



Integrated Education and Training Policy

TOOLKIT SUMMARY

PART OF NSC'S SKILLS EQUITY AGENDA



STACKABLE
CREDENTIALS



SKILLS-BASED
SNAP E&T



ALIGNMENT



JOB-DRIVEN
FINANCIAL AID



TANF





Integrated Education and Training Policy

WHY STATES SHOULD ADOPT AN INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY

There are 36 million working age US adults who have limited basic skills in math, reading, or spoken English. Two-thirds of these individuals are currently employed.¹ Traditional sequential models for helping these adults build skills can be discouraging for workers who face the prospect of spending months or years in basic education before they can begin occupational training.²

Integrated education and training (IET) is a proven model that helps people develop or refresh key basic skills while simultaneously training for a specific occupation or industry. IET models are effective in part because they recognize that busy working adults need opportunities to acquire basic skills in a meaningful context that has an immediate application, enables credential attainment, and can directly increase their earning power.

A rich base of evidence confirms that IET helps workers with basic skill needs earn in-demand skills and credentials.³ States should adopt policies to support the creation and growth of integrated education and training models.

By adopting IET policies, state leaders can:

- Expand individuals' access to effective integrated education and training program models;
- Build the capacity of adult education and higher education partners to implement IET program models;
- Increase postsecondary credential attainment, particularly among workers with low basic skills and low incomes; and
- Demonstrate national policy leadership by advancing a state level policy to complement federal requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

COMPONENTS OF A MODEL INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICY

State integrated education and training policies should:

- Require adult education providers⁴ to implement rigorous, high-quality IET programs that combine basic skills instruction with training for a specific occupation or industry, and equip participants to obtain both a secondary and a postsecondary credential;
- Provide dedicated funding to support IET programs;
- Target industry sectors or occupations for which there is local employer demand;
- Provide support for pathway navigators, who can help program participants navigate through their educational and vocational options and access support services;
- Require IET providers to partner with organizations with expertise in both adult education and occupational training; and
- Align with other policies, such as financial aid and stackable credentials, so that students can continue to build their skills.

WHAT IS INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING?

Integrated education and training is an adult education and workforce development program model that provides simultaneous instruction in basic skills such as math, reading, or spoken English as well as occupational or industry-specific training.



Integrated education and training programs may be offered by an institution of higher education, another organization such as a nonprofit education and training provider, or multiple organizations working in partnership.

Many IET programs use a "team teaching" approach that utilizes dual instructors – one with expertise in adult learning pedagogy and basic skills instruction, and another with content-area expertise in the industry or occupation being targeted.

Regardless of the specific teaching model, IET approaches typically support the attainment of both secondary (high school equivalency) and postsecondary credentials.

EXAMPLES FROM THE STATES

- **VIRGINIA**'s PluggedInVA initiative provides adult learners who have low basic skill levels with a contextualized high school equivalency program integrated with technical workplace skills. Required elements of the model include high school equivalency credential preparation and completion; at least one stackable, industry-recognized credential or certificate; active and consistent collaboration with local employers, including input into curriculum development; and use of the Virginia Community College System's Adult Career Coach Program. PluggedInVA is supported through a \$465,000 line item in the governor's budget.
- **WASHINGTON** pioneered the IET model with a rigorous approach known as Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST). Overseen by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, I-BEST uses a team teaching approach, with one instructor focusing on basic skills and another on workforce education. Colleges implementing I-BEST programs must undertake rigorous collaborative planning that involves basic skills, workforce education, and student services personnel.
- The **MINNESOTA** FastTRAC program is a nationally recognized IET approach. Funded by \$3 million from the state's Workforce Development Fund, the program is now part of the state's broader Pathways2Prosperity initiative. FastTRAC IET programs are delivered by teams of adult basic education providers, postsecondary institutions, and community-based organizations. Programs focus on high-demand occupations, allow participants to earn stackable credentials as part of a structured career pathway, and provide advising and support services.

ABOUT NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION'S SKILLS EQUITY AGENDA

National Skills Coalition is advocating for states to adopt a set of policies that expand equitable access to middle-skill training, credentials, and careers – particularly for those who have faced barriers to economic opportunity.

This effort includes scans of all fifty states to ascertain whether states have the policies in place to expand access to skills. NSC has also developed toolkits that provide resources, including model legislation, for policymakers and advocates to advance a skills equity agenda in their state. NSC's skills equity agenda includes state policies on Job-Driven Financial Aid, SNAP E&T, Stackable Credentials, Alignment, Integrated Education and Training, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Employment and Training.

