

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Primary Media Contact: Christy Nelson – Regional Director of Adult Education  
231-929-5055  
christy.nelson@networksnorthwest.org

Secondary Media Contact: Dana O'Dell, Communications Coordinator  
231.929.5075  
dana.odell@networksnorthwest.org

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## **Northwest Education Services Receives Innovation Grant to Support Adult Learners**

Northwest Education Services is proud to announce that it has been awarded a 107-A Innovation Grant as part of more than \$8.7 million in state funding distributed by Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO). The grant will fund innovative initiatives aimed at supporting adults without a high school diploma or equivalency and English language learners, helping them achieve academic and career success.

With this grant, Northwest Education Services will partner with Northwest Michigan Works! to create a new initiative called BEST (Building Education for a Stronger Tomorrow). This two-year grant will support the development and implementation of new strategies to increase enrollment, improve retention, and enhance program completion rates. The adult education program provides services through the Northwest Michigan Works! learning labs and serves the 10 counties of Northwest Michigan.

Through the BEST program, Northwest Education Services will introduce four key innovations:

1. Support students with special education needs to ensure access to learning.
2. Implement ConnectAble, a program to increase student access to educational information and software.
3. Expand instructor availability to provide personalized support and flexible learning opportunities.
4. Develop postsecondary pathways to help adult learners transition to higher education, job training, and meaningful employment.

"We are proud to partner with Northwest Michigan Works! to establish new pathways to support student growth and achievement through our adult education programming," said Dr. Nick Ceglarek, Superintendent of Northwest Education Services. "This grant funding will not only increase access to



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educational and career opportunities for adult learners in our region, but it will also contribute to a stronger economy by adding new talent to the state's skilled workforce."

In addition, Regional Director of Adult Education Christy Nelson said, "We are excited to bring these innovative approaches to our adult education programming. This grant allows us to better serve the unique needs of adult learners in our community and help them reach their educational and career goals."

The 107-A Innovation Grant is part of Michigan's broader effort to expand educational opportunities for all residents, recognizing that a strong workforce begins with access to quality education. Adult Education services are provided to the ten county region as a collaborative partnership among Northwest Education Services and Northwest Michigan Works, a program of Networks Northwest.

For more information on the 107-A Innovation Grant, please refer to Michigan.gov press release titled, "[Gov. Whitmer awards \\$8.7M to support innovative approaches to adult education programming](#)". This release provides additional context and details regarding the 107-A Innovation Grant.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing Dana O'Dell at [dana.odell@networksnorthwest.org](mailto:dana.odell@networksnorthwest.org) and stating preferences for resolution, file format, and file size. Or phone (231) 929-5075. Check our online Media Room at [networksnorthwest.org/media](http://networksnorthwest.org/media)

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10-county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works!, APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC), various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business, and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our website, [networksnorthwest.org](http://networksnorthwest.org). Networks Northwest's member counties are Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.

