

# **LINKING ADULTS TO OPPORTUNITY**

**Transformation of the California Department of Education  
Adult Education Program**

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**California Department of Education**

**November, 2011**

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## OVERVIEW

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California has the eighth largest economy in the world, yet faces sobering challenges to its long-term competitiveness. Too many working-age adults are ill-prepared for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace. Educational attainment levels are not keeping pace with the knowledge and skills necessary for complex, high-wage jobs that fuel the California economy; many adults lack the basic skills needed to ensure self-sufficiency. Further, underemployment and unemployment have devastating effects on communities as well as on individuals and the economy.

- Over 20 percent of California's adults — 5.3 million people — lack a high school diploma or a California High School Equivalency Certificate, the latter earned by successfully passing the General Educational Development (GED) test. Half of these adults have less than a ninth-grade education at a time when education beyond high school is the prerequisite for workforce success.<sup>1</sup>
- At least 27 percent of those currently aged 18–44 — the “baby boom replacement generation” — are unprepared for postsecondary education, let alone for “middle skill” jobs which require successful completion of some postsecondary education or training.<sup>2</sup>
- Approximately 20 percent of all California high school students drop out between ninth and twelfth grade, with almost 50 percent of African American and Latino students not graduating.<sup>3</sup>
- Adults with less than a high school diploma in 2008 earned only \$20,000 per year, whereas those with some postsecondary education or an associate's degree earned \$37,000 — 85 percent more.<sup>4</sup>
- Community colleges report that they place 70 percent of their new students in remedial mathematics and 42 percent in remedial English, a heavy expense on both the system and the students.<sup>5</sup>
- Fifty-eight percent of the people who will be in California's workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults in 2005 and are therefore long past the traditional high school-to-college pipeline.
- There is a strong correlation between low levels of education and criminal activity, with high school dropouts five to eight times more likely to be incarcerated.<sup>6</sup>
- Immigrants lacking a high school diploma or a GED are 15 percent less likely to become naturalized citizens.<sup>7</sup>

California has the opportunity to renew an educational system that provides adults with the academic and career skills needed to support themselves and their families and make meaningful contributions to the state's economic future by:

- Addressing the needs of undereducated residents who are beyond the reach of the kindergarten through grade twelve (K–12) system but are not ready for community college, other forms of higher education, or the workforce.
- Providing relevant academic programs to reengage students who drop out of the K–12 system.
- Linking education with support services to enhance student outcomes.
- Implementing educational programs that support the reentry of ex-offenders and the transition of many adults from dependence to self-sufficiency.

This strategic plan presents a more focused mission and new design for the California Department of Education (CDE) Adult Education program based on the state’s critical educational and workforce needs. In the “Blueprint for Action,” the plan outlines seven core components of this new design: Collaborative Leadership; Academic and Career Education Transition (ACET) Centers; Transition Services; Curriculum and Instruction; Professional Development; Data and Accountability; and Funding. (Note: Throughout the document, “Adult Education,” when capitalized, refers to programs administered through the state’s K–12 system and overseen by the CDE’s Adult Education Office [AEO]).

The plan sets the stage for developing the statewide collaborations and regional approach needed to maximize the state’s return on its investment in adult education. Adult Education will serve as a “portal to opportunity,” the key vision that emerged in planning activities with teachers, administrators, and external experts. The “portal” concept includes such operational components as comprehensive intake and assessment services, contextualized learning opportunities, support services, and transition services. Consistent with this vision, the most transformational recommendation in the plan is the expansion, strengthening, and networking of existing adult schools and programs into “academic and career education transition” centers to more efficiently and effectively deliver services to local residents in collaboration with regional partners.

The ACET centers would collaborate with community colleges, high schools, regional occupational centers and programs (ROCPs), workforce development organizations, libraries, and community-based organizations. They would draw on the expertise of partner agencies and their instructional and support staffs to provide a continuum of services for adults to succeed in transitioning to further education and employment. The centers would be funded in accordance with established need indicators such as poverty levels, unemployment statistics, English language levels, and high school diploma rates, as well as on the basis of student access to co-located social services.

Leadership, accountability, and funding would support the transformation and operations of the centers, establishing the guidelines and incentives necessary for the system to meet its goals. Services and instruction would be expanded, strengthened, and integrated to ensure student success and transitions, and professional development would support continuous organizational learning and system improvement.

The centers and other core features of the plan are to be implemented through a systematic, transparent, and inclusive process guided by the CDE. The plan calls for the establishment of technical working groups to develop, based on rigorous analyses, detailed implementation strategies for each component of the blueprint that incorporate vital perspectives of Adult Education administrators, teachers, and external partners.

With all the proposed changes, Adult Education remains committed to the needs of its students, especially the most vulnerable. In keeping with current theory and best practice in adult teaching and learning, Adult Education will continue to offer programs that are accessible, responsive, relevant, and flexible, delivered by highly skilled and culturally competent teachers and staff. The system would continue to be inclusive, equitable, cost effective, and outcomes-driven to maximize returns for both students and the state.

