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

FROM: Robert Purga, Director, ACCES Adult Education Programs *Robert F. Purga*

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Guidance

This memo provides revised guidelines for NYSED State and Federally administered adult education programs to provide the maximum allowable flexibility in providing continuity of learning and student engagement for adult education programs. The major priority is to provide flexibility for and support for online learning now that face-to-face classes have become unavailable across the State. We will provide additional webinars for Employment Preparation Education (EPE) training and Adult Literacy Education (ALE) and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) specific policies and steps in the coming weeks.

**WIOA and ALE funded programs:**

Consistent with WIOA, Title II, Subtitle C, Section 231(e)(7), (9) & (11), NYSED is allowing and encouraging these programs to continue instruction with students via distance learning, including online tools:

- o **Reminder: The guidance provided here is dependent upon events considered temporary in nature.** Existing guidelines and requirements remain in effect and are only waived temporarily and to the extent set forth herein. The guidance provided here shall apply until revoked upon face-to-face classes becoming more readily available across the State;
- o NYSED has created a spreadsheet (NYSED WIOA and ALE Adult Literacy Coronavirus Online Learning Planning Tool) where programs will be asked to identify the plan for delivering these services;
- o The initial deadline for submitting the plan, the NYSED WIOA and ALE Adult Literacy Coronavirus Online Learning Planning Tool, is March 27<sup>th</sup>. Plans must be submitted to their respective funding program's mailbox ([WIOA@NYSED.gov](mailto:WIOA@NYSED.gov) or [ALE@NYSED.gov](mailto:ALE@NYSED.gov)). Subsequently, programs may submit new or amended plans as needed to reflect changes in programming;
- o The Online Learning Planning Tool can include both Synchronous and Asynchronous learning options for students;
- o NYSED has also created an electronic, fillable attendance document (the NYSED WIOA and ALE DL Attendance Record March 2020) that each teacher must complete and submit to their Program Managers;
- o Program Managers are responsible for uploading the attendance rosters to [NYSED's adult education accountability website](#) every two weeks. The attendance rosters must not be entered into ASISTS during this time frame.

- No pre- or post-testing will be required, per [National Reporting System Guidelines](#), during the period this guidance shall remain in effect.
- Programs may use existing funds to purchase technology in order to adjust to this temporary guidance, if necessary. However, before any money is expended, a budget amendment must be submitted to, **and approved** by, NYSED's ACCES-AEPP fiscal lead (Marisa.Boomhower@nysed.gov).
- Even with programs that do not have the capacity or wherewithal to provide these services online, programs may continue to employ their teachers for tasks such as:
  - Teachers can remain at home and review curricula and create lesson plans;
  - Program managers must submit those lesson plans to their Regional Adult Education Network (RAEN) Director. [A portal on the accountability website](#) will be open soon and directions will follow.
- For WIOA and ALE funded programs which serve students from the ages of 16 to 21, these students can also be served via the above options **if they meet ALE and WIOA eligibility requirements**.

### **EPE funded programs:**

- Distance Education under EPE has already been defined in Section 202 of the EPE State Manual and consistent therewith:
  - All attendance for EPE must still be entered into ASISTS, using:
    - GRASP for ABE and ASE students
    - SMART for lower level learners
    - Crossroad's Café for ESL students
- If teachers have not been trained in the past, [they can register for training](#). This registration information has already been sent to all EPE Program Managers.
- As stated in Section 202 of EPE State Manual, programs will still be able to accrue 12 hours for each two week's worth of work for each student.
- New tutoring guidelines: Tutoring contact hours can continue online through a synchronous platform (a teacher will schedule and meet with students online to support the student's work). Up to 3 hours per week for tutoring may be claimed while these temporary guidelines remain in effect.
- New waiver: During this temporary period that face-to-face classes have become unavailable across the State, a student may receive both a FAST Track Math GRASP packet and traditional distance learning GRASP packet. An additional 24 hours will count in EPE under Fast Track. EPE Program Managers must carefully track (via ASISTS) the amount of Fast Track and traditional EPE that is accrued. Programs are responsible for **not exceeding** their current allocation for either traditional or Fast Track EPE. If any alteration to the allocation is desired, Program Managers must submit a request for an amendment to the EPE mailbox (EPE@NYSED.GOV). While there are foreseen limitations on the dollar amount, NYSED will review program requests and make accommodations when possible.
- The National External Diploma Program (NEDP) will continue electronically and programs can provide their contact with students electronically via the online platforms or with phone calls to the students.

### **Students from the ages of 18 to under 21:**

- For those EPE Programs that also serve Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Programs (AHSEP) students; these students cannot be supported with EPE funding.



