# Integrated Education and Training 2020 Technical Assistance Transcript

**Video available on** [**https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/specialized-instruction/adult-education/professional-development**](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/specialized-instruction/adult-education/professional-development)

Welcome, I am Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, Adult Education Coordinator at the Virginia Department of Education.

Hi, I am Jenna Kelly and I am the Adult Career Pathways Specialist, also at the Department of Education.

And I am Kate Rolander, I’m the Workforce Education Specialist at the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center.

Hi, I’m Karen Ballengee and I am the Assistant Instructional Technology Specialist at the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center.

Hi, I’m Jim Andre, I’m the Director of Grants and Federal Workforce Programs at the Virginia Community College System.

Hi, I’m Cyndi Finley, I’m the Coordinator of Workforce Programs and Grants with the Virginia Community College System.

**Slide #1**

**Heidi**: So welcome everyone, let’s get started. This recording will provide a Virginia-specific overview of Integrated Education and Training, or IET, a model of accelerated and intense programming that pairs academic and occupational learning to prepare individuals for the workforce of today and tomorrow. We are recording this tutorial jointly between the adult education team at the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Community College System because we believe that a shared approach can strengthen partnerships at the local level, leveraging resources, and bring this powerful programming to more individuals.

**Slide #2**

The agenda for this recording is shown on the screen. We are covering a lot of topics from the WIOA Combined State Plan through specific tools and resources you can use to plan your programming.

**Slide #3**

Let’s start with the vision for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA, Combined State Plan. This Plan drives the work of all the WIOA-funded programs and other workforce development partners in Virginia. For the 2020-2024 Plan, the state has articulated a vision for improving economic opportunity for all Virginians. Although the vision was drafted and posted for public comment in January of 2020, this vision could not be more timely now that we are seeing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even more Virginians will need the assistance of education, training, and job placement as the economy recovers from the pandemic.

**Slide #4**

The five big goals in the Plan are on this slide. These goals can all be addressed through robust, rigorous, and regionally customized integrated education and training. Think about IET as we consider the goals:

Number 1: Help individuals gain access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and provide opportunities for career progression by providing equitable and universal service delivery.

Number 2: Increase business engagement. Again, IET Programming that involves employers from start to finish is an excellent way to address this goal.

Number 3: Develop a qualified and desirable workforce with skills, competencies, and credentials that meet the business needs of Virginia.

Number 4: Strengthen outreach and recruitment efforts and stimulate career awareness.

Number 5: Reduce workforce system barriers through collaborative innovative solutions.

I think you can hear in these goals how IET programming can address them and help more individuals gain access to careers that offer advancement and stability. Kate, I turn it to you.

**Slide #5**

**Kate**: Thank you, Heidi. Today we’re going to talk about the many goals of IET and the many names of IET in Virginia. We’ve all heard of PluggedIn Virginia in our state. IET under WIOA and the Virginia Community College grants, including young adults, RSVP, and middle college.

**Slide #6**

PluggedIn Virginia is one model of IET in Virginia that operates through a model of co-enrollment and partnership between an adult education program and an occupational training provider, often the local community college. It is a career pathways bridge program that prepares adult learners with the knowledge, skills, and credentials they need to succeed in postsecondary education, training, and high-demand, high-wage careers in the 21st century. The two overarching goals of this model are to prepare learners for success in continued education and training opportunities and success in a career.

**Slide #7**

While the PluggedIn Virginia model is a very flexible model to accommodate a wide range of industries, training environments, and learner populations, there are seven elements that are consistent across programs: an industry-specific contextualized curriculum, co-enrollment at a postsecondary (the occupational training provider), industry-recognized credentials or certificates, career coaching, and goal-setting with learners, active business participation in the target industry, a capstone project (which we’ll explain in more detail in a couple of slides), and a cohort model where learners progress through their adult education and training work together, supporting each other and adding a layer of motivation and accountability to one another throughout the PluggedIn Virginia program.

