COVID19 & ABE Programming Discussion

MDE – Adult Basic Education Staff
Staff from Literacy Action Network (LAN) and MN Distance Learning Team
Introductions

MDE Staff:

Todd Wagner, ABE State Director
Astrid Liden, Professional Development Specialist
Brad Hasskamp, Secondary Credential and Policy Specialist
Jodi Versaw, Program Quality Specialist
Julie Dincau, Transitions Specialist

Literacy Action Network and ABE Distance Learning Team members:

Susan Wetenkamp-Brandt, Senior Manager Ed Technology Literacy Minnesota and Literacy Action Network President
Tom Cytron-Hysom, ABE Distance Learning Team, consultant to Literacy Minnesota
• MDE-ABE guidance
• Distance Learning team guidance
• Discussion
Goals:

1. Safety of ABE students, ABE staff and our communities

2. Best possible service for ABE students throughout any program closures and disruptions

3. Support for ABE programs and staff across the field
“School Readiness, Early Childhood Family Education Programming

Community Education programs such as Early Childhood Family Education and School Readiness will not be required to be included in your district’s distance learning plan whether these programs are included in the plan can be a locally determined decision.” pg. 16


We interpret this to mean that ABE does not have to be included in the district plan, and therefore it is up to the individual district to determine whether ABE will participate in the 2-week planning period for online learning.
The ABE team at MDE and Literacy Action Network commit to:

Work to hold all ABE consortia harmless from any decline in contact hours as a result of school closures.
Continue to provide ABE services with as much access and quality as possible.

Don’t worry about funding.
Reminder about current year funding:

State and Federal ABE aid have been awarded for fiscal year 2020 - this means that ABE services are funded through June 30, 2020.

Use those funds to deliver services in whatever ways are possible throughout any period of school closure.

- As possible and based on public health recommendations and guidelines, staff paid through ABE funding should continue to work and be paid for their work during this time
- Work will look different, including working remotely
Continuing to provide ABE services

Ideas to consider for how to provide services during school closure:

• Deliver ABE instruction using Skype, Zoom or another platform

• Online learning, including BUT NOT LIMITED TO currently approved distance learning platforms

• Phone calls

• Emails

• Text messages

• Snail mail (handouts, worksheets, textbooks, packets, etc.)
In addition to direct service, current year funding can be used to build capacity to provide distance education in the future.

Reminder: we don’t know how long this current public health emergency will continue, and there is a possibility of future resurgence.
What might this look like for instructors?

ABE instructors paid to:

• Learn more about delivering effective instruction at a distance
• Take DL Basics online course
• Develop online learning curriculum
• Research online learning platforms
• Communicate with students to build student capacity for distance learning
What might this look like for support staff?

ABE support staff paid to:

• Take DL Basics online course
• Communicate with students to build student capacity for distance learning
• Research communication tools for use with students
• Coordinate and organize device distribution to students
• Research resources for free or inexpensive internet access for students
• Research resources for low-cost laptops or other devices for students
What might this look like for managers?

ABE managers paid to:

• Facilitate communication, collaboration and training around distance learning for ABE staff

• Facilitate collaboration and sharing with K-12 partners around distance learning

• Take DL Basics online course

• Research online learning platforms
What does this look like?

Other ideas?
Use this year’s funding to deliver services as possible AND grow your program’s capacity to support ABE students in new ways.

Remember: LAN and MDE will be working to make sure you have the upcoming six weeks to do this WITHOUT being concerned about how many contact hours are generated.
Requirements and data

ABE programs must continue to comply with all state and federal law and ABE policy and guidance

• No more than 12 contact hours can be entered for a student with no pre-test

ABE Continue entering all required data, including attendance (contact hours and proxy hours) into SiD as you normally do

• Aside from funding calculations, we still need an accurate count of student hours

• Synchronous instruction to individual students or groups (e.g. via Skype, Google Hangouts or phone call) should be recorded in SiD as contact hours, not proxy hours.
We recognize:

• Closures will impact your ability to conduct post-testing

• This will impact MSGs for this year.

We commit to taking these factors into account when determining Program Improvement processes for next year.
Limited capacity in testing centers and many closures.

Please communicate this with your students.

