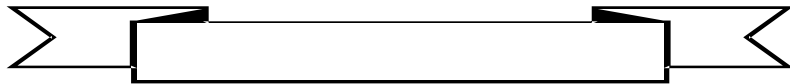




# Next Step Program

## New England Student Handbook

January 2008



More information about Next Step is available  
at the Next Step Web Site:

**[www.nspinfo.com](http://www.nspinfo.com)**

**NEXT STEP PROGRAM  
Student Handbook  
IBEW / Verizon**

**Nothing in this NEXT STEP Program *Student Handbook* is to take precedence over the collective bargaining agreement between Verizon and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. In situations where a discrepancy exists, the provisions of the contract will apply.**



**verizon Campus Connection**

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January 2008  
New England Version

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## **Background**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the NEXT STEP Program. This handbook is designed to provide employees with general information regarding the NEXT STEP Program and includes a list of resources if there are additional questions about the program. This handbook is divided into several sections that address eligibility requirements, the enrollment process, company policies, and general information regarding the program.

### **Background-The NEXT STEP Program**

NEXT STEP is a groundbreaking workforce educational partnership between Verizon and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). The NEXT STEP Program offers qualified Verizon employees an opportunity to earn an Associate Degree in Applied Science (A.A.S.) with a concentration in Telecommunications Technology. The program was initiated by the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and Verizon in collaboration with selected community colleges within the New England geographical area.

This partnership is designed to provide an innovative, state of the art, competency-based educational program that will allow employees to keep pace with advancing technology, to understand changing marketplace realities, and to enhance customer service skills.

One third of the curriculum is devoted to general studies, one third to electricity and electronics, and one third to telecommunications. The NEXT STEP curriculum includes such topics as switching technologies, network management, quality, labor studies, customer satisfaction, problem solving, and teamwork. This curriculum will introduce employees to the latest technology in the telecommunications industry, and will give employees the skills and knowledge they need to make an even greater contribution to the highly competitive telecommunications industry of the future.

### **IBEW/NYNEX Educational Partnership**

The partnership is the result of the 1994 collective bargaining agreement between Verizon and the IBEW, and is part of the *Employee Development Programs* section of the agreement. Both the union and the company recognize that the telecommunications industry has changed dramatically over the last decade and will continue to change at an ever-increasing pace. In order for Verizon to meet the competitive challenge and be on the cutting edge, it is crucial to prepare employees for the ongoing changes in technology and the marketplace. The IBEW and Verizon agreed to provide an opportunity for employees who meet established eligibility requirements to obtain the skills, knowledge and technological expertise necessary to take Verizon and the IBEW into the future.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

Permanent, full-time Verizon employees, who are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, assigned to rated job titles in the Plant bargaining unit, who meet established eligibility requirements, will have the opportunity to enroll in the program. Employees need to have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Degree (GED), plus at least two years of high school math that includes algebra.

In addition, all program candidates will be required to achieve minimum scores on the four sections of the ASSET Test before being considered for admission into the program. Candidates are also required to meet all enrollment requirements for a particular college or technical school, as defined by the schools standard policies and procedures, before admittance into the NEXT STEP Program. See chapter 3 (Enrollment Requirements)



## Application Process

### How to Apply

Employees who meet the initial program qualifications can apply for entrance evaluation testing (ASSET test) by either registering on-line or calling the NEXT STEP Program on a special 800 number during the designated call-in period. This call-in period will generally be conducted once a year; usually in the fall. **Employees must call in during the designated period to be eligible to take the ASSET evaluation and be considered for admission to the NEXT STEP Program.**

The NEXT STEP Program staff will send advance notification via US mail to all union employees regarding call-in periods. This notification will specify the dates and times of the call-in period, and the web site and the toll-free, call-in telephone number. General information about the ASSET test will also be included.

Upon applying for the program, the employee will be asked to provide his/her name, social security number, net credited service date, rating date, home mailing address, home telephone number, telephone number where he/she can be reached during working hours, college preference (if applicable), union local, and any other necessary information.

Selection for participating in the ASSET evaluation is based on seniority. (See Article G-27 of the IBEW Contract.) As stated previously, only employees who are in rated job titles may apply for the Next Step Program, and while employees in the rated job titles do not have to *be* rated for selection, nevertheless, those who are rated have priority in applying for the program. Rated employees in the job titles of Central Office Technician, Equipment Installation Technician, Outside Plant Technician, and Splice-Service Technician have priority in applying for the NEXT STEP Program. Only employees with these titles will be eligible to take the qualifying ASSET test.

