

Community needs assessment survey

PURPOSE OF SURVEY:

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated racial and economic disparities in digital equity, from K-12 students lacking reliable access to the internet for distance learning, to newly unemployed adults whose access is limited to a mobile device for completing online job applications, and more.

Literacy Minnesota [<https://www.literacymn.org/>] in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Education [<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/index.html>] is conducting a Community Needs Assessment to learn about how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the ways that participants access education and to identify digitally underserved communities. Northstar Digital Literacy [<https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/>], a program of Literacy Minnesota, has sought to close the digital divide for 10 years by offering digital literacy assessments and curricula.

Responses to this Community Needs Assessment survey will contribute to a report that will be publicly available after January 2021, and will be used to inform two pilot projects currently in planning stages. Both projects would support K-12 students and adult learners:

1. A “digital navigator” project in Minnesota to provide targeted assistance to individuals in the areas of connectivity, device access and digital literacy to close the digital divide;
2. A multi-state digital equity project in the North Central region (MN, IA, WI, ND, SD, NE, MO, KS), potentially adding more states in the future, that would place AmeriCorps volunteers in nonprofits, schools and public agencies to help them increase digital equity in low-income communities, such as:
 - scaffolding curricula for beginning ELL or transitioning curricula for online learning
 - creating resources and workshops to help parents support their children with distance learning/learning at home
 - generating funding and other resources
 - recruiting and training virtual tutor volunteers
 - or other digital equity projects identified by the host organization

ABOUT LITERACY MINNESOTA:

Literacy Minnesota shares the power of learning through education, community building and advocacy. Our current programs and services include:

- In Minneapolis and St Paul, MN: free classes for adults, a literacy-rich preschool for children of adult learners, and parenting classes
- Statewide in Minnesota: volunteer tutor training and referral support for K-12 and Adult Basic Education programs; AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers placed in Pre-K, K-12 and Adult Basic Education programs to work behind the scenes on literacy curriculum development, volunteer engagement, program evaluation, and other capacity-building projects, or during the summer months as children’s literacy tutors
- Nationally: Northstar digital literacy assessment and curricula; lesson plans and other resources for literacy educators; consulting

Visit our website for more info: www.literacymn.org. Questions about this survey can be directed to Joe Miller, jmiller@literacymn.org, or Meghan Paul-Cook, mpaulcook@literacymn.org.

This survey will take approximately [how long?] to complete.

Please respond by November 11, 2020. Thank you!

ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION & WHO YOU SERVE:

1. (all) What is the name of your organization?
 - Please provide your contact info: name, role, phone, email.
2. (all) In what state are you located? (drop-down)
 - i. (If Minnesota) What county(ies) do you serve? (multi-select)
3. (all) Are you currently a Northstar subscriber? (yes/no)
4. (all) What type of organization are you? (check all that apply)
 - Public or charter school or school district
 - Private school
 - Non-profit organization
 - Business
 - Library
 - Government agency
 - Higher education
 - Workforce center
 - Other (please describe)
5. (all) What type(s) of programming do you provide? (check all that apply)
 - Adult basic education
 - College courses
 - Job training/workforce readiness
 - Parent/caregiver education
 - Digital literacy services
 - Family literacy
 - Literacy services to people who speak a language other than English
 - Preschool/school readiness
 - K-12 school-based
 - K-12 out-of-school
 - Other (please describe) (text area)
6. (all) In what type(s) of community(ies) does your programming/services take place (check all boxes that apply)?
 - Rural
 - Suburban
 - Urban
 - Other (textbox for explanation)
7. (all) Do you serve individuals in any of the following demographics? (checkboxes)
 - English language learners
 - Immigrants and/or refugees
 - People who are incarcerated
 - Native American/Indigenous people
 - African American/Black people
 - Asian American/Pacific Islander people
 - Hispanic/Latino/a/x people
 - White people
 - People in poverty
 - People who are unemployed

- Native English speakers
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with disabilities
- Incarcerated people
- Veterans

CHANGES DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

8. (all) How has your organization responded since to the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March 2020? (checkboxes)
- Shifted to remote (digital/distance learning/virtual) services
 - Added services
 - Reduced services
 - Shut down services
 - Closed physical location
 - Reduced hours/capacities at physical location
 - Hybrid in-person and remote
 - Other (textbox)
- If remote or hybrid checked:
 - (all) How has your organization helped participants access remote programming and services? (checkboxes)
 - internet access
 - How many participants have you helped access the internet?
 - How have you helped participants access the internet (e.g, hotspot distribution, grants for broadband, etc.)?
 - device distribution
 - How many participants have you helped access devices (e.g, loaned devices, gifted devices, etc.)?
 - How have you helped participants access devices?
 - digital literacy skills
 - How many participants have you helped access digital literacy skills?
 - How have you helped participants access digital literacy skills?
 - partnered with community organizations and/or businesses
 - branching to an explanation asking who and how
 - other (please describe) (text area)
 - none of the above
 - (all) How well-equipped are teachers and tutors in providing distance learning/digital instruction? (Likert scale - very well to not at all, include n/a)
 - f/u: What additional training or support would be helpful for teachers or tutors in distance learning/digital instruction? (text area)
 - (all) Have you used volunteers to teach remote learning?
 - If yes — textbox asking organizations to elaborate.

PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS & SERVICES:

9. (all) How has participation in your programming changed since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020? (single select)
- No change
 - Increase in participants
 - Decrease in participants
- a. (If increase or decrease:) Please describe further any changes in participation since March 2020. (text area)
10. (all) How serious are the following barriers or challenges for your participants? (Likert scale for each, include n/a)
- access to devices
 - access to internet
 - financial safety net worries
 - unemployment
 - health/mental health concerns
 - participants' digital literacy skills
 - low English skills
 - (for parents/caregivers) supporting children with home/distance learning
 - instructors' skills in digital instruction
 - other (please explain) (text area)

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

11. (all) What has worked well in your organization to address digital equity since March 2020? (text area)
12. (all) If you had unlimited resources (funds, time, staff), what would you like to do differently or better in your organization to address digital equity? (text area)

FOLLOW UP:

13. (all) Would you like to share any further comments?
14. (If Minnesota) Are you interested in any of the following? (checkboxes – can include links to website?)
- Participate in a 10-15 minute interview about digital equity in your community
 - Learn about Literacy Minnesota's tutor training and volunteer referral services for Adult Basic Education programs
 - Learn about Literacy Minnesota's tutor training and volunteer referral services for children's/youth programs
 - None of the above
15. (If MN, IA, ND, SD, KS, MO, WI, NE - could include all states maybe?) Are you interested in learning more about how AmeriCorps VISTA could help your organization? (yes/no)
15. (if did not check Northstar subscriber currently) Are you interested in learning more about the Northstar digital literacy assessment and curriculum?

Add a section to thank respondents on form assembly