What is the IDEAL Consortium?

MAKING QUALITY DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING POSSIBLE FOR ADULT LEARNERS

The IDEAL Consortium helps member states establish quality innovative distance and blended learning programs by offering professional development, providing technical support, and facilitating a network of education leaders from across the country. We aim to ensure that all learners have access to quality learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

www.coabe.org/journal
What is IDEAL?
Focus Group held at IDEAL Institute, August 2017

Small Group Discussions:
1) Using technology to reach new learners;
2) Using technology to extend learning for current students;
3) Using technology to differentiate learning;
4) Using technology to collaborate and break silos.

SECTION 1
TECHNOLOGY TO REACH NEW LEARNERS: SERVING THE UNDERSERVED

Using Technology to REACH new learners

Potential:
Anytime, anywhere or blended, flexible distance learning models could reach millions more learners, and reach the harder to serve

Common Barriers

Issues of Internet Access

California – Mobile Up!
- ELL Instruction; Career Instruction
- Delivered via Cell-Ed

Maine – Libraries Without Borders
- Community Services
- Pre- and Post-Testing at Libraries

Rhode Island – Library Borrow The Internet
- MiFi Devices Loaned Out
- Microsoft Surface Tablets Loaned Out
CALIFORNIA: Mobile Up, Cellphone First Education

95% in US have cell phone
77% are smartphone owners
39% have high-speed internet

Many users don’t have regular internet

Alternative Models to Create Learning Opportunities

Peer to Peer University
- Learning Circles
- Lower-Level ELLs

Instituto del Progresso Latino
- 97% Retention with Online Instruction
- ELL
- 85% Virtual, 15% In-Person

Policy Initiatives to Create More Opportunities for Learning

New Mexico – NEDP
- Competency-based High School Diploma
- Fully Online

Minnesota – Proxy Contact Hour Adjustment
- 1.25 Hours Assigned to Each Distance Learning Hour
- Acknowledges Importance of Wrap-Around Services

California – WIOA II Distance Learning Plans
- Learners Complete Technology Survey
- Informed Decision Making about Digital Literacy

What is the NEDP?

The National External Diploma Program (NEDP) is a competency-based, applied performance assessment system in which participants demonstrate their abilities in a series of simulations that parallel workforce/job and life situations.

NEDP is the ONLY Nationally Recognized Competency-Based, Workforce Aligned, High School Equivalency Program in the United States.

NEDP – 38 Years

1972 Ford Foundation/Syracuse Research Corporation
Study Results
1) Adult education class schedules were not compatible with adult responsibilities
2) Content did not relate to real life experiences
3) Multiple choice, paper/pencil tests were too limiting

1975 NEDP debuted in Syracuse, New York
1979 NEDP validated by the US Dept. of Education for national dissemination
2006 CASAS acquired NEDP with support from New York, Maryland and Connecticut
What is the NEDP?

Workforce-Focused, High School Diploma
Driven by the Application of Skills
- This is NOT a test -

How Does the NEDP Assess Skills?

Participants are evaluated against a criterion of excellence instead of by comparison to others, take responsibility for acquiring instruction by using existing resources, and achieve 100% mastery of all required competencies, plus identifying occupational or specialized skill.

Applicability of NEDP Skills

- NEDP skills are applied in performance tasks in relevant adult contexts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foundation Skills</th>
<th>Work Readiness Skills</th>
<th>Self-efficacy Skills</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Media Literacy</td>
<td>Career development, Resume development, Job search, Interpersonal skills, Organizational Awareness</td>
<td>Learning to learn, Problem solving, Critical analysis, Personal responsibility, Self-awareness, Self-direction</td>
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</table>

- Foundation and self-efficacy skills are applicable to college and careers.

NEDP Clients (not Student)

- Take responsibility for acquiring skills needed to demonstrated mastery of competencies
- Are evaluated against a criterion of mastery instead of comparison to others
- Earn a Diploma and/or Equivalency
- Demonstrate incremental progress rather than relying on an all-or-nothing exam
- Are native English speakers, English Language Learners, or special needs learners
- Can be concurrently working or attending skills training
**NEDP Steps to Completion**

- Intake Assessment (CASAS 230/236 or TABE D)
- Create Portfolio (70+ Components)
- Ongoing Portfolio Review
- Graduation

**NEDP Diagnostic Phase**

- **On-Site Assessment (CASAS or TABE)**
  - Reading
  - Writing
  - Math
- **At-Home Self Assessment**
  - Self-Assessment Checklist
  - Technology Skills Self-Assessment Checklist
  - Individualized Diagnostic Competencies Instrument
  - O*NET Occupational Interest Profiler

**NEDP Components**

- **Academic High School Competency**
  - Focuses on application and demonstration of knowledge and skills
  - Clients acquire a high school diploma

- **College and Career Competency**
  - Clients demonstrate progress in preparation for transition to
  - postsecondary education
  - training
  - work