**Slide#8**

When the PluggedIn VA model first began in 2009, the target skill level was an ASE (9th grade and above) and an expected outcome was a secondary credential if learners didn’t have one prior to the program, as well as college credit completion. The model has expanded to serve learners at lower skill levels where these outcomes may not be realistic within the timeframe of the program itself. These common elements are characteristic of PluggedIn VA programs at any skill level: increased rigor, the cohort model, contextualized curriculum, digital literacy focus, professional soft skills, workplace exposure, and active participation with employers and partnering agencies and organizations.

**Slide #9**

The capstone project provides learners with an opportunity to identify a problem, perhaps in their community or in their educational program and engage in critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork to brainstorm and flesh out potential solutions to their identified problems. Example projects have included organizing and holding health fairs, weatherizing homes in their communities, advertising and holding a reverse career fair where learners were able to showcase their skills and experiences to employers, and designing and building an outdoor public space. The capstone is done in teams with support from instructors and presented at a culminating ceremony to a community audience at the end of the PluggedIn VA program. It’s one of the key elements that makes PluggedIn VA unique among IET programs. And with that, I think I send this to Jenna.

**Slide #10**

**Jenna**: Thank you Kate. I am going to talk about IET under WIOA.

**Slide #11**

The definition of IET is here on the screen. Keywords in the definition emphasize that the three required components are offered concurrently and contextually for the purpose of educational and career advancement. The three key required components are: adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and occupational training. Adult education is basic skills and English language proficiencies. Workforce preparation activities include activities designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills. Occupational training includes occupational training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and entrepreneurial training. The training provider should be respected by and seen as credible within the business community.

**Slide #12**

The “I” in IET, Integration, has specific meaning. Services must be offered concurrently and contextually with the scope of the program. A program could be a single semester, or it could be two semesters, or it could be a short-term bootcamp. Whatever the overall scope is, all three components must be of sufficient intensity and quality, based on rigorous research, occur simultaneously and use occupationally relevant materials. The laws and regulations do not specify the time commitment of each component across the duration, and the balance across the duration of the course can shift. As IET programs are designed, you may want to front-load more academic and language preparation coursework while phasing in the occupational training. As the training ramps up and students are spending more of their time on the training component, the adult education and workforce prep activities can lessen to more of a supporting role. However, at no time during the overall scope should students be enrolled in only one aspect; while the balance can shift, no component can be zeroed out.

To meet the requirements of being a compliant IET program, the IET must: have a single set of learning objectives which are the competencies that learners will need to master in order to be successful, be aligned with the CCRS (which is College and Career Readiness Standards) and be part of a career pathway. Now I will send it over to Jim.

**[No slide #13 included]**

**Slide #14**

**Jim**: Thank you, Jenna. In designing an IET program that meets the standards of best practices and WIOA requirements, we should consider a few design elements that will drive our success. As you review this list of considerations, it should stand out that collaboration among partners is key to their integration. In selecting a participating training partner, consider ones that understand and actively participate in sector strategies and career pathways, offer credentials to meet regional demand, and are flexible enough to respond to labor market changes. We’ll take a look at additional considerations for training partners in the next slide. Rigorous credentials are in demand regionally, portable, and included in a clear career pathway. When connected to regional job openings, salaries, and close employer partnerships, credentials can increase recruitment, focus career development activities, and provide access to new jobs or job advancement. The type of programming and teaching that IET requires may be new to teachers and administrators. Coordinating the academic and workforce prep coursework with occupational materials and sequence will require communication and co-planning. Funders will expect to see that instructors are supported to have collaborative planning time for this activity. Creating a timeline and sequence for the scope of the project would help instructors, administrators, and students understand how the activities function cooperatively. Similarly, curricula should be developed jointly between adult education providers and training institutions to target the competencies that will make our students successful. Often, employers or professional organizations can lend to the development of curricula. By sharing college and career readiness standards with your workforce partners, you can develop curricula that addresses competencies and credentials and is aligned with training and employment outcomes. Through partnerships, we can expand the scope of services, leverage resources, and avoid duplication of efforts while strengthening our regional approach to education and employment. Many of our partners, especially those funded by WIOA and other federal programs, share the same mission. Through strong collaboration, we can identify what each partner brings to the table, whether it’s basic skills instruction, training, employment services or student supports to deliver the most comprehensive programming available in achieving our common mission.

