ESSENTIAL CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ADULT EDUCATION IN RHODE ISLAND

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The following list identifies the essential conditions necessary for the effective use of technology in Adult Education. By technology use the members of the Technology Advisory Committee II specifically refer to services, and delivery systems, including distance education as outlined in four of the thirteen essential considerations necessary to meet the standards of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)[1].

The identification of the essential conditions began with fourteen critical elements necessary to effectively leverage technology for learning as identified by ISTE.[2] Subsequently other conditions specific to Rhode Island Adult Education were introduced and some ISTE conditions were dropped or reframed for an Adult Education context.

The conditions outlined in the next pages include preliminary recommendations from TAC II as to how these conditions may be met at the agency and at the system (RIDE –OMP) level.

A. **The Essential Conditions** necessary to effectively use technology in Adult Education programs in Rhode Island Adult Education must address the following four essential considerations necessary to meet the standards of the Workforce Opportunity and Investment Act of 2014:

(7) whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and systems lead to improved performance;

(8) whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship;

(9) whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means;

(12) whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with section 116) and to monitor program performance;

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[1] Considerations 7,8,9,12 for AE agencies in WIOA:

[2] http://www.iste.org/standards/essential-conditions

B. Agency Planning for an increased use and reliance on technology in order to meet new WIOA standards and impact students will be challenging. Agencies must be prepared to exploit opportunities, identifying where their strengths lie and develop them and create (foster) strategic alliances.

<u>Consequently TAC II Recommends</u>

Adult Education programs receiving RIDE funds must develop a multi-year technology plan. The plan must address how the provider's activities will effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education to increase the amount and quality of learning and how partnerships that share technology (hardware and software), services, and/or systems will lead to greater efficiencies and improved performance.

Specifically Programs must describe in their plan how they will address WIOA considerations as measured by

- Evidence of the implementation of a curriculum that develops skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information.[3]

- Evidence of the implementation of a curriculum that develops personalized learning, self-directed learning and critical thinking in a technology rich environment.

- Evidence of the implementation of a curriculum that provides learning in context, including the necessary life skills tasks that increasingly are required of them online (examples include job applications and many social services forms, banking.)

- Evidence of the implementation of a curriculum that includes integrated education and training so that students can acquire the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education (including Computer Based GED training and testing) additional training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship [4]

- The use of on-line (Web-delivered) courses and instructional material

- The development and successful integration of blended learning opportunities into current and future programs

- Increased student access to technology facilitated remotely and at the program level

- Evidence of teacher skill to teach effectively with technology

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[3] INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY IN WIOA www.ed.gov/AEFLA
[4] Op.cite.

C. <u>Agency Planning for Implementation</u> is equally important as the plan itself

<u>Consequently TAC II Recommends</u>:

Adult Education programs need to describe how they will administer a multi-year technology plan including:

- Implementation of blended and online courses and curriculum
- Budgeting to support the necessary technology hardware, licensing, and service/support mechanisms for users and providers
- Development of staffing models and professional development plans for staff to support online and face to face technology integration
- Creating enhanced position requirements to include technological proficiency and expertise
- Planning/administering assessments to:
    - evaluate the use of technology in programs
    - measure student outcomes
    - track development and demonstration of staff requisite skills and proficiencies
- Pursuing blended learning opportunities (while integrating the metrics listed directly above)
- Planning for all instructional staff to be Northstar certified in Basic Computers, Internet (WWW), Microsoft Word and Using Email by June 30, 2016

D. <u>Agency Budgeting</u> for consistent and adequate technology in a time of steady or diminishing fiscal resources will require agencies to concentrate resources on key technology goals.

<u>Consequently TAC II Recommends</u>

Adult Education programs must describe how they develop technology budgets that can realistically, over a multiple year period, support the required technology including:

- New equipment and updates
- Repairs,
- Licensing,
- Networking,
- Internet access,
- How they plan to use expanded RISTE services to purchase hardware, software and technical services[i] or other services which provide cost savings
- Related professional development

E. <u>**Technical Support**</u> **for Agencies to make certain that the technology works when, where and how it is supposed to is another key challenge. Currently it is not clear who provides or how a consistent level of technology can be supported across all programs**.