Once the employee passes the ASSET test, the employee will be placed in a pool of candidates who are eligible to attend the NEXT STEP Program based first on seniority of rating by union local, and then net credited service, also within the local. Employees with the most senior rating date in their current job title in their union local will have the opportunity to attend the program first. (NEXT STEP colleges have been assigned to union locals for the exclusive use of their members. See the list of colleges in chapter 6.)

The employee will be notified by US mail at his/her place of residence at least two weeks before the ASSET test of the examination date, time, and location of the community college where he/she will be tested. **If an employee does not plan to take the ASSET test, he/she must call NEXT STEP Academic Administration at Springfield Technical Community College, (1-800-238-5455), as soon as possible so another employee can be given the opportunity to take the test.**

Employees who qualify on the ASSET test but who are not initially selected for admittance into the NEXT STEP Program, will be required to reapply to the program during the next call-in period if they are still interested in participating. They will not be required to take the ASSET test again; their scores remain valid.

Employees who do not qualify on the ASSET test will have the opportunity during subsequent call-in periods to apply again for ASSET testing.

## **ASSET Test Procedures and Requirements**

The ASSET test evaluates a candidate's skills in four basic areas: reading, writing, basic mathematics and elementary algebra. This standardized test is used as a placement vehicle for technical education programs nationwide.

### **All employees who apply for the NEXT STEP Program must take the ASSET test and achieve a minimum score.**

The test results are compared with nationally established norms to determine if an individual possesses the ability to perform college level work in a technical curriculum. If the employee failed to successfully complete the ASSET test, the employee could experience significant difficulty taking the demanding courses within the NEXT STEP Program.

Employees do not have to study for this test; however, to become familiar with any of the four skill areas, please refer to chapter 7 (ASSET Information) in this handbook.

The ASSET test is offered at each participating college following each call-in period. All employees will be notified of the date, time and location where they are to take the ASSET test. The test is scheduled during regular working hours and will be treated as part of a normal scheduled tour. The test lasts approximately four hours and is given in either the morning or the afternoon. The employee is expected to return to work to complete the tour after a morning test, and to report to work in the morning to start the tour if scheduled for testing in the afternoon. No travel expenses will be paid for required travel to and from the test location.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, the employee cannot take the ASSET test on the date he/she is scheduled, he/she must call NEXT STEP Academic Administration at 1-800-238-5455 to be rescheduled. The NEXT STEP Program staff will make every attempt to reschedule the employees test date if the employee has a conflict.

If an employee has applied to take the ASSET test, but was not notified of a testing date, he or she can call 1-800-238-5455 to verify whether or not he/she will be tested.

The NEXT STEP staff will coordinate with the field when employees are scheduled for the ASSET test. Supervisors will receive a list of their employees who are being invited to take the test, so that they can coordinate work loads with test dates.

### **Because the NEXT STEP staff will coordinate with the field prior to scheduling employees for the ASSET test, supervisors are not required to approve employees test dates and must not prevent employees from taking the test.**

On the scheduled test date, the employee must bring the letter received from the NEXT STEP lead school, Springfield Technical Community College, confirming the date and location of the test, and his/her company identification card.

**If the employee does not have a company identification card, he/she will not be allowed to take the ASSET evaluation.**

No calculators or any other materials will be permitted at the ASSET evaluation except for what is provided in the classroom on the day of the test. Tests will be graded immediately after the exam ends, so employees will receive their results before leaving the test location.

Employees who need further development in basic skills are encouraged to sign up for the ASSET Test Preparation (ATP) course, which covers algebra, writing, reading comprehension, and test-taking techniques. The ATP is most appropriate before taking the ASSET test. Employees will be provided with information on how to enroll in the ATP, which will be offered in the evening at various colleges. (See the list of participating NEXT STEP colleges in chapter 6 of this handbook.)

**Retaking the ASSET Evaluation**

Employees whose ASSET scores do not meet the established minimum levels will be allowed to retake the test during the next test administration. Employees will only have to retake the part(s) of the test in which they did not meet the requirements. Employees who do not successfully complete the ASSET test should consider taking the ASSET Test Preparation (ATP) course.