**Slide #15**

In selecting training partners, you should focus on ones that are on the eligible training provider list (or ETPL) so students can be supported by the Virginia Career Works Centers through wrap-around services, career development activities, and employment/job services. They should have a high credential attainment rate as evidenced by data and experience with adult education students. You will find that training partners with experience serving adult education students or underserved populations value co-planning and ongoing collaboration and understand the need to deliver flexible programming to meet their needs. With that I’ll turn it over to Heidi.

**Slide #16**

**Heidi**: All right, thank you Jim. Let’s move from the big picture to a point of compliance. In Virginia, according to the WIOA Combined State Plan, we expect IET programming to lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. What does that mean? The federal definition is in the U.S. Department of Education’s memo linked here on the slide, but it does allow for some flexibility for States. A certificate or credential may be an industry-recognized credential, such as a welding credential, or a license, like a commercial truck driver’s license or a certified nurse’s aide license. It may be a milestone in an apprenticeship, or it can be a college-conferred degree such as an Associates in computer science. There are also industry-recognized credentials that are more local, such as an employer that trains on a specific welding technique and confers certification that is recognized by other employers. Both the VDOE and the VCCS request in grant applications that applicants identify what credential a program is leading to so that we can determine if it fits the definition of a postsecondary recognized credential. Also on this slide is a few things that such a credential is not. The federal memo makes clear that workforce board-conferred certificates, workforce readiness certificates, and general certificates related to safety or hygiene do not fit this definition, even though they may be of value to an entry level worker and a valuable part of an IET experience. They simply may not be the terminal credential of the program. Back to Kate.

**Slide #17**

**Kate**: Thank you, Heidi. Now I am going to talk a little bit about the Virginia IET Blueprint. This is an online resource developed and maintained by the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center to provide guidance on the instructional planning and implementation of IET models.

**Slide #18**

A printable version of the IET Blueprint is available on the IET Blueprint homepage (there will be a link to that on the final slide) and includes resources for integrating and contextualizing instruction across the three required components of an IET. The Blueprint also includes contacts for technical assistance and an IET Glossary. In the appendices, you’ll find the shared learning objectives template, which we’ll go into on the next slide, the 2020-2021 IET Planning Tool, also available on the [VDOE] professional development website, and example responses for the IET planning tool. Additionally, on the IET Blueprint site are information and resources, including sample Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), contracts for partnering, and a partnering checklist for working with the Virginia Employment Commission’s Trade Assistance Act program which you’ll see features on the right-hand side of this slide.

**Slide #19**

This shared learning objective template is available on the Blueprint and can be used to develop a unified competency list, a required component of IET planning and implementation. The template includes the WIOA legislation’s definitions of the three elements of IET and a space to identify the academic skills, workplace readiness activities, and occupational training skills that will all need to be integrated into a cohesive IET plan. This resource is a tool to guide the development of contextualized curriculum for the IET and ensure that all required competencies across the three areas of the IET are included in instruction. And with that, we’ll go on to partnerships.

**Slide #20**

**Cyndi**: All four of these bullets do not operate independently. They are intertwined and co-dependent. Each, in my opinion, carry equal weight and are requisite for a successful program. While I do feel all four of these bullets carry equal significance, I am partial to the employer relationship, and we’ll see why in a few slides. Finding training partners prior to program design will be key in order to adequately integrate educational concepts. This relationship is crucial in order to develop curriculum and execute an IET in a succinct cohesive manner. A key element here will be seamless implementation of adult education services in an interconnected way along with the training partner.

For student support services, research has shown that the two driving factors in student success are coaching and supportive services. Finding resources through partnerships will be the most effective way to integrate this vital piece of support. Look to community partners such as your WIOA partners, Community Colleges, Department of Social Services, etc. for collaboration with these efforts.