## THE MISSION OF ADULT EDUCATION: SUPPORTING CALIFORNIA’S SUCCESS

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The mission of the Adult Education system aligns with the educational, economic, and social needs of California as it moves further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Increasing the skill levels of the workforce supports the attraction of new business and the retention and growth of existing business. Skilled workers employed in well-paying jobs, in turn, generate tax revenues and enable reductions in social expenditures. Economic imperatives and the needs of millions of Californians for basic educational services require Adult Education to focus its mission as follows:

*The mission of the California Department of Education Adult Education system is to advance California’s economic, workforce development and societal goals by preparing adult learners for college, career, and civic responsibility.*

- **Preparation for college** is the development of the literacy and mathematics skills necessary to transition to non-remedial coursework in a variety of postsecondary settings, including moderate-term and long-term on-the-job training, industry certification programs, apprenticeship, the military, two- and four-year college and university programs, and high-level technical schools.
- **Preparation for career** is the development of literacy, mathematics, and technical skills, as well as foundational workplace skills necessary to transition to short-term on-the-job training and employment. In many cases, preparation for postsecondary education is a key component of career preparation; in other cases, students who already have postsecondary degrees may only require short-term retraining particular to a new industry.
- **Preparation for civic responsibility** is the development of literacy skills that enable students to understand their responsibilities and benefit from the rights of civic life.

## DRIVING FORCES: FRAMING THE NEED FOR ADULT EDUCATION

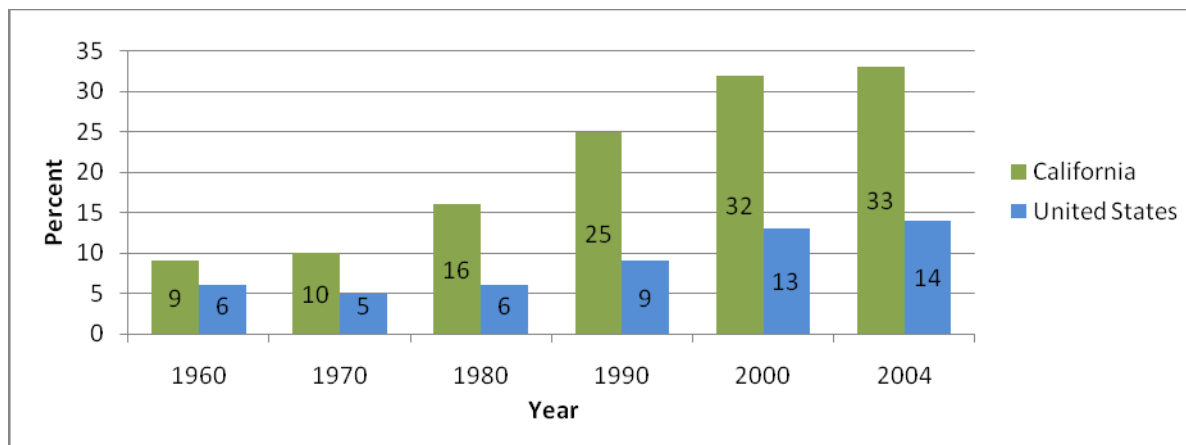
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Three interrelated forces are driving the need to educate adults in California: demographic shifts, educational challenges, and workforce demands. The CDE Adult Education system is committed to focusing its resources, leveraging its expertise, and working with its partners to address the need.

**Driving Force 1: Demographic Shifts.** California faces major economic challenges with shifts in the state’s demographic composition. The “baby boom” generation — workers currently aged 46–64 — is one of the largest in history, and its retirement will pressure the state’s budget, Social Security, Medicare, and social service demands. In 2010, there were 205 seniors per 1,000 working-age Californians.<sup>8</sup> In 2030, the “dependency ratio” will increase by 71 percent to 350 seniors for the same number of workers. The average skill level of the workforce will need to rise dramatically, not deteriorate, if the state is to maintain an economic engine that can generate tax revenues to fund critical public investments and social programs.<sup>9, 10, 11</sup>

In addition, as shown in Figure 1, California has long led the nation in the immigrant proportion of the workforce.

**Figure 1. Percentage of foreign-born in total employment, 1960–2004**



Source: Peri, G. (2007).<sup>12</sup>

Foreign-born residents constitute approximately one-third or 8.3 million of the 23 million adults over 25 in California.<sup>13</sup> Over 3 million adults ages 18–64 speak English “less than well.”<sup>14</sup> Beyond needing English language development, many foreign-born residents lack basic education. Thirty-eight percent lack a high school diploma and an additional 21 percent have only a high school diploma or GED.<sup>15</sup>

The interaction of California’s aging population and high levels of immigration will have significant impacts on California’s economy. According to the University of Southern California Demographic Futures Project, 99 percent of the growth in the California workforce over the next 25 years is expected to be made up of immigrants (39 percent) and children of immigrants (60 percent).<sup>16</sup> With the retirement of the baby boom generation, it is vital that these individuals be well educated. According to the Demographic Futures Project:

By 2030, a much greater portion of young-adult Latinos will be long settled or second generation, and all other things equal, the overall share who are high school graduates is expected to be substantially above the current level. This readiness for upward achievement lays the basis for even stronger gains if stimulated by proactive educational policies. (Myers et al., 2007, p. xi)