**NEDP Competency Mastery**

- Ten Competency Areas
- Ongoing Task Assessment
- 100% Mastery

**NEDP Staff Roles**

- **NEDP Advisor**
  - Administers Diagnostics
  - Interprets diagnostic results with client
  - Provides feedback/advises on self-directed learning plan

- **NEDP Assessor**
  - Administers Generalized Assessment competency areas
  - Evaluates performance tasks and provides client feedback
  - Conducts Post-Task Assessment

- **NEDP Portfolio Reviewer**
  - Conducts independent review of completed portfolio, including Generalized Competencies and Individualized Competency

**General Requirements to Establish NEDP Site**

- Provide evidence of diploma-granting authority.
- Have a minimum of 2 or 3 staff per local agency (depending on size) complete the NEDP Implementation Training to become NEDP Advisors/Assessors.
  - Minimum requirements for Advisors/Assessors include a four-year college degree and any state certification requirements.
WIOA Title II

- Workforce Preparation Services
- Integrated Education and Training (IET)
- Digital Literacy
- Performance Accountability
  - NRS benchmarks upon program entry and completion
  - Some states award payment points during program enrollment

Digital Literacy

The skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information.

NEDP encourages the development and assessment of digital literacy skills as an online program.

Benefits of NEDP in WIOA Career Pathways

- Flexible schedule
- Contextualized activities
- Assesses Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills
- NEDP can be offered by partner agencies:
  - Workforce Development Board (AJC)
  - Library
  - Social Service Agency
  - Community College
  - K-12 Adult School
  - Employer / Job Site

Flexible Implementation Model

NEDP can be offered by partner agencies:

- Workforce Development Board (AJC)
- Library
- Social Service Agency
- Community College
- K-12 Adult School
- Employer / Job Site

Workplace Emphasis in NEDP

- O*NET Interest Profiler
  - MyNextMove.org
  - O*NET research on careers
  - 21st century workplace content areas
  - Career planning
  - Development of a resume and cover letter
The College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) were developed using the most effective models from states and countries around the world.

- CCRS provides stakeholders with a common understanding of what students should know at each grade level.
- Consistent standards will provide uniform benchmarks for all students, regardless of where they live.
- Uses same standards as GED, HiSET, TASC, CASAS, TABE.

Competencies emphasize 21st Century skills required for successful transition to postsecondary education and/or workforce:

1. Communication and Media Literacy
2. Applied Math/Numeracy
3. Information and Communication Technology
4. Cultural Literacy (Literature and Film)
5. Health Literacy
6. Civic Literacy and Community Participation
7. Geography and History
8. Consumer Awareness and Financial Literacy
9. Science
10. Twenty-First Century Workplace
The NEDP has accommodations incorporated in the web-based delivery system:

- Clear tabs direct clients to Overview, Activities, In-Office Check, and Tutorials.
- Overview provides the “why” for the competency and summarizes activities.
- Most competencies include web links or PDF resources.
- Resource icons clearly noted with white text on dark teal background.
- Clients can attempt an item multiple times. (no timed testing)
Learners with higher academic and language skills, who perhaps have already established proficiency with foundational digital literacy, should be given support to utilize their skills as they complete tasks in their ACP programming at the bridge or postsecondary level. This support might involve explicit instruction for determining how to effectively use technology for solving problems. Such a process is laid out in PIAAC’s Problem Solving in Technology Rich Environments (PSTRE) framework. Along with receiving instruction for problem-solving, students benefit from instruction making use of technologies used in the actual work environments. ABE programs cannot do this work without close collaboration of postsecondary institutions involved with higher-level training and employers who might partner with them.

PIAAC surveys were first given in 2012 to
- ~166,000 adults
- aged 16 - 65
- in 24 countries
and measured literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments (PS-TRE).

Results
- U.S. participants performed poorly, compared to the international average.
- One in six (17%) adults demonstrated low literacy skills.
- One in three (33%) adults had weak numeracy skills.
- The average of U.S. participants’ scores in PS-TRE were lower than the overall average of all countries’ participants.

What Is PS-TRE?
Problem solving in technology-rich environments involves using digital technology, communication tools and networks to acquire and evaluate information, communicate with others and perform practical tasks.
Why Teach PS-TRE?

Adult learners require strong PS-TRE skills in the world of work; the skills articulated in PS-TRE mirror those rewarded by employers.

The top five skills that support employability are:
1. Judgment and Decision Making
2. Complex Problem Solving
3. Active Learning
4. Reading Comprehension
5. Critical Thinking

Goal of Including PS-TRE Instruction

Support the development of proficiency using the problem-solving process.
Support the facility with which adult learners employ a systematic approach to solving problems in which technology use is implicit, so that they can reach educational and career goals.
Achieve this through using both explicit instruction of the PS-TRE process and implicit representation of its use in instructional activities.