If the employee needs additional development in one of the skill areas tested in the ASSET, he or she can also take appropriate developmental courses recommended by the college. Information regarding courses related to the parts of the test will be provided before the employee leaves the test location. Tuition for these courses will be handled through the normal Verizon Tuition Assistance Program. There are also *Home Study* courses that can help employees prepare for the ASSET test. (See the *ASSET Study Guide*, available by calling 1-800-238-5455. To enroll in *Home Study* courses, call CAEL at 1-800-497-5465, Option 2.)

**Authorization for Release of NEXT STEP Program Information**

To participate in the NEXT STEP Program, all employees will be required to sign an Authorization for Release of Information permitting the college or technical school to report specific information to the lead school, Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), for program management purposes. The release also covers STCC's reporting of summary information to the NEXT STEP Program staff. Employees will receive this form when they are invited to take the ASSET test. **Employees will not be allowed to take the ASSET test without first submitting this signed form.**

A copy of the Authorization for Release of Information form is included in chapter 6 (Resources).

**Acceptance into NEXT STEP Program**

Once all qualifications are met, including passing the ASSET test, the employees' names will be placed in the pool of eligible candidates according to seniority within the union local. The names of all employees who satisfactorily completed all sections of the ASSET test will be passed on to the NEXT STEP Program office. Based on seniority of rating in their current job title by union local, or net credited service by union local, employees will be notified of their acceptance into the program for the upcoming semester. If an employee is not called to participate in the program for the upcoming semester, he/she must call during the next call-in period to be considered for enrollment in the following semester.



## **Enrollment Process**

### **Enrollment Requirements**

Employees will be asked to complete the college's registration paperwork when they are formally accepted into the program. Employees will also be informed of any college enrollment requirements, including high school transcripts or GED scores, and proof of immunization, if required.

### **Class Locations**

The NEXT STEP Program has built partnerships with selected colleges in the New England area. All classes will be held on their campuses. Students must attend the college designated for members of their union local. **(A list of participating colleges and the union locals assigned to these colleges is provided in chapter 6 [Resources] of this book. As the program grows, other colleges may be added, and distance learning implemented.)**

### **Class Schedules**

Classes will be scheduled during company time on the same day each week for 15 weeks each semester. The employee will be expected to attend classes from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The employee must take the course on the day it is offered. Each semester, the employee will take two courses from the Associate Degree in Applied Science in Telecommunications Technology curriculum.

At least two weeks before the start of the semester, the employee will be notified by US mail of the dates and locations for upcoming classes. The NEXT STEP Program staff will also inform supervisors of the names of participants and the schedule of classes, so work assignments can be adjusted accordingly.

Once accepted into the NEXT STEP Program, if an employee finds that he/she can not participate, he/she should call 1-800-238-5455 to request later admission into the program, or complete withdrawal. The next eligible employee will be given the opportunity to enter the program, based on seniority of rating or net credited service, within the union local. Selected employees who opt for later admission must remember to call in and register during the next call-in period in order to be considered for selection for the following year's class.

### **Course Requirements**

To graduate with an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Telecommunications Technology, the employee will have to successfully complete sixteen courses for a total of sixty credit hours. The employee will take the courses in an established sequence. Each semester the employee will attend two courses during a 15-week semester.

NEXT STEP Program participants will be awarded a degree upon successful completion of all course requirements as defined by the college that they attend, usually at the completion of four years of study. There will be no classes scheduled during the summer months.

## **Transfer Credit**

Students with prior college credits will be allowed to waive certain courses, depending upon approval of transfer credits by the NEXT STEP college, except for those courses that have been identified as non-waivable. Transfers of credit are handled on a case-by-case basis and are subject to the policies and procedures of the employee's local college or technical school. The normal policy at each college will apply. (In general, this means that a student must take at least 30 of the 60 credits in the NYNEX-specific AAS degree program.) It is the student's responsibility to initiate the request for a transfer of credit.

**Students will not be allowed to waive any of the four telecommunications courses, since these will cover the most up-to-date technologies, nor will a waiver be allowed for the social studies course. In addition, new students enrolling in Next Step will not be granted a waiver for any of the courses offered in the first semester.**

If an employee has both courses in a given semester waived, he or she will be required to report to work that semester. If an employee has one course waived in a semester, he or she must be at the college for the full day. In most cases, it is expected that the student will audit the course for which transfer credit was granted by the college. This means that the auditing student will participate fully in the class, completing all assignments and projects, and taking all the examinations.