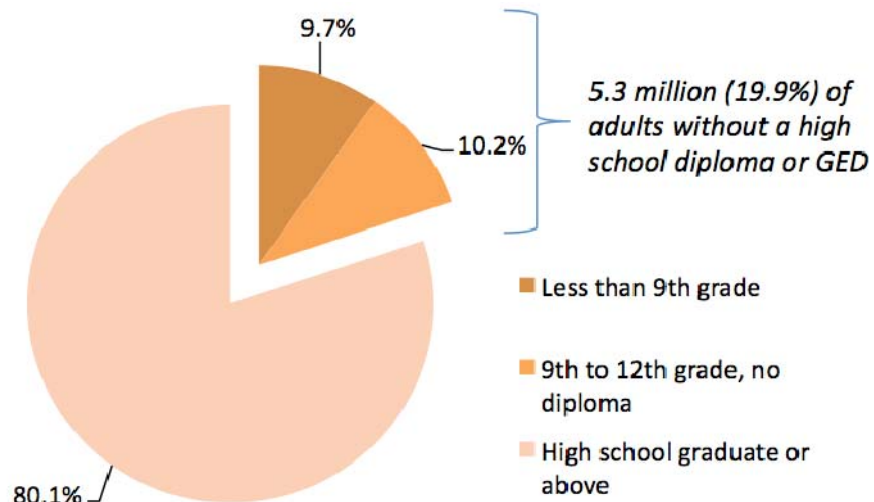
Further, as presented in *California’s Middle Skills Jobs*, ensuring a well-educated population will require attention not only to educational opportunities for young people but also for those already in the workforce. Fifty-eight percent of the people who will be in California’s workforce in the year 2020 were already working adults in 2005 and are therefore past the traditional high school-to-college pipeline,<sup>17</sup> suggesting that education and workforce systems must provide ongoing opportunities for adults to upgrade their skills.<sup>18</sup>

**Driving Force 2: Educational Challenge.** While the need exists to educate a population that is highly diverse in age, ethnicity, and language, California faces significant educational challenges in doing so. Approximately 20 percent of all high school students drop out before graduation and almost 50 percent of

African American and Latino students do not graduate. These high dropout rates severely limit individuals' economic and social opportunities and impact the economic future of the state.

According to the U.S. Census, one-fifth of the state's adult population — 5.3 million adults — lacks a high school diploma or GED High School Equivalency Certificate. In addition, half of those with no diploma have less than a ninth-grade education — more than twice the national average.<sup>19</sup>

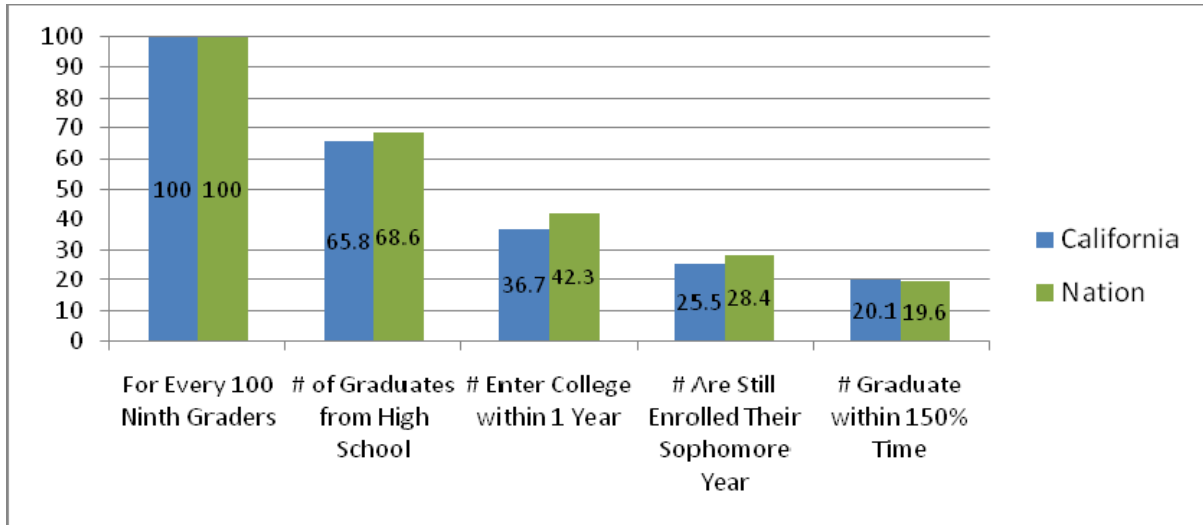
**Figure 2. Educational attainment, Californians 18 years and older**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2005–07 (population 18 years and older).

Even students entering postsecondary education are too often not prepared to succeed. California State University's (CSU) assessment system found that 47.0 percent of the entering freshmen required some level of English remediation and 37.2 percent needed math remediation; 27.1 percent of 2008–09 CSU freshmen were not proficient in *both* English and mathematics.<sup>20</sup> Further evidence for the need for a strong Adult Education program is provided by the remedial needs for community college students; 70 percent of the students entering into community college are placed in remedial mathematics and 42 percent are placed in remedial English.<sup>21</sup> In addition, many students fail to complete either their two-year or their four-year college program. As seen in Figure 3, the percent of students who complete all of their educational stages in the traditional timeframe is very low.