Read more about NSC's Skills Equity Agenda and download the full toolkit at nationalskillscoalition.org/skillsequity

ENDNOTES

¹ Time for the US to Reskill? (OECD, 2013.)

² Building Pathways to Success for Low-Skill Adult Students: Lessons for Community College Policy and Practice from a Longitudinal Student Tracking Study (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2005).

³ See., e.g., Contextualized College Transition Strategies for Adult Basic Skills Students: Learning from Washington State's I-BEST Program Model (Community College Research Center, 2012) and California Adult Education Research Brief: Integrated Education and Training (CALPRO, 2012).

⁴ Given the diversity of adult education providers in organization type, size, and capacity, states may wish to specify that each individual adult education provider need not provide one or more IET programs, but rather may partner with other organizations to do so. Alternatively, states may set the IET requirement at the geographic level – requiring that at least one IET program be available in each county or region of the state – rather than the provider level.



Integrated Education and Training LEGISLATIVE TEMPLATE

This template can be used to develop legislation to establish a state integrated education and training policy. It can also be used to inform an administrative policy. The template outlines the key components. It includes a grant program to fund the development of integrated education and training programs and enhanced funding to support ongoing programs. Because states vary greatly in the structure and providers of adult education, states will need to modify and supplement the template with state specific information.

SEC. 1: INTENT

The legislature finds that too many adults in our state lack the basic skills in reading, writing, math, and spoken English and the specific occupational skills required to succeed in family supporting employment. To meet our economy's skill needs, we must ensure that adults with limited skills have access to high-quality education and workforce programs that can help them build their abilities and attain industry-recognized postsecondary credentials. Integrated education and training is an approach that can enable adults to acquire key basic skills while simultaneously pursuing occupational or industry-specific training, helping them to advance in employment and fill employer skill needs.

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Integrated Education and Training Policy

LEGISLATIVE TEMPLATE (CONTINUED)

SEC. 2: DEFINITIONS

As used in this Act:

- a. Department means the state agency that administers adult education.
- b. Integrated education and training means instruction that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.
- c. Adult education means academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent; transition to postsecondary education and training; and obtain employment.

SEC. 3: INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING GRANT PROGRAM

The integrated education and training grant program is established to provide grants to local adult education providers or partnerships of adult education providers and providers of workforce training for the purpose of developing and implementing local programs of integrated education and training.

- a. The Department shall administer the integrated education and training grant program.
- b. The Department shall allocate integrated education and training grants to local providers through a competitive process. Eligible grant recipients are local adult education providers eligible to receive either state funds for adult education or P.L. 113-128 Title II funds, or partnerships of at least one eligible adult education provider and at least one provider of workforce training. Eligible providers or partnerships must submit an application that describes:
 - i. The specific integrated education and training instructional model to be implemented;
 - ii. How the program will be designed and implemented by educators with expertise in adult education and occupational skills training;
 - iii. How the program will prepare students to receive a high school equivalency credential;
 - iv. How the program will prepare students to receive a postsecondary credential;

- v. The occupations or industry for which the program will prepare students for employment;
 - vi. Evidence of employer demand for program completers;
 - vii. How the program will provide student support services including guidance counseling in order to assist student success; and
 - viii. Other information required by the Department.
- c. The Department shall provide technical assistance to adult education providers on how to provide integrated education and training.

SEC. 4: INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING ENHANCED FUNDING

The Department shall identify the cost difference between programs providing integrated education and training and programs providing adult education alone, and develop a funding enhancement for integrated education and training programs to be applied in the allocation of state funding for adult education.

- a. To be eligible to receive enhanced funding under this section, an adult education provider must:
 - i. Provide one or more programs of integrated education and training,
 - ii. Provide the Department with the information listed in section 3b of this Act regarding the program(s),
 - iii. Provide the Department with information the Department requires on student success; and
 - iv. Provide other information required by the Department.

SEC. 5: INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENT

The Department shall require that each local recipient of state funding for adult education provide one or more programs of integrated education and training. A local recipient may satisfy this requirement in partnership with one or more other providers of adult education or workforce training.

SEC. 6: FUNDING

For the period ___ to ___, \$___ in state general funds are appropriated to the Department to carry out its duties under section 3 of this Act, of which up to 15 percent may be retained by the Department for administering grants and providing technical assistance.

