

PLUGGED IN



GED 2.0: Innovative Initiatives in Adult Basic Education
PlugGED® In & GED On Demand

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Background

Adults lacking a high school diploma are at a critical disadvantage in today's rapidly changing world. Not only do most jobs require the possession of a basic educational credential, but they increasingly require workers to possess a host of 21st Century Skills to be successful in the workplace, including a familiarity with technology.

In an effort to increase GED® attainment and workplace readiness in the Commonwealth, the Virginia Department of Education and the Literacy Institute at VCU have partnered to develop two initiatives that leverage the use of technology to help better prepare adults to succeed in today's competitive global economy. The first initiative is called GED On Demand. GED On Demand makes GED preparation content available *on-demand* to cable subscribers through a partnership with regional cable television providers across the state. The second initiative, PlugGED In, is an innovative contextualized GED curriculum, currently being piloted in Southwest Virginia, that provides hands-on technology training, Microsoft certification, and workplace skills training to adult drop-outs looking for tech sector employment and training. Both of these initiatives involve important partnerships with stakeholders from both the business and educational community.

GED On Demand: 24/7 access to GED instructional videos

The award-winning GED Connection multimedia series helps adults prepare for the General Educational Development (GED) tests through a combination of online, video, and print material. Part of this series is a collection of 39 half-hour video episodes organized around the five GED

- GED On Demand**
- 39 half-hour GED prep videos**
- Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reading content**
- Available 24/7 to Comcast, Cox, and Charter Digital On Demand Cable subscribers**

subject tests. These videos teach adults to interpret and analyze reading passages, write clearly and effectively, and solve everyday problems using basic math, reading, and critical thinking skills. The video series uses a documentary-style approach to instruction, with many real-life examples of how people use the skills and knowledge tested on the GED at work and in their homes and communities.

In the past, these GED preparation videos were broadcast on local public broadcasting channels, often at times that were inconvenient for

learners.

But now, thanks to a partnership between the Commonwealth of Virginia, Comcast, Cox Cable, Charter Communications, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center, Virginians who subscribe to Comcast, Cox, or Charter Digital On Demand can now watch any of the GED Connection episodes from the



comfort of their home at a time of their choosing through the GED On Demand program. This program enables subscribers to choose the specific videos they want to watch and, using the features of their digital cable equipment, lets them pause, rewind, fast forward, and bookmark any of the videos they are watching.

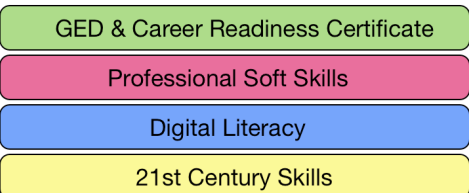
Since the debut of GED On Demand, these videos have been accessed by thousands of subscribers in Virginia interested in viewing the GED preparation content. The GED On Demand initiative uses innovations in digital broadcast technology to better meet the needs of adult Virginians by giving them yet another convenient option for preparing for the GED tests.

PlugGED In: A Contextualized GED-Technology Curriculum to Prepare Learners for the 21st Century Workplace

While attainment of a high school diploma or GED certificate is an important educational milestone, these credentials alone are often insufficient for achieving success in the 21st century labor market. Educational and training programs must meet current and future employer demands in order to create a well-trained, well-educated, and globally competitive skilled workforce.

To add value to the GED credential, a new curriculum has been developed through a collaborative effort between Virginia educational institutions and businesses that not only prepares high school dropouts to pass the GED tests but also provides them with opportunities to learn the technology-rich skills they will need to succeed in the current competitive global economy.

PlugGED In is a contextualized GED curriculum that integrates GED and Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) preparation with digital literacy skills, 21st Century skills, and professional soft skills instruction. The pilot class in Lebanon, Virginia meets 3 nights per week over a 6-month period. The PlugGED In students participate in a variety of project based learning activities that give them entry-level technology skills, as identified by



area technology sector employers, as well as the knowledge necessary to successfully complete the GED Tests. Area employers, including Northrop Grumman, have provided mentors to support the students' endeavors, and the Southwest Regional Adult Education program and Southwest Virginia Community College have partnered to provide instruction. By the

end of this six-month program in July 2009, successful participants will have earned a GED credential and CRC, developed a technology portfolio, and been given the opportunity to earn several, highly sought-after Microsoft certifications. In addition, PlugGED In graduates will earn community college credit and be eligible for post-secondary scholarships. They will also be given the opportunity to interview at the Northrop Grumman facility in Lebanon.

PlugGED In

- **6-month curriculum**
- **Integrates 4 content strands: GED/CRC, Professional Soft Skills, Digital Literacy, and 21st Century Skills**
- **Students can earn Microsoft certifications**
- **Guaranteed Northrop Grumman job interview**

Contact Information

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