**Figure 3. The educational pipeline**



Source: NCHEMS Information Center for Higher Education Policymaking and Analysis. (2006). *Student pipeline – Transition and completion rates from 9th grade to college.*

The large high school dropout rate, high college attrition rates, and the educational status and language ability of adults already in the workforce combine to produce a large population of adults who lack the foundational skills needed for success.

The lack of foundational skills among adults is particularly troubling when we look at the education levels of the “replacement generation,” the 14.5 million adults in the 18 to 44-year-old age group who will replace the large and highly educated baby boom generation.

**Table 1. Educational needs of “replacement generation” adults ages 18–44**

Population	Number
18–44 without a High School Diploma or GED	2,836,564
18–44 with a High School Diploma or GED Needing Remediation	1,022,919*
<b>Total “Replacement Generation” Needing Basic Skills</b>	<b>3,859,483</b>

\* The number of adults ages 18–44 with a high school diploma or GED and no postsecondary (3,774,611) multiplied times the estimated percent who need both English and math remediation once in postsecondary (27.1%).

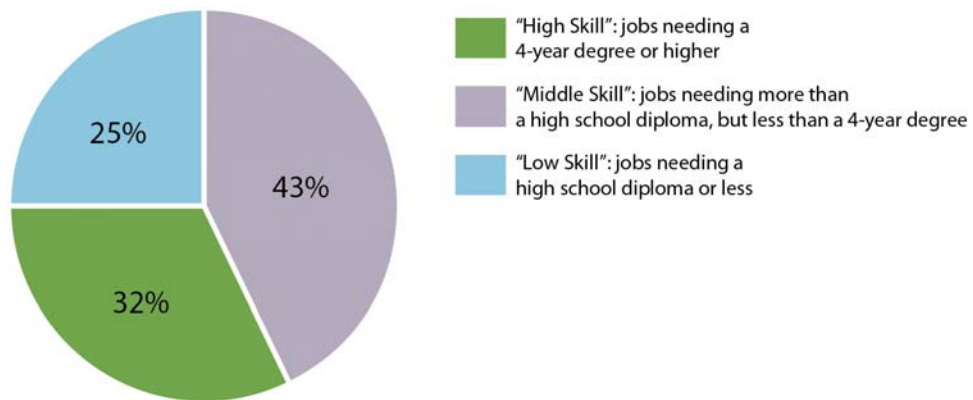
Source: U.S. Census 2005–07 American Community Survey 3-year estimates.<sup>22</sup>

As seen in Table 1, among the 14.5 million adults currently in the 18 to 44 age group, representing the “replacement generation,” 2.8 million, or 20 percent, lack a high school diploma. Of the 3.8 million that have attained a high school diploma, it is conservatively estimated that over a million need remediation to become fully ready for postsecondary education. Therefore, all told, nearly 3.9 million adults — at least 27 percent of the replacement generation — are not even ready to begin postsecondary education without

remediation, at a time when the majority of living wage jobs will require some postsecondary education or training beyond high school.<sup>23</sup>

**Driving Force 3: Workforce Demand.** As educational levels decline, the economy needs an increasingly skilled workforce. Thirty-two percent will require a four-year degree or higher. Middle-skill jobs — those requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree — are projected to account for the largest share of job openings in California at 43 percent. Of the middle-skill job openings, many will require work experience in a related field or moderate-term and long-term on-the-job training, suggesting that the Adult Education program must build strong partnerships with industry and business as well as the community colleges.<sup>24</sup>

**Figure 4. California’s total job openings by skill level, 2008–16**



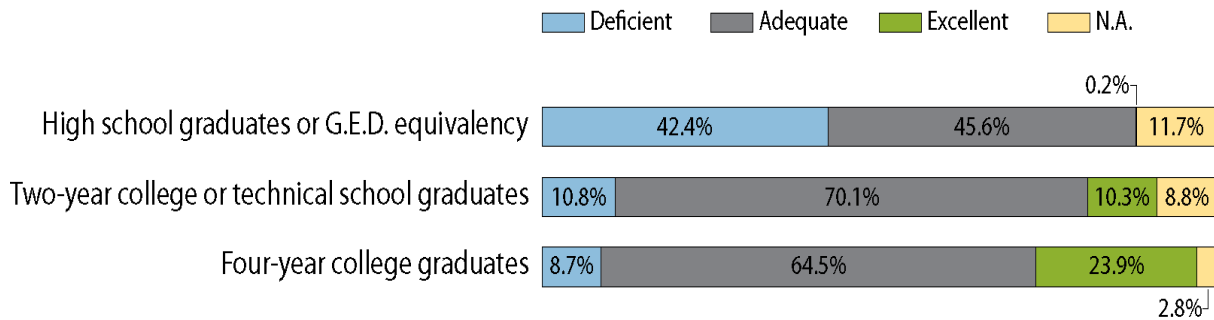
Source: Calculated by TWA from California Employment Development Department Data.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), California will “under-produce” people with some level of postsecondary training and college graduates to meet growing workforce demands. The Institute projects that 75 percent of present and future occupations will require at least some college, which includes a wide variety of postsecondary education options, but only 61 percent of the population is projected to obtain this level of education.<sup>25</sup> Recent projections place the expected workforce gap at 1 million college graduates by the year 2025.<sup>26</sup>

In addition, according to a 2010 survey conducted by the American Management Association, 21<sup>st</sup> century employers need workers with skills beyond just the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. “Skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation, will become even more important to organizations in the future.” However, many of the executives surveyed noted room for improvement among their employees in these skills and competencies.<sup>27</sup>

As shown in Figure 5, employers find that a large percent of incoming workers are not ready to work. In a survey of employers conducted by the Conference Board, 42 percent of high school graduates were considered deficient in the skills needed for employment.