Limited MDE office capacity for onsite appointments for GED records; we recommend emailing records request forms.
Expanding DL in MN ABE - a Response to COVID-19

Tom Cytron-Hysom and Susan Wetenkamp-Brandt
Further closures of public spaces are likely.

This may affect schools and ABE programs.

Distance learning (DL) offers a way to serve students if they can’t attend class.
Seat Time at a Distance

Minnesota DL Policy allows for **synchronous online learning** via a webinar platform or similar tool.

Seat time can be counted.

Try **Zoom**, **Google Hangouts Meet**, or **Skype**
Preparing for DL Instruction - Proxy Hours

Make sure each of your students has a **working email address**, so you can communicate with them at a distance. **Text** messages are another good option.

Develop **remote working arrangements** for staff, insuring each person has adequate connectivity and access to work at home.

Insure that all teachers who may be involved in distance learning **complete DL Basics**, as per state policy.
Preparing for DL - Connecting with Learners

Stay connected with students so they have good information and know when they can return to class.

Remind easily reaches large numbers of students.

- Sign students up now if you are not already using it.
- It’s also a great way to send links to online learning options!
Self-paced distance learning platforms aren’t a replacement for face-to-face classes.

But they are helpful, educational and important.

If you are not now using a DL platform or platforms, review those that are available.
All MN ABE programs have free access to Edmentum Courseware and Northstar. NS Online Learning has self-directed online instruction and practice material for Computer Basics, which can be used to claim time-on-task proxy hours.

There are many other approved DL platforms on the DL website, some of them free. A new filtering tool makes it easy to match approved platforms with student needs.

Sign up as many students now as you can for the platform(s) you select. Note: Many companies are offering reduced prices for their platforms due to the virus – check their websites for information.

Take time during class to make sure everyone knows how to access their platform(s).

http://mnabe-distancelearning.org/
# Other Platforms

To filter results, select options from the lists below and then select "apply."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASAS Score</th>
<th>TABE Score</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Other filters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 200</td>
<td>300-457</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Accuplacer Prep</td>
<td>Adult Diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201-210</td>
<td>458-510</td>
<td>Digital Literacy</td>
<td>Career</td>
<td>CCRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211-220</td>
<td>511-546</td>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221-235</td>
<td>547-583</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>Mobile Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236-245</td>
<td>584-630</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>College Prep</td>
<td>Time on task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 246</td>
<td>631-800</td>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Unit completion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Vocabulary.com
- USA Learns
- Tooling U-SME
- Townsend Press
- Skills Tutor
- Spelling City
- Rosetta Stone
Another Consideration

DL students need **solid connections** with ABE staff.

Teachers should **monitor work closely** for distance-only students, **preferably daily**.

Contact (email, phone, text, or video chat) should happen at least **weekly**.

Formal guidance coming soon.
Currently there is no system in place to record proxy hours for teacher-developed courses delivered through an LMS.

Nevertheless, creating a class on an LMS such as Schoology or Google Classroom is still a valuable step. These tools help you build online community among learners and keep engagement with your program high. They provide a place for learners to check in and get links to learning materials, ask questions, and receive support.

Both Schoology and Google Classroom are free for teachers.
The EdTech Center@World Education made a new resource website to help ABE programs scale up or launch distance learning programs. [https://edtech.worlded.org/tips-for-distance-learning/](https://edtech.worlded.org/tips-for-distance-learning/)

LINC’s forum

For advice, consider following discussions in the LINCS Community of Practice, specifically the Integrating Technology group. To ask questions about some of these issues join LINCS. Then join the Integrating Technology group.
We will be providing ongoing information in the coming days about potential resources, including news items on the DL website.

Please submit questions at support@mnabedistancelearning.zendesk.com
A Note on Scams

Coronavirus-related scams are multiplying at a terrifying rate.

Our students, with limited English and/or low basic skills, are vulnerable.

The Federal Trade Commission has created a dedicated web page at https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/coronavirus-scams-what-ftc-doing with information about current scams and guidance on avoiding them.

The material could be used directly with intermediate-level readers, or adapted for those at more beginning levels. You can also subscribe to receive alerts and updates.
Discussion and Questions

Web Check-in:
Thursday Mar 19
3:30 – 4:30