## **Advanced Standing**

A student who has courses waived due to the transfer of credit is considered to be a student with advanced standing. These students will not "jump ahead" of their classmates, but will stay with the group of students with whom they first began the program. A student in advanced standing will be allowed to take the courses he or she needs, when they are offered, provided they meet any and all specific course prerequisites, and the college has adequate seats available to accommodate the student.

## **Transfers to Other NEXT STEP Program Colleges**

After completing one full semester, an employee may request transfer to a different college if he/she meets the normal college transfer policies and is eligible at the new college based on seniority. The new college must also have seats available and must be one of the colleges set aside for that employee's union local.

## **Academic Standing**

### **Grade Point Average**

Students in the NEXT STEP Program must comply with the standard policy of their college regarding academic standing and grade point average (GPA). Policies may vary from one college to the next. These policies are published in each participating colleges' handbook/catalogue. Each student will receive a copy of the college handbook for his/her participating college from the NEXT STEP Program Coordinator on or before the first day of class.

## **Failed Courses**

Failure of any course is serious and usually cause for dismissal from the program. Generally, a student who receives a failing grade in a NEXT STEP course that is not a prerequisite for a subsequent class may continue as a student in the program, but will be required to make up the course on his/her own time and receive a passing grade, prior to graduation. However, if a student fails a course that is a prerequisite to another course for the next semester, the student will be terminated from the program.

Students who are terminated from the NEXT STEP Program and subsequently pass previously failed courses, can present their cases to the Employee Development Board for re-admission into the Program by calling (800) 238-5455.

The NEXT STEP Program has worked with participating colleges to ensure that academic support is available to assist students in maintaining the GPA requirements, and employees are encouraged to utilize these services as appropriate.

If an employee is having difficulty with a course or is struggling to maintain the pre-determined academic requirements, he/she is strongly encouraged to seek additional help from the college, or by calling the NEXT STEP Program office at (800) 238-5455.

## **Program Costs**

All costs associated with attendance at the local college for the purpose of participation in the NEXT STEP Program will be paid through an agreement between Verizon and the participating colleges. Billing for these expenses will be handled by the colleges. Students will not pay for any program-related items directly.

All tuition costs including, registration fees, laboratory fees and graduation fees will be paid by the NEXT STEP Program. All textbooks, workbooks, equipment, and computer software will be ordered and distributed to employees by each participating college and paid for by the NEXT STEP Program.

In addition, all NEXT STEP Program students will be assigned a laptop computer and calculator for the duration of the student's participation in the program. The participating colleges will distribute computers and calculators to the NEXT STEP Program students during the first semester. Each student must sign an *Equipment Custody Form* for tracking purposes, which identifies the individual employee and the serial number of the assigned computer.

If a Verizon student leaves the program, he/she must return the assigned computer and associated equipment, calculator, and the current semester textbooks and workbooks.

## **Other Program Costs**

Employees will be responsible for the purchase of personal supplies, such as notebooks, paper, pens, pencils and computer diskettes. In addition, employees will be responsible for any and all personal expenses incurred as a result of the failure to comply with college policies, such as campus traffic violations and library late fees.

## **Campus Facilities**

NEXT STEP Program students have full access to campus facilities at the college in which they are enrolled, as described in each college's handbook or catalog.

## **Student Complaint Procedures**

Each participating college has established procedures for handling student complaints, as outlined in their catalog/handbook. If a complaint is college-related, rather than a NEXT STEP Program problem, the student should follow the normal complaint procedures of the college. For problems that relate specifically to the NEXT STEP Program, students should contact the NEXT STEP Program Office at (800) 238-5455.



## **Company Policies**

### **Compensation**

Employees' attendance at classes one day a week at a participating NEXT STEP college shall be treated as a normal work day, with exceptions as noted below. Employees in the NEXT STEP Program shall be paid for their normal scheduled tour at the straight time rate under the collective bargaining agreement.

### **Benefits**

All applicable benefit plans and programs currently in effect under the IBEW bargaining agreement, including Workers Compensation coverage, will apply during an employees attendance at the NEXT STEP Program.

### **Daily Travel Allowance**

No employee will receive a daily travel allowance for the one day per week that he/she travels to college while attending classes.

In addition, Verizon will not provide transportation to the college, nor will reimbursement be made for parking, tolls, mileage, surface transportation or any other expenses incurred in traveling to or from the college.

### **Use of Company Vehicles to Travel to College Campus**

Technicians are strictly prohibited from driving company motor vehicles to class.

