STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
ADULT EDUCATION DIVISION
220 French Landing Drive
Nashville, TN 37243-1002

ADULT EDUCATION POLICY – DISTANCE EDUCATION: PROGRAM YEAR 2021-2022

Effective Date: Jan. 11, 2020
Date Issued: Jan. 11, 2020
Last Issued: July 31, 2020

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

1. Voxy, New Readers Press ProLiteracy, and ReadWorks added to list of approved distance education curricula.

AUDIENCE

- Local Adult Education program directors and staff

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this policy is to (a) identify distance learning programs approved by TDLWD; (b) clarify expectations as to which individuals may use distance learning programs; and (c) explain the process for tracking and reporting progress for distance education students according to federal requirements.[1]

According to federal guidance, *Distance Education* is defined as a "formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media, including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, Web based programs, and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication by mail, telephone, e-mail, or online technologies and software."[2]

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[1] See https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-TA-Aug2019-508.pdf#page=54.
[2] See https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-TA-Aug2019-508.pdf#page=56.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Title	Role or Responsibility
Local Adult Education Program Staff	Utilize only approved distance education curricula; determine student eligibility to utilize distance learning programs; and adhere to requirements concerning tracking distance education hours.

POLICY

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1. Distance Learning Curricula

The following distance learning software programs have been approved by TDLWD for local providers to use as part of their distance education plan:

a. Khan Academy
b. Read Theory
c. Spark3000
d. Reading Horizons
e. BurlingtonEnglish
f. Rosetta Stone
g. HiSET Academy
h. Odysseyware
i. Voxy
j. New Readers Press ProLiteracy
k. ReadWorks

In addition, the Schoology Learning Management System is the approved learning management system for use in our programs, beginning with a pilot year in program year 2020-2021. Access is provided by the state office.

Local providers wishing to utilize or purchase distance learning software not on this list may do so with written approval from TDLWD staff. The abovementioned distance learning programs must be used in a manner consistent with the computer program's target student population (e.g., a local provider may not use Rosetta Stone for a NRS Level 4 ABE student).

Local providers can also provide students with hard copy instructional resources that can be utilized outside of traditional face-to-face interactions. Students can acquire contact hours for utilizing these resources. That is, a teacher may assign specific reading passages, worksheets, practice tests, or other activities in packaged "assignments" that students can complete and submit to the teacher. Teachers determine the amount of hours of credit associated with each assignment (see p. 4 "Teacher Verification Model" for additional details).

2. Guidelines for Ensuring Distance Education Student Success

Any student may be eligible for distance learning programs if local providers have determined the student has 1) a need for such opportunity and 2) the potential to benefit from the opportunity. Local providers should consider that not all students are equally prepared to learn in a distance environment; distance learning requires self-discipline and the means to utilize required curricula and communication tools.

Preferred attributes for students who are provided distance learning software access include:

a. Student is computer literate; if possible, this has been demonstrated via a computer literacy assessment or otherwise.

b. Student has regular access to a computer, tablet, or mobile device capable of delivering the functionality of the computer program he or she is using.

c. Student is willing to commit to consistent, regular use of the distance learning program for the length of the student's planned period of participation.

Local providers may remove access to any distance learning program from students who become inactive or who do not use the program in a manner consistent with their learning plan.

3. Recording Distance Education Student Hours

Students who are eligible for and plan to utilize distance learning programs must be enrolled in a "Distance Education" class in Jobs4TN. All distance education contact hours acquired by a student must be entered into this class. Daily attendance hours must be entered into Jobs4TN within a 10-day window (see below for requirements concerning "synchronous contact hours" and "proxy contact hours").

Any student who uses distance learning programs for the majority of their instructional time (i.e., greater than 50%) during their period of participation will be identified as a *Distance Education Student* in Jobs4TN.[3] The system will automatically assign this designation based on the number of attendance hours entered for a student's class registration type (i.e., "Face-to-face" or "Distance Education"). See Appendix for step-by-step procedure to create a "Distance Education" class in Jobs4TN.

A. Synchronous Contact Hours

Synchronous distance education occurs when staff and students interact remotely in real-time. Contact hours for distance learners can be acquired for student-staff interactions via telephone, video, teleconference, or online communication, as long as student identity is verifiable.[4] For students to acquire hours for remote interactions, local staff must keep a record of the remote activities conducted with students and associated contact hours; these hours must be entered into the "Distance Education" class in Jobs4TN.

B. Proxy Contact Hours

For students to acquire hours for working on distance learning curricula outside of synchronous contact with program staff, local providers may use three (3) proxy time-tracking models.

