

# Technology and Distance Learning Plan

## Introduction

This plan outlines how the local ABE consortium is planning to utilize technology resources and distance learning in support of quality instructional services and increased student outcomes for ABE learners.

## Guidance

In developing this multi-year plan for technology and distance learning, consider the following:

- **Current resources:** What resources currently exist and are available across the consortium? Resources can include (but aren't limited to): hardware, software, funds, staff expertise, staff time, and IT/tech support.
- **Future needs as it relates to current resources:** What training, support, funds or other items will be necessary to continue the use of current resources?
- **Future plans for developing and utilizing additional resources:** What additional hardware and/or software would add value for the consortium's programming? How will decisions be made about which hardware and/or software are worth investing in? Where will funds come from to support additional resources? What training requirements will additional resources entail?

The use of technology in programming enhances education at all levels, including for the lowest level students. Teachers use technology to support formative assessments such as online quiz tools, integrated learning targets such as using word processing papers to develop typing skills while developing stronger writing skills, support learning by accessing video clips and/or photos to clarify vocabulary and/or challenging concepts, and to enhance learning outside of class, including the use of distance learning programs.

During the 2017-2018 school year, staff development focused on the creation of updated course descriptions which incorporate the state standards, including the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards. Each level of programming is working to ensure that the technology skills taught will support continued learning as student's progress to the next level. This helps ensure that as students transition from one level to the next, or from ELL to ABE programming that there is a common understanding of the technology skills needed. Students have the opportunity to earn their Northstar Digital Literacy certificates in ABE classrooms and at the local Workforce Center.

## Technology and Distance Learning Plan

<b>Consortium name</b>	WEST ABE
<b>Staff contact</b>	Jill Dechaine
<b>Plan implementation period (start and end dates)</b>	Annually reviewed and revised July 1 - June 30
<b>Date of last update</b>	July 1, 2018

### Technology resources:

Current		
Hardware:		
Software: Please see attached <b>Technology Resources</b> for all ABE hardware/software/other		
Other:		
Future Plans	Resources needed	Timeline
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the annual Program Planning process, addressing classroom hardware and software requests by location and as needed. For example this year was priority for the computers in Wayzata to all be replaced, 18 computers. This rotates on a 5-year plan.</li> </ol>	<p>Each year the Management Team plans for technology needs, training and equipment in the Spring for the following fiscal year. Program planning forms are distributed to all instructors by the ABE Program Manager. Instructors are to work with each other (if co-listed at the same location) and with their Community Education Manager in filling out the forms. The Management team meets in the Spring to determine funding for the requests and priority levels.</p>	Annually

**Expectations for staff digital literacy skills and use of technology:**

Current		
<p>Instructors are expected to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain electronic communications with the ABE Program Manager and support staff.</li> <li>2. Utilize the SID database in accordance with student hours and assessment information.</li> <li>3. Maintain working knowledge of Google Drive, including Google Docs and Google Sheets.</li> <li>4. Maintain working knowledge of the software and hardware placed and used in their classrooms.</li> <li>5. Integrate digital literacy skills into all levels of instruction, from beginning ESL to Advanced ABE, both as an instructional tool, and as a way to require students to demonstrate digital competency.</li> <li>6. Maintain a working knowledge of approved ABE Distance Learning platforms and regularly encourage all adult learners to participate in at least one online platform or program.</li> <li>7. Be familiar with the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards and have the skills to instruct learners on those standards.</li> </ol>		
<p>Admin staff are expected to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain electronic communications with the ABE Program Manager and instructors.</li> <li>2. Maintain expert knowledge of the SID database in accordance with student hours, assessment information and applicable reports using throughout the year and for reporting purposes.</li> <li>3. Maintain working knowledge of the Google Suite used for correspondence, professional development and reporting.</li> </ol>		
<p>Managers are expected to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain electronic communications with the ABE Program Database Manager and instructors.</li> <li>2. Maintain working knowledge of the Google Suite used for correspondence, professional development and reporting.</li> <li>3. Learn and enlist staff to administer distance learning platforms</li> </ol>		
Future Plans	Resources needed	Timeline
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FY19-20 All 18 Wayzata computers will be replaced.</li> </ol>	<p>Funding comes from WEST’s technology budget</p>	<p>By August 15, 2019</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Continue to review annual consortium and individual professional development plans and goals and incorporate new technology skills as needed.</li> </ol>	<p>Technology budget</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

3. 4 computers to be purchased for J&B Wholesale for their classroom	Paid for by Technology budget	June 30, 2019
4. Please see Question #6.1 for further breakdown of DL platforms going forward.		

