

Torrance Adult School DLAC Mid-Project Report

In the first year of DLAC, the Torrance Adult School DLAC Team has clarified our goals around promoting digital literacy, building our capacity for HyFlex teaching, and moving toward CANVAS integration. In the second year, we will focus on implementing the plan.

TAS & the DLAC Team

Torrance Adult School (TAS) serves approximately 2,350 students on three campuses in Torrance, southwestern Los Angeles County. The TAS DLAC project primarily focuses on the English as a Second Language (ESL) and Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE) departments. TAS also has fee-based Career Technical Education (CTE) and Community Education departments.

The primary DLAC Team is comprised of

- Ryan Whetstone, Principal
- Meredith Tait, TOSA and Teacher (ESL)
- Hilary Estes, TOSA and Teacher (ABE/ASE)

The ESL and ABE/ASE Resource Teachers (Department Heads) are also part of our on-site extended team

- Ryan De La Vega, ESL Resource Teacher
- Armando Chavez, ABE/ASE Resource Teacher

The TAS Director, Dr. Wayne Diulio, gives input, approval, and overall support

IDEAL 101 and Site Plan

The IDEAL 101 course materials and activities deepened our understanding of distance education options. The course itself modeled an effective blended learning class, managed through CANVAS. In the process of completing the regular assignments, the DLAC team evaluated all aspects of the current digital environment at TAS. This helped clarify the schoolwide digital integration plan and timeline, post-COVID. The resulting DLAC goals were to:

- Promote digital integration in all ESL classes: maintain online & distance learning (DL) classes; aim to implement 1 Hyflex ESL class by the end of 2023-24
- Develop & implement HyFlex professional development for all ABE/ASE & pilot in 1 or 2 ESL classes (Teacher volunteer)
- Implement Northstar Digital Literacy in all school classes (Fall 2023, at least one

lesson and one assessment)

- Use CANVAS at TAS; goal of completing one CANVAS course by the end of 2023-24

In developing the site plan, the DLAC team engaged the Leadership Team in focused discussions about staff and student digital skills, as well as related professional development needs. We clarified what we would like TAS to achieve in year two and how to engage relevant stakeholders in implementing the plan.

Accomplishments to date

- Continued Digital Integration Across The Organization
 - All ESL classes incorporate technology in instruction and learning, with teachers using a variety of digital presentation tools for core curriculum and supplemental material
 - There is a mix of class offerings including 2 online classes, distance learning classes for ESL and Citizenship
 - Teacher sharing of technology-related tools has become a regular part of ESL meetings e.g. pronunciation and listening skill websites; using Wakelet and blogs with students.
 - Students have regular access to computers, with IA (Instructional Assistant) help.
 - Continued HyFlex offerings and online curriculum used in all ABE/ASE classes
 - Steady progress toward becoming paperless in the offices, including scanning documents, digital catalogs, and timecards
- Northstar (Northstar Digital Literacy Integration)
 - Fall 22 and Winter 23 - began with several schoolwide professional development sessions devoted to Northstar introduction and training
 - Winter 23 Term - TAS became a Northstar Site, with OTAN's support
 - Winter 23 - held several Friday Tech Cafes (proctored, in-person, sessions; staff work independently on Northstar lessons (NSOL) and assessments)
 - Spring 23 - Weekly Friday Tech Cafes for Northstar lessons (NSOL) and proctored assessments
 - Initially, 1 weekly Friday afternoon session (Hamilton site), then on 5/5/23, expanded to 1 morning (Griffth site) and 1 afternoon session (Hamilton)
 - All staff members are involved in completing Northstar lessons and assessments, with a requirement for all staff to pass a minimum of

4 proctored assessments - Computer Basics, Internet Basics, Email, and Google Docs - by 6/30/23

- 16 staff members completed proctor training; others are in the process of completing it.
- Teachers and IAs who complete proctor training will be able to manage student completion of lessons and assessments starting in Fall 23.
- Scheduled for early June: OTAN in-person training in using the Northstar teacher-directed lessons and the Northstar Online Learning (NSOL) curriculum
- Canvas Use at TAS
 - Since Spring 2022 TAS has been exploring what CANVAS offers and ways to implement it on campus.
 - TAS has an MOU for 550 Canvas licenses
 - Plans for general CANVAS 101 training are in progress
 - A group of teachers from ABE/ASE who have expressed interest in using CANVAS courses in the 2023-24 school year
 - 3-4 ESL Teachers expressed interest in using CANVAS; some are already using Schoology, so transitioning to CANVAS for Distance Learning might be easier for them
 - Started CANVAS pilot with UCScout with one class
- HyFlex
 - Continued use of HyFlex in all ABE/ASE Direct instruction classes and the Child Development IET class

Leadership Training

Digital leadership training has introduced us to valuable insights about team building, conflict resolution, and communication skills.