**Figure 5. Readiness for the workforce by level of education**



Number of respondents varied for each question, ranging from 401 to 423.

N.A. selected when company does not hire in selected category.

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Casner-Lotto, J., & Barrington, L. (2006). *Are they really ready to work? Employers' perspectives on the basic knowledge and applied skills of new entrants to the 21st century U.S. workforce*. Washington, DC: The Conference Board, Inc., the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, and the Society for Human Resource Management.

The graph above shows that workforce readiness levels increase measurably with educational attainment. Although a category for “less than a high school” was not included in the survey, deficiencies are more prevalent for those with less education. Eleven percent of employers surveyed did not even hire individuals with less than an associate’s degree or technical certificate.

Most proposed solutions to narrow this gap between workforce need and projected supply involve reform in the state’s K–12 and higher education systems. Reform of these systems, however successful, will not fully address the issue for the majority of California’s workforce for the critical period of 2011 to 2031 — those who are already adults and not ready for higher education.

## THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT IN ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education is not only critical to ensuring a prepared workforce; it also yields significant returns to the state in many domains. It produces economic benefits, increases civic participation, results in improved health for individuals and families, reduces recidivism rates, and improves educational outcomes for the children of adult learners.

**Economic benefits for the state and for individuals.** Increasing the basic educational competency of the workforce benefits the state’s economy by supplying the skilled workers needed to be competitive in the global marketplace. Higher levels of educational attainment drive economic and social returns through an increased tax base and decreases reliance on state services.

On a statewide level, returns on investment in education overall are dramatic. In 2009, McKinsey & Company described critical educational achievement gaps in the U.S. educational system and estimated

the associated economic impacts. The study correlated educational attainment with economic output and determined that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the U.S. could have been \$2.4 to \$4.2 trillion dollars higher if these achievement gaps had been closed.<sup>28</sup> Using the same loss percentage, California's GDP would have been \$314 to \$554 billion higher, and generated more than enough tax revenue to close the budget gaps of the last few years.<sup>29</sup> McKinsey also noted the "staggering economic and social cost of underutilized human potential" implied by these results. While the study examined investments in primary and secondary education, a similar case can be made for increasing the competencies of adults.

Education also produces gains for individuals. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, adults 25 and older with less than a high school degree in 2008 earned a median annual income of only \$20,109; those with a high school diploma earned \$29,473 per year. By contrast, those with an associate's degree or "some college," including a technical certificate, earned \$37,134, over \$7,600 more per year than those with only a high school diploma and \$17,025 more than those with no high school diploma. The difference between "some college" and "less than high school" represents a gain in income of 85 percent. Finally, those with a bachelor's degree earned a median income of \$52,111 in 2008, a \$15,000 gain over an associate's degree.<sup>30</sup> Adult Education programs address these gaps by bringing students to a level of readiness that will enable them to succeed in postsecondary education and training as well as enter and advance in growing occupations.

Education not only provides positive economic returns to the state and individuals; it also prevents economic drains, such as public assistance, remediation costs, health care costs, and costs associated with administration of the criminal justice system. A 2008 study by the Pacific Research Institute estimated that the annual indirect and direct costs of inadequate education for a single cohort of two- and four-year college freshmen in California equals more than ten billion in increased costs and reduced tax revenue for the state.<sup>31</sup>

Table 2 below shows the mean fiscal return of various educational levels to the state. "Tax Payments" reflect the average income taxes paid by an individual in that educational attainment bracket. "Cash and In-Kind Transfers/Institutionalization Costs" are the sum of the average costs in aid (Medicaid, food stamps, housing assistance, etc.) that are returned to the individual.

Every upward move in educational attainment nets the state another five to ten thousand dollars per person in revenue from decreased costs and increased revenue. The final column shows that a person without a high school diploma provides almost no gain to the state, contributing only \$159 more in taxes than he or she draws down in cash and in-kind transfers and institutionalization costs. An individual with a high school diploma, however, nets the state \$5,308 on average, and a person with an associate's degree or certificate nets the state \$10,327.

**Table 2. Estimates of fiscal contributions of adults (16–64) by educational attainment, 2004–05 averages**

<b>Educational Attainment Level</b>	<b>Tax Payments</b>	<b>Cash &amp; In-Kind Transfers/ Inst. Costs</b>	<b>Tax Revenue Gains</b>	<b>% Revenue Gain Over Cost</b>
No H.S. Diploma	\$4,573	\$4,414	\$159	1.04%
H.S. Diploma/GED	\$8,857	\$3,548	\$5,308	2.47%
A.A. or Technical Certificate	\$13,111	\$2,784	\$10,327	4.71%
Bachelor Degree	\$21,125	\$1,365	\$19,760	15.47%
Masters or Higher Degree	\$30,529	\$1,200	\$29,329	25.43%
<b>California Average</b>	<b>\$13,676</b>	<b>\$2,865</b>	<b>\$10,811</b>	<b>4.77%</b>

Source: March 2005 Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Analysis by the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University.<sup>32</sup>

Communities also reap direct economic benefits from increasing education levels. Cities with larger percentages of college graduates have higher average wages as well as increased manufacturing plant productivity.<sup>33</sup> Economic growth is heavily linked to this sort of spill-over effect. As individuals improve their circumstances, the community is improved, and a positive cycle is created for all residents.