**Training for staff on technology:**

<b>Current</b>		
Instructors receive training on Google Drive and Sheets, SID, distance learning platforms, Northstar Digital Literacy, Smartboards (as applicable by program),		
Admin staff receive training on Google Suite, SID		
Managers receive training on Google Suite, SID		
<b>Future Plans</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Train staff on new and relevant technology resources as they become available, as well as the skills and tools ABE staff members need to effectively do their job.	WEST will draw from approved PD budget at the rate of 40 hours/yr per staff member	Ongoing
2. Increase knowledge of Distance Learning platforms. Each platform will have their own training session in 2019-2020. To include Burlington English, Rosetta Stone and MobyMax.	Professional Development approved budget	Ongoing

**Technology access for students:**

<b>Current</b>
As demonstrated in the Technology Resources sheet attached, all WEST ABE classrooms have technology access for students. Some classes, depending on location, have a one-to-one ration for computers/laptops and students while others may have to rotate access depending on

instructional need. Some classrooms, such as St. Michael, have computers available for students to work on distance learning outside of their normally scheduled class time.

The correctional facilities have computers and pre-approved software but access to technology can sometimes be a struggle, although understandable, depending on policy. Students are able to develop their digital literacy skills in a variety of ways including working on resumes for future employment and working on curriculum for their GED.

### Integration of technology into instruction:

#### Current

Current teacher input on use of technology in the Classroom

- Use Smart Notebook on the Smartboard and ask them questions that they can answer back with by typing it on the ipads that shows up on the Smartboard.
- Use Burlington English In Class Lessons and Ventures Arcade Review Lessons so they have to answer on the smart board.
- Make up a list of questions that I want my class to research on the ipads or chromebooks. I assign each student a question to research; I give more detailed questions to more advanced students and easier to answer questions to beginning students. Then they have to share the information with the class.
- Use Read Works to choose readings for students at their level and I will then have them type the answers to the comprehension questions on the chromebook or in Word on the computers so that they get practice typing.
- Have the students look up words for definitions in an online dictionary or thesaurus for synonyms everyday.
- Have had students create PowerPoint projects involving research and then they present it to the class.
- Use News for You either as a whole classroom activity or as an individual activity on ipads, chromebooks, or computers. The students listen and read the story and then answer the 10 online interactive questions.
- When the students ask me a question in class, I don't always answer it; we tell them to look it up and find the answer which they then share with the class.
- Show students how to "unsubscribe" to unwanted emails on the smartboard when they have complained about too much junk in their emails.
- Have the students use the MY MN Careers and MN Career Pathways to help them think about goal setting, career searching, and resume writing.
- Have the students use different online programs so the students can learn basic skills on the computers Like GCF Learn Free and DigitalLearn.org.
- Show the students how to download the USCIS flashcards on their phones for practice outside of class for Citizenship skills.

Future Plans	Resources needed	Timeline
1. Explore the applicability of new technology resources as they may pertain to individual classrooms or the consortium as a whole.	Unknown	Unknown
2. Review new DL platforms as they arise and determine applicability to their use throughout the consortium.	Unknown	Unknown

### Distance Learning:

Current
<p>Integration of technology and distance learning platforms varies according to instructional time, access to technology outside of the classroom, student dedication and perceived relevance, and how well the curriculum can be embedded into other instructional units, as well as the usability of the platform itself. WEST ABE has found it difficult to fully grasp many of the distance learning platforms as they seem to change or have a hard time matching them with students levels, accessibility and dedication. However, we have made a purposeful effort in being dedicated to being introduced and being trained on all applicable platforms. As with most cases, the more comfortable you are with any pieces of technology hardware and/or software the more you likely you are to use it. The same can be said of distance learning platforms.</p>
<p>Teachers are more likely to recommend students be exposed to and encourage dedication when they, themselves are comfortable with the platform. This is true to many reasons, if the instruction is well versed in the platform they will readily know which student will align best with the various platforms. They will not have to take time to re-learn the basics of introducing students and getting them registered when they are familiar and they will not have to take extra time throughout the month to run progress reports and find assessment results. The ultimate goal of distance learning is to support both digital literacy as well as supporting and reinforcing the learning occurring in the classroom.</p>
<p>In almost all ESL classrooms each student has a distance learning program that they use at home if at all possible. Programs are assigned based on what skills they need and what level they are at as well as what devices they have that they can use. For instance, if a student doesn't have a computer at home, they won't assign Burlington English, but rather MobyMax, Kahn Academy, USA Learns or Rosetta Stone which all can be accessed on mobile devices. Or if a student is pretty conversationally fluent in English, we won't assign Rosetta Stone, but</p>

perhaps Kahn Academy. If the student needs math skills, I will assign MobyMax. Helping to understand the differing platforms is the key to assigning them to students.

Future Plans	Resources needed	Timeline
1. Continue to be aware of and proficient in the use of the various distance learning platforms that are used by instructors in the consortium.	Unknown	Unknown
2. Continual work on training and implementing the Northstar Digital Literacy assessments as a MN ABE Statewide Initiative.	Unknown	Unknown