Job placement and employers provide designs that include in-demand credentials supported by local labor market data. That will ensure that we create an effective pathway for students to gain employment. A critical piece to this design is the employer partnerships and active participation from the employer in areas such as curriculum development, internships, externships, interviews, and employment. Letting the employer opportunity drive the process strengthens the platform. Students can see first-hand the clear pathway to completion and employment.

**Slide #21**

Contextualized basic instruction is the “ah-ha” moment, that illuminates basic skills instruction through the lens of the training. Simultaneous – not sequential, this is a key concept here and will prevent the loss of momentum. This key concept is sometimes hard for programs to grasp; but its key in making a successful IET program. Accelerated rigorous design is critical for targeted demographics, whose aim is training and employment. With all the other barriers to content with, time should not be one of them. Work based learning opportunities and work experience ties in with contextualization and provides the best experience and pulls the IET concept together. Sector strategies can help to navigate potential work-based learning opportunities for students, leading to future viable employment in their area. Career pathways leading to family-sustaining wages, establishing a pathway from the start in order to fully contextualize the curriculum and establish employer partners will be key for student completion and employment. The cohort design can seem daunting and its not always the Standard Operating Procedures for existing programs, but a cohort design provides a structure and support platform that truly lifts up students and leads to a more successful outcome. The mindful schedule: most of these adults are working, have children and or family obligations. In order to maintain retention this will be a key element. Offering a variety of classes and times and locations would be a good place to start.

**Slide #22**

Building career awareness and promoting opportunities: explore opportunities not previously known to the students and explain what those opportunities might be and how it fits the background of your students. I know when I started, someone had to explain to me what logistics was. So, bringing your students in and letting them know what those careers are and what might fight best for them is a key concept.

Creating a pipeline: draw a map, and make it clear where they’re headed, whether that’s to reengage in postsecondary, or get stackable credentials, or continuing with employment advancement.

Selecting your students: set the student up for the best possibility of success. For example, a student who has a [criminal] background might be prohibited from working in the health care industry and should be presented with different options that fit their skill set as well as career availability. And certainly, the student should be made aware of potential challenges with these options.

Ensuring completion and credential attainment: an IET design walks through this step-by-step. This design can help remove barriers and create a clear pathway to student success by providing the necessary alignment, support, timeline, and resources.

**Slide #23**

Participant student cost, supportive services, paying for the credentials, and braided funding. Paying for credentials, we all know that cost is a top barrier that impedes student success. If we can weave in partnering agencies to help alleviate this cost and braid funding where we’re all working towards the same goal, we’ll have better success at serving these students. Several programs, such as TANF, SNAP, E&T, FastForward and WIOA dollars, to name a few, can help cover credential cost as well as training and testing for credentials. These agencies can help with supportive services as well. It will be important to know what costs lie ahead so you can adequately braid the funding, create strong partnerships, and provide the best holistic service for your students. And I’ll hand it off to Jenna.

**Slide #24**

**Jenna**: Thank you, Cyndi. The IET Planning Tool, which is a graphic organizer that was created to aid localities in planning robust and compliant IET programs, is available by clicking on the link below.

**Slide #25**

This graphic organizer helps localities to visualize all components needed for a compliant IET program. Also, the advance planning that completing the tool requires, guides programs to plan not only their own programming activities, but also to explain and secure commitments and cooperation from occupational training and employer partners and document the labor market value of the credentials offered. And now I pass it over to Heidi.

**Slide #26**

**Heidi**: Well, thank you everyone. As you can hear, the two big granting organizations, VDOE and VCCS really do have a shared approach. There are assistive resources here on the slide. We are also available to answer questions.

**Slide #27**

We’re happy to get questions on this topic, happy to help programs think about how to reimagine IET in the age of closures and much more distance education. It’s a challenging time for everybody, but IET is really a way that we can help unemployed Virginians get the jobs and the skills that they need to be successful to get back in the workforce and to advance in the workforce. We’re all passionate about it, I hope that you heard that. We hope that passion rubs off on you, our viewers. Those of you who receive grants from our organizations, we know that you are working hard to implement this model and we appreciate all that you are doing. So, we’ll all come off mute for just one more moment to say thank you and please contact us.

**All**: Thank you