(1) **Clock Time Model**, which assigns instructional hours based on the elapsed time that a learner is engaged in a computer program that tracks time and disconnects after a period of inactivity. Programs that use this model include: *HiSET Academy, Khan Academy, Spark3000, Reading Horizons, Rosetta Stone, Burlington English*, *Voxy, NRP OLL,* and *Odysseyware*.

These programs record the amount of time that each student spends interacting with the program. One hour of time spent in these programs equals one hour of instructional time accumulated for the student.

(2) **Learner Mastery Model**, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit based on the learner passing a test after working through the content of a lesson. A high percentage of correct answers (typically 70%-80%) earns the credit hours attached to the material. Programs that use this model include: *Read Theory*.

Students who use Read Theory may acquire 30 minutes of instructional time for completing the pre-test, and 30 minutes for each quiz passed at the end of a lesson. (These time allotments are based on a sample of average time spent on

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[3] Note: The outcomes for these students will be recorded in NRS Reports 4, 4c, and 5a
[4] See https://nrsweb.org/sites/default/files/NRS-TA-Aug2019-508.pdf#page=54

Read Theory lessons, as well as needing a simple and standardized method of data collection. A lesson consists of reading a passage, then taking a quiz, including reviewing the explanations for quiz answers).

(3) **Teacher Verification Model**, which assigns a fixed number of hours of credit for each assignment based on teacher determination of the extent to which a student engaged in, or completed, the assignment. Teachers must keep a record that summarizes each assignment given to students and the hours acquired.

C. Verification of Distance Education Hours

Program leaders and TDLWD monitors must be able to verify the distance education hours recorded in Jobs4TN. Local programs must keep reports generated from the software using the "clock time" and "learner mastery" models that indicate the students' utilization. Note: these reports do not necessarily need to be printed or stored outside of the software itself, as long as the reports are accessible within the software upon request.

Local programs must keep the records used for tracking synchronous distance education contact hours and "teacher verification model" assignments. These records must be made available upon request. Note: records used for verification are not required to be stored in hard copy.

D. NRS and Assessment Requirements

As with all students, distance education students must have at least 12 hours of instruction before they can be reported to the NRS, and must take a pre-test during intake.

Local providers must administer all NRS-approved pre- and post-test assessments (TABE or CASAS) to distance education students in person, at a proctored program site within the state. **A distance education student may not be post-tested until attaining at least 40 instructional hours**, with the exception of students who test with TABE and are at NRS level 5 or 6 —these students may post-test after attaining at least 30 instructional hours. Note: TABE recommends 50-60 hours for students at NRS levels 1-4, and 30-59 hours for students at NRS levels 5-6, before post-testing. CASAS recommends 70-100 hours before post-testing. A student may take multiple post-tests, but the 40-instructional-hour minimum requirement exists between each iteration of post-test.

GOVERNANCE

To ensure local Adult Education program compliance with this policy, as part of its regular monitoring practices, TDLWD will conduct both in-person and remote monitoring of distance education student enrollment, attendance hours, and assessment records.

CONTACT

For any questions related to this policy, please contact Laura Chartier, director of academic services, at laura.chartier@tn.gov or (615) 712-4014.

Jay Baker, Interim Assistant Commissioner of Adult Education

APPENDIX

Creating a Distance Education Class in Jobs4TN

To create a "Distance Education" class in Jobs4TN, complete the following steps:

1. Login to www.Jobs4TN.gov.

2. On the left navigation, expand the "Services for Workforce Staff" ribbon.

3. Place your mouse over "Manage Adult Education."

4. From the fly-out, select "Manage Classes" then "Create/Edit Classes."

5. Using your selected naming convention, type the name of your class in the "Class Description" Box.

6. Using the "Type" dropdown menu, select "Other" or "Individual Tutoring." If you are creating a class for individuals to use *HiSET Academy* or *Khan Academy*, you may select these choices from the dropdown menu.

7. Select your correct Grantee, County, and Learning Center. *Note:* Select the Learning Center that relates to your normal teaching location.

8. (Optional) Select the Primary and/or Secondary Instructor. Those individual instructors registered in Jobs4TN will appear on the dropdown list.

9. Select the Class Start Date.

10. Choose 6/30/2020 as your "Class End Date."

11. Using the "Class Attendance Type" dropdown menu, select "Distance Education."

12. Using the "Class Status" dropdown menu, select "Active."

13. Set your maximum number of students.

14. Select the meeting days and time. We recommend selecting the maximum parameters to allow students to login and attain attendance hours that would accommodate your students' schedules.

15. Click "Save."

For more information, please refer to the *Data Entry Manual* Pages 37-38, found on the TN AE Staff Portal.