### **Board and Lodging**

No student will receive board or lodging expenses for the one day of the week that he/she travels to college while attending classes.

### **NEXT STEP Program Attendance**

Attendance at NEXT STEP classes is mandatory and is considered the employee's work assignment for the day. Students are expected to attend all classes. As with any other day of work, students must attend class when scheduled. Because of the accelerated nature of the NEXT STEP Program, missing just one day of classes is the equivalent of missing a week's worth of classes in a traditional college program. **Class attendance is essential to success in the Program. Missing class, arriving late for class, or leaving class early could negatively affect a student's final grade.**

If students are unable to attend a class for any reason, three telephone calls must be made:

1. To the NEXT STEP Program Coordinator at their college. They must inform the Coordinator that they will not be in class on a particular day, and the reason(s) why they will not be in attendance;
2. To the Verizon Absence Reporting Center (1-800-377-7333) **Option 2**, if they will not be reporting to their work location that day; and
3. When possible, to their individual professors. If students know in advance that they will not be in class, they must inform their individual instructors and make sure they have all of their class work assignments.

Class attendance means that students are physically present in the classroom for the entire time class is in session. This means that students must show up on time for every class, and must stay until the Instructor dismisses the class. Any kind of appointments such as doctor, dentist, etc., should be scheduled outside of class time.

**Students who are absent from three class sessions in a semester will be subject to review and potential dismissal from the Program.**

### **Disability**

Students on Verizon medical disability must inform:

1. Jack Marshall, NEXT STEP Program Co-Director/IBEW (1-508-460-4689);
2. The NEXT STEP Program Coordinator at their college; and
3. The NEXT STEP Program's academic administrative office at Springfield Technical Community College, the Lead College for the New England Program (1-800-238-5455).

Students on disability may attend classes on campus if they have the permission of their physician, their Verizon supervisor, and their Verizon disability case manager and they should inform their supervisor that they have obtained the required permissions and that they intend to attend class..

If they are physically unable to attend class, or if they do not have all the required permissions to attend, then they are to withdraw from the Program and seek re-entry in the next appropriate semester. Students who formally withdraw from the College and the NEXT STEP Program must surrender all books and equipment, including laptops. They must also write a letter to Jack Marshall, Program Co-Director/IBEW, stating the particular circumstances of their withdrawal, and anticipated return to the Program.

### **Vacations, Extra Work, And Company Training**

As stated above, attendance at class is mandatory and even one or two absences can negatively affect grades. Thus, students are requested **not** to schedule a vacation on a day or week that they are supposed to be attending class. Tolerance will be afforded to first semester students if a vacation was planned before they learned of their acceptance into the NEXT STEP Program. However, students in the second semester, or second, third, or fourth year of the program should not schedule vacation time during the regularly scheduled class meetings. If students do schedule vacation during class time, it will be viewed as an absence.

Verizon employees are given work assignments and selected for company training by their supervisors. When an assignment or training conflicts with NEXT STEP classes, students are to inform Verizon NEXT STEP staff, who may be able to resolve the conflict through contacting the appropriate supervisor. If the conflict cannot be resolved, students must inform their Program Coordinator and, when possible, their individual professors. Missed classes under these circumstances do not count as absences for this policy, and students who miss classes due to these circumstances will remain in the program if they maintain passing grades.

## **Retirement**

Retiring students must make three telephone calls to withdraw from the Program:

1. To the Next Step Program Coordinator at their college;
2. To Jack Marshall, Program Co-Director/IBEW (1-508-460-4689); and
3. To the NEXT STEP Program's academic administrative office at Springfield Technical Community College, the Lead College for the New England Program (1-800-238-5455).

Once these calls have been made, then students must follow all withdrawal procedures at the college they attend as well as any procedures required by the academic administrative office at Springfield Technical Community College. All books and equipment, including laptops, must be returned. If they so choose, they may continue with coursework on their own, taking advantage of the Telecommunications degree programs offered at most of the New England partner colleges.

## **Night Tours**

Employees enrolled in the NEXT STEP Program will not be removed from night tours solely as a result of their enrollment in the program. They will continue to receive their night differential while attending classes during the day.

## **Vacation Days**

Employees who take vacation time on a scheduled class day will not be given additional time off to attend class since the college program is given on specific days each semester. If an employee misses class, it is his/her responsibility to make up the course work on his/her own time.

If a student attends class during a scheduled vacation week, he/she will be permitted another vacation day at a later date.