**Citizenship and improved civic participation.** Education brings not only the rewards of economic prosperity for individuals and communities but also generates the related benefits of civic participation. Incorporating new immigrants into America’s social and economic fabric and promoting civic participation are at the very heart of the historical mission of adult education.

Along with the over 3 million California adults who speak English “less than well” and more than 5 million that need instruction in basic and secondary academics, an estimated 2.3 million of the state’s eligible immigrants have not yet become naturalized citizens.<sup>34</sup> Immigrants who lack a high school diploma or the GED High School Equivalency Certificate are 15 percent less likely than those with a high school degree and 31 percent less likely than those with a postsecondary degree to become naturalized citizens.<sup>35</sup> Navigating a complex system and successfully completing the citizenship examinations require at least a sixth-grade English-speaking and reading level as well as knowledge in U.S. government and history. With education comes the increased likelihood that immigrants will become citizens. Adult Education programs provide the critical link.

Education also improves voting levels, a key measure of civic engagement. The percentage of adults reported as having voted in the 2004 presidential election varied by educational attainment. Only 30 percent of adults who lacked a high school diploma or GED voted in the election versus 52 percent of high school graduates, 66 percent of adults with one to three years of postsecondary education, and 77 percent of those with a master’s degree or higher. Adults with a bachelor’s degree were 2.4 times more likely to vote than their counterparts without a high school diploma.<sup>36</sup>

Other forms of civic participation are also correlated with education levels. While measures of civic participation or involvement are complex and their impact on a community and its citizens is not easily calculated, Robert Putnam, a political scientist whose work focuses on community and social capital, has developed a Social Capital Index (SCI) that takes into account such measures as community levels of volunteer work, community projects, electoral turnout, and involvement in local organizations and politics. The SCI was found to be highly correlated with educational performance as well as with

reductions in crime, increases in health and well-being, and improved economic outcomes for communities.<sup>37</sup>

**Improved individual and family health.** Educational attainment is also strongly correlated in a direct way with long-term health.<sup>38</sup> Better-educated individuals are more likely to access preventative health care and self-report as being in good health and are less likely to lose work days due to illness. An increase in the parental education level is documented to show children miss fewer days of school due to illness or other issues.<sup>39</sup>

In contrast, less-educated individuals are more likely to be uninsured, creating a significant cost in public health, contributing to absences from work, and resulting in excessive use of emergency rooms. Low health literacy is estimated to cost the U.S. hundreds of billions of dollars annually, more than the entire cost of the controversial government health care bill recently passed by Congress.<sup>40, 41</sup>

**Reduced recidivism.** Low levels of education also strongly correlate with criminal activity. A high-school dropout is five to eight times more likely to be incarcerated than a college graduate. A federal, three-state study showed that attending school while in prison was associated with a 29 percent reduced likelihood of re-incarceration.<sup>42, 43</sup> These lower recidivism rates held true regardless of post-release employment, indicating that education itself has value, regardless of individual economic returns. Given California's relatively high recidivism rate (69 percent of released offenders return to jail or prison within three years, one of the highest rates in the nation) and the overcrowding in jails, this outcome is of key concern to the state.<sup>44</sup> If only 20 percent of the 23,000 incarcerated Californians enrolled in jail adult education programs in 2005–06 are not re-incarcerated, the state of California would save almost \$100 million per year.<sup>45</sup>

**Improvements to children's education.** Finally, education cascades through generations and helps break the cycles of generational poverty. One of the best indicators of a child's academic success is the educational attainment of the mother.<sup>46</sup> An estimated 40 percent of Adult Education students have children in the K–12 system. "Family literacy" programs, delivered primarily by Adult Education with federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Title II funding and through California's Community-Based English Tutoring (CBET) programs, provide literacy training to the parents of school-age children who commit to tutoring and reading with their children. Two years of data analysis showed significant improvement among the children whose parents participated in these Adult Education programs. In the Oakland Unified School District, children of CBET parents averaged 19 percent gain on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

In summary, the new mission of the Adult Education system directly targets the critical needs of the state in the face of compelling demographic shifts, educational challenges, and workforce demands. Increasing the basic educational competency of the workforce and of the larger adult population benefits the state's economy by supplying the skilled workers needed to be competitive in the global marketplace. Higher levels of educational attainment drive economic and social returns through an increased tax base and decreased reliance on state services. Educational attainment increases individual earning power and improves civic participation, health, and the successful re-entry of ex-offenders. Finally, the education of adults directly impacts the educational attainment of the next generation.

## CORE PRINCIPLES

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Over the course of the Adult Education needs assessment and planning process, a set of fundamental “core principles” emerged. These principles inform all of the components and recommendations in the “Blueprint for Action.”

