



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION

**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT**

**INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY IN WIOA**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) supports the use of technology for the improvement of teaching, learning, professional development, productivity, and system efficiencies. This fact sheet highlights the places in Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, in which technology plays a supporting role in creating a high-performing system.

**Allowable activities.** The definition of “workforce preparation activities” (see sidebar) describes a new allowable activity for programs funded under WIOA Title II. This definition specifically names *digital literacy* among the list of programs, activities, or services that comprise workplace preparation. WIOA references the Museum and Library Services Act of 2010, which defines digital literacy as “the skills associated with using technology to enable users to find, evaluate, organize, create, and communicate information.”<sup>1</sup>

This activity supports the expanded purpose of the Act, which includes “assist[ing] adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, including through career pathways.”<sup>2</sup> The activity is also a component of another newly allowed activity, Integrated Education and Training. Watch for forthcoming guidance from OCTAE on what these new program activities may include and vignettes of how they are being implemented.

**State leadership.** WIOA requires states to provide technical assistance to providers on the use of technology to improve system efficiencies; and, allows states to use funds for “the development and implementation of technology applications, translation technologies, and distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.”<sup>3</sup>

**What states must consider in funding local adult education programs.** WIOA lists thirteen considerations states must use when selecting providers, including three that deal specifically with how such providers use technology. Eligible providers should demonstrate:

- how they “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;”

**Workforce Preparation Activities**

The term “workforce preparation activities” means: activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.

Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014, Title II, Sec. 203(17).

<sup>1</sup> Pub. L. 111-340, 22 Dec. 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014, Title II, Sec. 202.

<sup>3</sup> Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014, Title II, Sec. 223(a)(2)(B).

- that their “activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators...who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means; and,”
- whether they maintain “a high-quality information management system.”<sup>4</sup>

**National leadership.** There are two specifically named allowable activities within the national leadership fund that speak to the use of technology. The Department of Education is allowed to use national leadership funds to provide technical assistance “in distance education and promoting and improving the use of technology in the classroom, including instruction in English language acquisition for English language learners.” The Department may also use funds “in the development and dissemination of proven models for addressing the digital literacy needs of adults, including older adults.”<sup>5</sup>

**Resources to integrate technology.** OCTAE supports states to meet these new requirements with resources, activities, and partnerships such as the following:

- [Who’s Online Where Index](#), a data-driven tool that assists states and program leaders strategically plan to extend their distance education offerings.
- [LINCS.ed.gov](#), an online learning portal for instructors, professional developers, and program leaders with resources, online courses, and an online community of practice for 24/7 access.
  - [Integrating Technology in the Adult Education Classroom](#) is a self-paced course that explores integrating technology in the adult education classroom.
- [EveryoneOn.org](#), a non-profit broker of low-cost Internet service and devices that has pre-qualified adult education students, teachers, and programs to purchase the lowest-cost options available in their area; learn more in this [blog post](#).
- A [Dear Colleague letter](#), signed with the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which encourages public libraries and adult education providers to work together on the provision of digital literacy training.
- **Professional development** available to states through [the LINCS Regional Professional Development Centers](#), much of which is delivered through distance platforms and means.
- **Targeted data quality trainings** that focus on data and system quality are available to states through the [National Reporting System Technical Assistance](#) contract.
- **Feasibility studies** have explored models [of connected teaching and personalized learning](#) in adult education, the [potential value and use of digital badges](#) in adult education, and the use of technology in correctional education (coming soon).

#### **Additional Resources:**

WIOA Resources are posted at:  
[www.ed.gov/AEFLA](http://www.ed.gov/AEFLA)

For questions, please email:  
[AskAEFLA@ed.gov](mailto:AskAEFLA@ed.gov)

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<sup>4</sup> Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014, Title II, Sec. 231(e).

<sup>5</sup> Pub. L. 113-128, July 2014, Title II, Sec. 242(c).