## **Holidays**

If the college holds class on a designated holiday and the employee attends class, the employee will be granted another day off with pay in that week or within three weeks following the holiday.

## **Cancellation Of Classes**

If it is necessary for the college to cancel a class, the college's normal class cancellation policy will apply. **In cases where classes are canceled, employees are to report to their assigned work location. (Depending on the circumstances, make-up classes may be added at the end of the semester.)**

## **Leave Of Absence**

In rare circumstances, an employee may be authorized to take a leave of absence from the program for cause. Cases will be reviewed on an individual basis by the Co-directors of the NEXT STEP Program.

## **Withdrawal From Program**

Any employee who wishes to withdraw from the NEXT STEP Program must first contact NEXT STEP Academic Administration at STCC on 1-800-238-5455. The student must also notify the NEXT STEP Program Office at (508) 460-4529. In addition, the employee must notify the program coordinator at the college he or she attends and follow the college's standard procedures for withdrawing from a degree program.

If an employee leaves the program, he or she must return the calculator, textbooks, the laptop computer, software, and associated equipment to the NEXT STEP Program campus coordinator within one week from the date of the last class attended. If these items are not returned, the college will take whatever steps are necessary to recover them, including the use of a collection agency.

Appeals for re-admission to the program can be presented to the Employee Development Board by calling (508) 460-4529.



### **Graduation From The Next Step Program**

Upon commencing course work in the NEXT STEP Associate Degree in Applied Science program in Telecommunications Technology, the following will apply:

#### **Wage Treatment**

Effective with the August, 2000, contract, employees entering the program after that date and who successfully complete one half of the credits in the program will be awarded a bonus payment in the amount of \$1,500.00. Upon successful completion of the entire program, employees shall remain on their rated job title and will be awarded a bonus payment of \$2,500.00.

#### **Work Assignment**

When designated and assigned by management to special work assignments, NEXT STEP graduates shall be transferred, either permanently or temporarily, to the job title Telecommunications Assistant and will be placed at the maximum wage rate (48 month step) on Wage Table 1.



**Resources**

**COURSES REQUIRED  
FOR ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN APPLIED SCIENCE IN  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

Courses for the NEXT STEP Program will address three main areas: general education, electricity/electronics, and telecommunications, for a total of sixty credit hours. They are listed below in the order in which they will be offered:

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credit Hours</u>
<b>Semester 1</b>	
Technical Math I	4
Computer Applications	3
Orientation Seminar	1*
<b>Semester 2</b>	
English I	3
Digital Systems for Telecommunications 1	4
<b>Semester 3</b>	
Technical Math II	4
Digital Systems for Telecommunications II	4
<b>Semester 4</b>	
Physics	4
Electrical Circuits	4
<b>Semester 5</b>	
Introduction to Electronics	4
Telecommunications I	4
<b>Semester 6</b>	
Electronics Communications	4
Telecommunications II	4
<b>Semester 7</b>	
English II	3
Telecommunications III	4
<b>Semester 8</b>	
Social Science	3
Telecommunications IV	4
<b>Eight Semesters 16 Courses</b>	<b>60 Credit Hours</b>
*One Institutional, not graduation Credit	

## **NEXT STEP PROGRAM RESOURCES**

### **NEXT STEP Co-Director - NE**

(Verizon)  
Roger Lindsey  
280 Locke Drive Floor 3  
Marlboro, MA 01752  
(508) 460-2445

### **NEXT STEP Co-Director**

(IBEW)  
Jack Marshall  
280 Locke Drive Floor 3  
Marlboro, MA 01752  
(508) 460-4689

### **Program Implementation**

Elaine Gallivan  
280 Locke Drive, Floor 3  
Marlboro, MA 01752  
(508) 460-4597

### **NEXT STEP Program Administration**

Judy Watson  
280 Locke Drive, Floor 3  
Marlboro, MA 01752  
(508) 460-4529

### **NEXT STEP Academic Administration**

Springfield Technical Community College  
One Armory Square  
Springfield, MA 01105  
800-238-5455