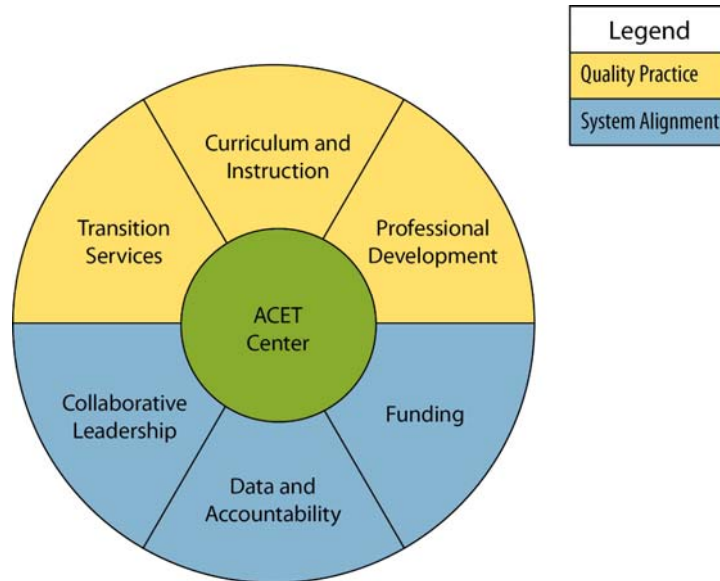
- ***Alignment of Programs.*** Aligning programs and services with postsecondary institutions, providers of support services, and workforce and economic development initiatives facilitates student success and seamless transition to further education and the workforce.
- ***Shared Responsibility and Accountability.*** Sharing in the responsibility and accountability for outcomes encourages partners to work collaboratively and efficiently leverage resources.
- ***Collaboration and Leveraging of Resources.*** Collaboration and leveraging of resources with partners assists students in meeting their goals.
- ***Accessibility and Student Focus.*** The needs of a highly diverse student population are met with broad accessibility of services and preparation of individual action plans based on cross-disciplinary assessment and guidance. Students linked to pathways of interest and provided a range of support services experience success.
- ***Responsiveness and Innovation.*** Strategic innovation ensures Adult Education remains responsive to student and community needs. Strategies that facilitate and accelerate student learning include: distance and online learning, work-based training, entrepreneurial opportunities, team teaching, dual enrollment mechanisms, and linkage to “career ladders.” Targeted initiatives and strategic partnerships address critical, statewide issues as they emerge.
- ***Evidenced-Based Continuous Improvement.*** Using research, programmatic data, and assessment strengthens service delivery and practice. Regular input from students, partners, the K–12 and community college systems, local communities, and employers, supports Adult Education in continuous improvement of its services and outcomes.

# BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION

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The blueprint is divided into seven components. Three components comprise the system alignment of Adult Education and three address the essential components of quality practice. These six wrap around the seventh component, the ACET centers, as the portal for service delivery.

**Figure 6. Blueprint components as a system**



As presented below, the first component — Collaborative Leadership — outlines the need for collaboration at the state level among stakeholder organizations, including the community colleges, the workforce system, and other federal and state programs, which is critical to meeting statewide priorities. The second component describes the ACET centers, a proposed new delivery system at the heart of the plan. The next two components — Transitional Services, and Curriculum and Instruction — describe the core operations of the ACET centers in greater depth. Professional Development describes the support that practitioners will receive in implementing new practices. The last two components — Data and Accountability, and Funding — describe the systemic infrastructure which, together with Collaborative Leadership, will drive and support high-quality service delivery and practice.

The presentation of each component in the Blueprint is structured to address: *strengths* of the current Adult Education program and services; *needs and challenges* presented by the current conditions and future demands; and the *strategic response* outlining the directions and approaches to be employed in meeting those challenges with specific *recommended actions*.

The concepts of the Blueprint will be refined and adapted through a systematic, transparent, and inclusive process. The CDE will convene technical working groups to develop implementation strategies that fulfill the vision of the plan.

## **1: Collaborative Leadership**

*Work with state-level partners to establish a common vision and develop coordinated processes to provide an integrated service delivery system to California’s adult students that will enable Adult Education to fulfill its mission of advancing California’s economic, workforce development, and societal goals.*

Adult Education is uniquely positioned within the CDE to serve the great diversity of adult learners in California. But the need is so great, and the challenges so complex, that it can only fulfill this role and meet its goals in partnership with other educational providers. A concerted, collaborative effort is necessary. State-level collaborations will lay the foundation for expanding and deepening local partnerships to provide an integrated service delivery system to California’s adult students.

### **Strengths**

The Adult Education system has a 155-year history of providing academic and career education in California. With its unique focus on teaching adult learners which other systems cannot effectively reach, Adult Education has become a nationally recognized leader in adult learning theory and practice. This system is one of the largest providers of education in California, serving over 1.2 million students per year through its state and federally funded programs and 350,000 adult students in non-state-funded courses.