<div align="center">Consequently TAC II Recommends:</div>

- That program must begin to make technology and program decisions with technical support in mind and favor solutions that will require less technical support going forward.

- That multiple agencies should merge their technical support needs under one contracted vender vetted with a shared price point by RISTE or other approved state provider of licenses/services.

- Technology solutions and support levels are collaboratively selected based on budget constraints and "just right" service levels, not based on unsustainable "high support level" agreements.

F. <u>**Agency Facilitated Equitable Access**</u> **to help adult students find affordable access to technology outside the classroom is another significant issue**

<div align="center">Consequently TAC II Recommends:</div>

That agencies begin to survey web-enabled devices that their students have and consider developing programs that can use this interface. Many students have smart phones and some agencies are introducing laptop lending programs. Consistent with security and compliance requirements, agencies should explore web delivered programming (accessible through smart phones and assist students in gaining information about local access (hot spots) http://www.wififreespot.com/ where laptops, Surfaces, or Chromebooks might be used. Publically accessible Hot-spots include:

1. Local libraries
2. Local higher education institutions
3. Coffee shops (ie:Starbucks etc.)
4. Restaurants (McDonalds) etc.,

G. <u>**Agency Staff and Instructional Personnel can help students**</u> **to effectively utilize technology, so it is critical that instructors and agency staff be skilled in its use. As previously recommended, every Adult Education instructor must be Northstar certified (Unit 1) by June 30, 2016.**

<div align="center">Consequently TAC II Recommends:</div>

 RIPDC must identify and offer training when necessary in the essential skills necessary for instructors to teach students to:

- Participate successfully in online testing.
- Complete necessary life skills tasks that increasingly are required of them online (examples include job applications and many social services forms, banking).
- Use online course management tools in order to work/be successful in a remote learning environment.

H. <u>Ongoing Professional Learning</u> necessitated by continuous technology changes will require ongoing training for program staff and instructors. Instructional strategies must be integrated.

<u>Consequently TAC II Recommends:</u>

- That PDC supports the development of a culture of self-directed learners.
- Scanning the technology environment for emerging and evolving changes in technology is necessary for identifying new or new ways of using technology while developing training programs to keep instructors reasonably up-to-date will be required.
- That RISTE be requested to consider formalizing the results of its environmental scanning for emergent technology offering - perhaps through annual workshops or presentations as an update on emerging technologies. Such presentations might include cost benefit assessments as well reliability assessments and might provide the PDC with an early view of where new PD may need to be developed.
- That resources of community organizations be leveraged.

I. <u>Assessment and Evaluation</u> will be required to assess the use of various hardware, software, systems and instruction in order to evaluate and make best use of the technology.

<u>Consequently TAC II Recommends:</u>

- That RIDE OMP develop policies in keeping with these recommendations

- That RIDE OMP develop and administer a governance structure capable of maintaining the above policies and procedures
    - In addition, this governance structure be utilized to administer prioritization decisions related to successful deployment of this technology initiative

- That RIDE OMP ensures that an information management system (IMS) for participant and program tracking and evaluation be developed to accommodate expanded data collection. Such an IMS would allow for tracking student progress as well as waitlist, intake and placement processes in meeting the new WIOA technology standards. The IMS would also provide greater information about how various programs are effectively using technology

- That RIDE OMP provides a Learning Management System (LMS) that provides for teacher collaboration and PD and online learning that is student accessible and friendly, providing for student portfolios, and allowing for data collection.

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[i] RISTE as if 4/24/15 JB agreed to explore how RISTE can expand their services to Adult Education to include bulk purchases of software (including a learning management Systems, Technology Support Services and statewide licensees for interested agencies.