due to the closure of DMVs, some states are experiencing delays in the issuance of government-issued IDs. Vermont's DMV has suspended in-person transactions and is taking renewal and replacement ID forms via the mail only. Pearson VUE and GED Testing Service are working to develop policies that will allow GED testing centers to accept expired IDs through the end of May. **They anticipate returning to regular ID requirements on June 1, 2020.** Vermont has opted-in to this temporary provision. If learning centers open after May 15, 2020, assuming the Governor's order to stay home is not extended again, GED testing centers in Vermont will be able to re-open on May 18, 2020. Watch for more information from Pearson VUE and ensure that staff is trained to implement the policy to accept expired IDs with fidelity.

Vermont will need to consider how to manage a potential backlog of students who wish to take the GED. The AOE will work with AEL providers to review all of the considerations for creating a plan for re-opening GED testing centers.

## **Distance Education/Learning Policy**

Distance learning policies must specify how distance learning hours are tracked and counted, how proxy hours count toward assessments, and what distance learning curricula are approved for use. The AOE is working with Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) to ensure that Vermont's policy meets requirements. In the meantime, please note that only Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) is approved as a distance learning course-based platform, as described below.

## **TABE Academy**

Time students spend using TABE academy may be used to count toward the 40 hours of instruction required for progress assessments. The hours must be tracked by providers in an electronic student file or in hard copy student files because the time cannot currently be tracked in DataWorks. To help pay for the additional time spent tracking these hours, AEL providers will be reimbursed an additional \$10 per student invoiced in FY20 Quarter 3.

## Distance Learning Courses

The AOE is scaling its existing relationship with VTVLC to provide an optional virtual learning management system (LMS) to support SUs/SDs, Career Technical (CTE) and AEL centers as they shift to remote education statewide. This is targeted to serve secondary students beginning at grade 6 (NRS 4) for the remainder of the school year. This option will be at no cost to districts, schools or providers.

This online system will provide access to curated and standards-based curriculum, instruction and delivery mechanisms. The platform will allow SUs/SDs, CTE centers and AEL providers to leverage their personnel to rapidly meet the range of student needs and ensure continuity of learning for Vermont learners as communities navigate the coming months. For more information, please review this [overview of the benefits of this resource](#). Additional details on accessing the platform, training and supports is forthcoming in collaboration with VTVLC.

## PBS

Vermont Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and the Agency of Education (AOE) are partnering to support continuity of learning for our students and school communities. This partnership will provide access to free educational programming resources via television broadcasts. Distance learning resources are accessed through [Vermont PBS At-Home Learning](#). Additional resources will be provided by the AOE and Vermont PBS, both on-air and online. The curriculum-supported programming is aligned to national standards and includes interactive lessons and suggested activities. Programming for PreK-8 has begun on the PBS main channel which is broadly available throughout the state and does not require cable. PBS Plus (WGBH) has also begun airing educational programming for grades 6-12 during the noon to 5 PM timeslot.

AEL instructors can create unique accounts with their school email or Google account through [PBS LearningMedia](#). Accounts are free and provide access to a range of additional features. Each Wednesday, the [Vermont PBS Week-Ahead Program Schedule](#) will be made available to educators so they can plan for the following week. Additionally, many of the materials can be printed and sent to students at home if necessary.

## Resources

[CARES Act](#) – note there are several provisions to assist small businesses and nonprofits, including guaranteed loans that may be forgiven if payroll is maintained.

[COVID-19 Support for Adult Educators on LINCS](#)

[GED resource page for educators](#)

CDC resources: [Managing stress and anxiety](#) and [COVID-19 info to distribute to students](#)

EdTech Center at World Education [Tips for Distance Learning](#), including weekly Distance Learning Strategy Sessions on Fridays.