Textedly was used:

- To offer Chromebooks to students
- To let them know when enrollment started
- To let them know when to test
- To let them know when the GED testing centers were opened again
- To encourage students who weren't showing up to class to participate
- To survey students to assess their technology access and technology needs
- To help students with Blackboard, our learning management system, and share Blackboard workshop information for students who needed more support

Benefits:

- We have found that students reply to messages via text much more quickly email.
- Texts can be sent in multiple languages, and groups of students can be sent different texts depending on language needs or other factors (although all this happens manually).
- Lists of students can be easily uploaded for mass text messages. When new students register, new and updated lists can be uploaded without deleting students from lists uploaded prior.

Limitations

- A single text is only 160 characters, and characters add up quickly! Longer texts can be sent but are billed as multiple messages.
- It is not possible to send photos. Sometimes screenshots or other visuals are very helpful when guiding a student through technology difficulties.
- We have not found a way to flag a particular message or mark it as unread.
- A student who has a question or concern cannot call the number that they received the text from.

Notes:

- Anytime a mass email goes out, it would be helpful for a mass text to go out the following week to catch those that don't look at their emails as well.
- It's a fine line between spamming students and trying to communicate with them at what works. Texting did seem to be the best form of communication.
- If the message is short, texting might be best instead of email.
- Because of the limitations listed above, we have found that Textedly is not always the most effective for specific, personal messages to specific students. In these situations, we've found Google Voice to be a good alternative (although Google Voice is much more limited in number of recipients).

Example of a text that worked well for us:

Text STOP to end   4:16 PM

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Complete your registration for English classes. We have testing this Wednesday and Thursday from 9 am to 6 pm and Friday 9 am until 2 pm. Just stop by to building M-room 150 with a photo ID and take your placement test.

Text STOP to end   4:45 PM

Thursday, August 20, 2020

Thank you for completing the process to enroll in Triton College Adult Education classes. Technology resources may be available for you and your class. Please fill out this survey as soon as possible: https://forms.gle/b2qTjNgzHdmjGf6F9

Text STOP to end

Thank you for completing the