PIAAC Core Dimensions

PIAAC defines three important aspects of PS-TRE in the PS-TRE conceptual framework.
1. The task you need to address (the problem you need to solve)
2. The technology that you draw on to solve that task
3. The skills you need in order to successfully use the technology to accomplish the task or solve the problem

Extend Learning: Unique BL & DL Models

Florida – National Immigration Forum & Miami Dade College
- Contextualized VESL Retail Instruction for Immigrants
- 60% Online
Los Angeles Unified School District – Distance Learning
- CASAS & TABE
- Aztec Software
New York City & Honolulu – BYOD
- District 79 WiFi
- American Job Centers

Leadership Commitment at State Level

Arizona – Blended Learning Requirements
- 13% Higher Gains than Traditional Classrooms in 2016
- Distance Learning had 9% Higher Gains
California – OTAN
- Mobile Tools: Facebook, Moodle, Kahoot
- TDL Annual Symposium
Pennsylvania – DL and BL Policies
- Reduced Waitlists
- DL for Higher-Level EFLs

Overcoming Barriers to Extending DL

Implementation of Standards – ISTE & ECDLF
- Student, Teacher, Administrator Levels
- ECDLF Includes Employer Requirements
Infrastructure – Hardware & Software
- Tools Should Not Define Programming
- Focus on Goal First, Then Pathway
Professional Development
How or What To Use – Do Teachers Understand Technology?
- Need Strong in Rural Areas
- Overcome Technology Discomfort
Arizona & Texas – Online PD Offerings
- Blended Learning Initiative
- TCALL 7-Level Badge Program for Technology Integration
IDEAL Consortium – Year-Long Trainings; Short-Term Trainings
University of South Florida – Technology Integration Matrix
- Five interdependent characteristics meaningful learning environments: active, collaborative, constructive, authentic, and goal-directed.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:
In terms of using technology to EXTEND learning to for current students to increase outcomes:

What resources or policy changes would let you do more to EXTEND learning to more students?

SECTION 3
TECHNOLOGY TO DIFFERENTIATE LEARNING: WAYS TO CUSTOMIZE LEARNING

The internet, mobile, and other new technologies offer endless, authentic opportunities for learners to practice skills through real digital tasks in their daily lives.

Exemplar Uses of Technology
Texas – Tech-and-Tell
- How-To Webinars to Guide Technology Implementation
- Call-Center Math Tutoring
Pennsylvania – Job Application Database
- Real Job Applications
- Authentic Practice
TABE & CASAS Leveled Instruction – Aztec Software
- Scale-Score Specific Curriculum
- Custom Class Creation

Extending Differentiation to Real Life
EdTech Center – Steve Reder
- Most Skills Gains Correlate to Real Life Practice
- Hours of Study are Less Important
PS-TRE – PIAAC’s Problem-Solving in Technology-Rich Environments
- Provides Structure for Choosing Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs)
- Geared Toward Accomplishing Tasks or Solving Problems
- Focus on HOW to Problem Solve

Differentiation for Just-In-Time Learning
Artificial Intelligence – Customized Delivery of Information
- Increase Motivation and Retention
- Ready-to-Learn Delivery
BOTS – Applications that Performs Automated Tasks
- Replace Information Overload with Information Precision
- Provide New Employees Information Over Time
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:

In terms of using technology to **DifferenTIAte** learning to increase outcomes:

What resources or policy changes would let you do more to **DifferenTIAte** learning to more students?

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**SECTION 4**

**TechNOLOGY TO SILO BREAK: WAYS TO COLLABORATE**

Technology can facilitate collaboration and referrals between silos of government that usually do not work together.

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**Exemplar Use of Technology**

Clark County – Common Online Instructional Platform
- Shared Curriculum (Aztec) Across K-12 Adult, Community College, Corrections, Libraries, AICC

Minnesota & Rhode Island – Braided Funding
- Reduce Duplication of Services
- Common Electronic Intake Forms

California – California Adult Education Program (CAEP)
- MOUs Between K-12 Adult and Community Colleges
- Consortium Funding Model

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**Identifying New Learners**

Los Angeles – CellED
- ELLs Study via Interactive Voice and Text
- Case Managers can Communicate More Regularly

Innovate+Educate – Competency Models
- “Filter In” Key Demographics in Hiring Process

Employment Technology Fund – Skills Matching
- Focus on Lower-Wage Workers
- Focus on Skills Development and Economic Mobility

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SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:

In terms of using technology to **BREAK THE SILOS** between different agencies:

What resources or policy changes would let you do more to **BREAK THE SILOS** between your agency partners?

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**CONCLUSION**

**CALL TO ACTION**

We can take action to harness these exponential technologies for the social good - to increase access to education and accelerate learning for the world’s most vulnerable populations.
A Collective Impact framework is needed to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems.

It is an “innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organizations and citizens to achieve significant and lasting social change.

Questions and Thoughts