- The DLAC team is aware of the individual and combined strengths of the core members, and how we can leverage our similarities and differences to work well together.
- We have been able to plan for 2 years of DLAC and beyond, build the extended team, include staff from different departments and sites, and take important steps toward meeting our goals.
- Regular formal and informal communication among ourselves, our Director, and our OTAN coach has been an important part of the process.
- We have been able to revise our DLAC goals as needed
- As we move toward our second year and focus more on asking teachers to integrate digital literacy lessons into their curriculum, we plan to incorporate

strategies shared in our leadership training as we create a cohesive plan for communicating with staff and creating buy-in.

Challenges we have faced include:

- Managing communication with staff around which elements of the project involve requirements for all teachers and which are optional tools to explore for teachers who are enthusiastic about pushing forward.
- Finding a balance between fostering the skills and enthusiasm of staff members who are excited about technology integration and overwhelming staff members who are more reluctant
- Deciding how to schedule introducing and integrating Northstar and CANVAS
 - With CANVAS and Northstar competing for our time and attention, we decided to focus on properly implementing Northstar first before introducing CANVAS

Changes TAS Has Made

- Introduced teacher sharing of technology tips and tools in regular ESL department meetings; added an online ESL class
- Became a Northstar Site
- Prioritized Northstar implementation while continuing HyFlex and CANVAS pilots

Planned Next Steps

Under the umbrella of continued digital integration across the organization we plan to continue:

- Northstar Integration
 - Using Northstar schoolwide will require additional licenses
 - Investigate pricing and pursue funding approval
 - Northstar Curriculum PD for Teachers/IAs(Summer 2023)
 - ESL focus on teacher-directed lessons
 - ABE/ASE focus on NSOL (self-directed)
 - Integrate Northstar Basic Computer Skills into all ABE/ASE and ESL classes in Fall 2023
 - ESL
 - Teacher-directed lessons - minimum requirement Computer Basics (teachers can use the Northstar Screener test to ascertain student basic competencies and needs)
 - ABE/ASE

- Northstar assignment in Direct Instruction English classes: Take the assessment, complete lessons if the assessment is not passed the first time and write a reflection about the learning experience
 - ABE/ASE will develop one or more Digital Literacy elective courses using Northstar Online (NSOL), the student-directed lessons
- Canvas Feasibility Study
 - Introduction to Canvas Training from OTAN (Fall 2023 TBD)
 - UC Scout Pilot:
 - One class in Fall 2023, additional classes possible in Winter 2024
 - Gives teachers an opportunity to try using Canvas without having to start from scratch
 - Determine the pricing structure for Ventures CANVAS
- HyFlex
 - HyFlex Professional Development for ABE/ASE Summer or Fall 2023
 - Plan for exploring a Hyflex pilot in ESL
- Professional development on Canvas and HyFlex will be offered for teachers who are interested in piloting them

Support Needed

- Confirm scheduled training with OTAN
 - Teaching with Northstar: June 2023
 - Using NSOL with Students (all teachers, including CTE)
 - Using the teacher-directed curriculum (mainly ESL teachers)

Record the training or schedule a make-up training in Fall 2023 for teachers who are not able to attend in the summer
- Get more information about ongoing Northstar pricing (Will OTAN fund a second year of Northstar @\$500/year for 500+ licenses and 3500 assessments?)
- Advice on best practices for using CANVAS in adult schools and ways to manage the transition

Other areas of importance

- Importance of not losing technology momentum after COVID changes
- Finding the right balance of in-person and online/distance/blended learning
- Learning more from other agencies in the DLAC cohort.

Summary

Participation in DLAC has been very beneficial for TAS. It has helped us to envision our future post-COVID and identify specific technology-related goals while drawing on the expertise and support of OTAN and its partners in the process. In the first year, we worked with our Leadership Team to clarify our plan for technology use while increasing digital literacy for all our staff members. In the second year, we plan to focus more on the implementation of Northstar assessments and lessons with students while offering staff members opportunities to pilot Canvas and HyFlex.