**NEW ENGLAND AREA COLLEGES  
PARTICIPATING IN NEXT STEP PROGRAM**

<u>College (Union Local)</u>	<u>Program Coordinator</u>	
Central Maine Technical College <b>Auburn, ME (Local 2327)</b>	Maurice Nadeau	207-755-5268
Community College of Rhode Island <b>Warwick, RI (Local 2323)</b>	Peter N. Woodberry	401-825-2147
Eastern Maine Technical College <b>Bangor, ME (Local 2327)</b>	Loring Kydd	207-974-4810
Massasoit Community College <b>Brockton, MA (Local 2322)</b>	Brian O'Leary	781-821-2222 Ext 2505
Massasoit Community College <b>Canton, MA (Local 2222)</b>	Brian O'Leary	781-821-2222 Ext 2505
Middlesex Community College <b>Lowell, MA (Local 2321)</b>	Mary DiSanzo	978-656-3174
New Hampshire Technical College <b>Nashua, NH (Local 2320)</b>	Terry Pardoe	603-882-6923 Ext 1582
New Hampshire Technical College <b>Concord, NH (Local 2320)</b>	Terry Pardoe	603-882-6923 Ext 1582
North Shore Community College <b>Lynn, MA (Local 2222)</b>	George Walsh	978-762-4000 Ext 6260
Quinsigamond Community College <b>Worcester, MA (Local 2325)</b>	Kathy Rentsch	508-854-2712
Springfield Technical Community College <b>Springfield, MA (Local 2324)</b>	Skip Tenczar	413-755-4596
Vermont Technical College <b>Randolph Center, VT (Local 2326)</b>	Jeffrey Higgins	802-728-1217

**Lead College:**  
**Springfield Technical Community College**  
**Joseph N. Joyce, Jr., Program Administrator**  
**1-800-238-5455**

**Authorization**  
**For Release of Information**

**NEXT STEP PROGRAM**

For Verizon employees enrolled at a NEXT STEP Program college other than Springfield Technical Community College:

I hereby authorize a participating college in the New England NEXT STEP Program to release to Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) information concerning my name, Social Security Number, and course work during my participation in the NEXT STEP Program. I understand that STCC will provide NEXT STEP with information related to my program eligibility based on the ASSET qualifying exam and that STCC will also notify NEXT STEP of my acceptance into the program. I understand that STCC will inform NEXT STEP if I am terminated from the program due to failure to meet the academic standards of the college in which I am enrolled, or if I inform STCC that I intend to withdraw from the NEXT STEP Program.

I further understand that any additional information that STCC provides to NEXT STEP will be in summary form that does not identify any specific students in the NEXT STEP Program.

**NAME (Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Asset Information

### ***What is ASSET?***

The ASSET evaluation program is a series of short placement tests developed by American College Testing (ACT) that lets you and the college work together to help you succeed in your educational program. ASSET helps you identify your strengths as well as the knowledge and skills you will need in order to succeed in the **NEXT STEP** Program.

### ***How Does ASSET Work?***

ASSET, as used in **NEXT STEP**, has four tests of basic skills in writing, reading, numerical reasoning, and elementary algebra. ASSET scores indicate areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need help. Thus, ASSET can identify problems in major subject areas before they disrupt your educational progress, giving you the opportunity to prepare more effectively for needed courses.

### ***How Are ASSET Scores Used?***

You must achieve a minimum score on ASSET to be considered eligible for the **Next Step** program. Seniority is also a factor in determining who is given the opportunity to register for **NEXT STEP** in any enrollment period.

### ***Where Can I Get Help?***

An ASSET **Study Guide** with sample questions from all four parts of the test is available on the Next Step website : <http://www.nspinfo.com/Asset.pdf> . There is general information for prospective students at the Next Step website: <http://www.nspinfo.com>.

Also, associates can prepare themselves by taking appropriate developmental courses in basic skills at local colleges using the *Verizon Tuition Assistance Plan*.

Various **Home Study** courses can help employees prepare in advance for ASSET testing. These self-study courses are offered at no cost to employees and cover writing, reading, numerical reasoning, and elementary algebra. There are also study guides available at bookstores and public libraries for the ACT, a test that is similar to the ASSET test used in the **NEXT STEP** program. (Turn to the following pages for more information.)

## **Home Study Courses:**

### **Writing Skills**

#### ***Practical English and the Command of Words***

This comprehensive course is designed to improve oral and written communication skills. All phases of language and effective communication are addressed in forty-eight brief lessons written in a style that quickly captures and holds the student's attention. Among the topics included are:

- vocabulary development
- pronunciation
- writing
- diction
- grammar
- spelling
- punctuation
- usage

### **Reading Skills**

#### ***Speed Learning***

Speed Learning is designed to enable the employee to read more effectively by increasing both speed and comprehension. The course consists of workbooks, audio tapes, and associated reading material. It focuses on his/her purpose in reading a newspaper, textbook, magazine, report, novel, etc., and thereby understand the contents more rapidly. The course also teaches different reading strategies and when to use them:

- skim reading
- scan reading
- study reading
- rapid reading

The skills learned in this course can be applied to any learning task.

### **Numerical Reasoning**

#### ***Real Life Math and the Power of Numbers***

This course consists of forty-eight interesting, to-the-point units that build Mathematical skills in a concise, logical way. The program addresses problems the student has to deal with daily:

- basic math operations
- business math applications
- statistics
- financial applications
- consumer issues
- problem solving

## Numerical Reasoning

**Basic Math** (Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4)

## Elementary Algebra

**Basic Math** (Lessons 5 and 6)

Certain elements of this course may be new to some employees. For others, it will serve as a refresher of math skills that have faded over time. The components of the course are:

- Lesson 1: Basic Arithmetic
- Lesson 2: Fundamental Fractions
- Lesson 3: Decimals
- Lesson 4: Exponents, Powers, and Roots
- Lesson 5: Introductory Algebra
- Lesson 6: Advanced Algebra

## Home Study Courses and NSP

If you are already qualified on the ASSET test, or currently enrolled in the NEXT STEP Program, and want to be better prepared when attending these courses in the NEXT STEP curriculum (See page 19 of this Handbook), the following *Home Study* courses can provide you with some additional knowledge:

### NEXT STEP Course

### Related Home Study Course

Computer Applications

*Computing Concept for End-Users*

Technical Math I

*Basic Mathematics*  
*Real Life Math and the Power of Numbers*

Electrical Circuits

*Basic Electricity*

English I

*Power Writing*  
*Practical English and the Command of Words*  
*Speed Learning*

**Any of the above *Home Study* courses can be obtained by calling the Verizon Home Study at CAEL 1-800-497-5465, Option #8. You should have the material within two weeks. If you plan to take a *Home Study* course, be sure to allow yourself enough time to order the course and complete it. Some *Home Study* courses take only a few hours to finish, while others take much longer. You work at your own pace and on your own time. There is no charge for *Home Study* courses.**

## **Using an ACT Study Guide to Prepare for ASSET**

There are numerous books available at bookstores and libraries that are designed to help people prepare for the ACT, a test that is similar to the ASSET program used in **NEXT STEP**, but not quite the same. (The ACT is required by some four-year colleges and universities for admission. The ACT covers English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning.)

If you decide to use an ACT study guide to get ready for taking ASSET, you will find the following similarities and differences:

- the **English** part of ACT is similar to the **Writing Skills** part of ASSET. Both measure your understanding of appropriate usage in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, writing strategy and writing style.

- ASSET has two mathematics components, **Numerical Skills** and **Elementary Algebra**. **Numerical Skills** tests your ability to perform basic math operations using whole numbers, decimals and fractions. It also measures your understanding of prime numbers, absolute values, scientific notation, and square roots. **Elementary Algebra** measures skills often taught in a first year high school algebra class, including evaluating and simplifying algebraic expressions, solving linear and quadratic equations, and performing operations and polynomials. The ACT has a single mathematics section that goes beyond elementary algebra, and includes intermediate algebra, geometry and trigonometry.

- the **Reading** part of ACT is similar to the **Reading** part of ASSET, but the ACT has more questions and covers four different kinds of reading material: prose fiction, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences. Both tests measure your ability to find specific information in text, and to make logical inferences that extend beyond the text information.

- the fourth part of the ACT, **Science Reasoning**, is **not** a part of the ASSET.

**A word of advice:** Using an ACT study guide to prepare for the ASSET can be helpful, but it can also be confusing. While some parts of both tests are similar, some are not. The ACT mathematics, for example, covers more mathematics than you need to know to take the ASSET.

By carefully examining the sample questions in the Numerical Skills and Elementary Algebra sections in the **ASSET Study Guide** (available by calling 1-800-238-5455), you will get an idea of the math covered in the ASSET. With this in mind, you can then go to any ACT study guide at <http://www.nspinfo.com/Asset.pdf> and review only the math topics you can expect to find on the ASSET. There is also general information for prospective student at <http://www.nspinfo.com>, the Next Step program's official website.

If you have any questions on studying for the ASSET, call the **NEXT STEP** Academic Administration Office at 1-800-238-5455.