Adult Education serves the many students who may not be ready for college-level work or have “aged out” or failed to benefit from secondary education. It provides unique programs for students with an emphasis on readiness for both postsecondary education and employment. Adult Education links underemployed adults to job skills and employment, bridges culture and language barriers by serving non-English speakers and preparing them for citizenship, moves adults with disabilities to greater independence, and helps incarcerated adults transition to their communities. Adult Education programs are specifically designed with the flexibility to serve its great diversity of students, many of whom face a wide range of challenges that have not been addressed successfully in other settings. Its services are easily accessible to all of these students, with classes offered in local community facilities or online, and programs sequenced to meet the individuals’ learning needs.

The CDE’s Adult Education program is uniquely positioned as a bridge between the CDE K–12 system and postsecondary education. Within the K–12 system, Adult Education plays an instrumental role in supporting high school students who may need extra time to master critical skills, need further preparation for the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), or need to recover credits in order to graduate. As a bridge to the community college system, local adult education programs coordinate with community colleges to prepare students for college-level work. Adult education providers offer rigorous and contextualized curriculum, as well as a variety of services to ensure that students transition successfully to postsecondary education.

Adult Education supports the CDE K–12 system in ensuring that the parents of K–12 students have the basic academic skills and access to the resources needed to support their children’s education and development. Not only do Adult Education classes provide needed skills directly, local programs also

have robust partnerships with child welfare programs and community-based organizations including Head Start and the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program (Even Start), a federally funded program administered by the CDE. Even Start plans and coordinates services to help parents gain the skills needed to become full partners in the education of their young children.<sup>47</sup> Research has shown that when parents are involved in their children's education, students are more likely to attend school regularly, earn higher grades and test scores, and graduate from high school and go on to college.

To fulfill its mission, Adult Education coordinates with a diverse set of partners. In addition to coordinating with the K–12 system and the California Community College Chancellor's Office, Adult Education coordinates with the California Library system, jail education, state workforce and economic development agencies such as the California Workforce Investment Board, the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Department of Social Services, and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Adult Education also participates in workforce development initiatives such as the "California Education, Diversity, and Growth in the Economy" or EDGE campaign. The system's distinctive strengths and partnerships support its unique role within the larger network of California's educational systems.

### **Needs and Challenges**

Coordinated efforts require high-level communication and capacity at the state level to ensure effective, non-duplicative, and articulated services. Of particular importance is the relationship between the adult school system and community colleges, where there is a need for greater alignment and coordination across the state and shared accountability for student progress and success. The educational systems are not currently rewarded for coordination or leveraging of resources. State education policy does not facilitate the kinds of strategies that would foster student transitions from one system to another, such as dual enrollment and standardized articulation agreements.

While state-level leadership and partnerships are recognized as critical, fragmentation and mission differentiation have made coordination difficult. Despite the similarity in their goals, the CDE's Adult Education and the community colleges' basic skills programs report to different boards, and there is no formal cross-segmental communication mechanism between the two as exists in career technical education (CTE) through the Joint Advisory Committee on CTE. As a result, the administrators and faculty of each system operate under differing teacher preparation and credentialing requirements, use unique standards, curricula, and assessments, and have separate reporting and accountability requirements.

The lack of coordinated partnerships at the state level necessitates the development of independent partnerships at the local level. Without the support of state-level policy, these partnerships can be difficult to establish and may require unnecessary effort. Currently, the establishment of articulation agreements between adult schools and community colleges must be developed by each local adult school and each community college for each course. A state-level policy on articulation agreements could expedite the process and foster clear pathways for students to transition from one system to the other. Increased state-level collaborations pave the way for more systematic collaboration among programs at the local level.

## Strategic Response

Working with state-level partners to establish a common vision and coordinated processes would enable Adult Education to fulfill its mission of advancing California’s economic, workforce development, and societal goals and enable the state to maximize its return on investment in adult education. Education providers, workforce and business organizations, social service agencies, and groups serving specific constituencies are all critical partners for Adult Education.

Strengthened state-level collaborations would lay the groundwork for more systematic collaboration at the local level. The CDE Adult Education Office (AEO) would collaborate within the CDE to strengthen services to high school students and parents of K–12 students. It would work with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) to support student success by establishing and strengthening policies and guidelines that will remove barriers and streamline access to both systems. Finally, Adult Education would work with other state agencies to ensure that its most vulnerable students receive the services needed to succeed in their educational and career pursuits.

**Figure 7. State-level collaborations and partnerships**



## Recommended Actions

- 1.1 Identify or create a state level coordinating council.** Work with partners and a technical working group to create a state level coordinating council to facilitate coordination of policies and service delivery across segments and sectors in order to more effectively transition adults to further education and careers, thereby supporting the state’s economic development. Include representation from all adult education agencies, secondary education, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office, the California Workforce Investment Board (WIB), the Employment Development Department, business and industry associations, labor organizations, the California Chamber of Commerce, state social service agencies, and other key partners.

- 1.2 Establish policies within the CDE and the K–12 system that promote partnerships and leverage existing resources and capacity.** Develop policy guidelines for facilitating a statewide collaboration that aligns curriculum (in both academic and career technical disciplines), and provides the K–12 system a framework to address the educational needs of fifth-year seniors and students needing credit recovery. Facilitate collaboration within the CDE and with other agencies to address the educational needs of parents of K–12 students and to provide access to needed support services, thus enabling them to support the academic success of their children.
- 1.3 Establish policies to facilitate collaboration with the community colleges for coordinated service delivery.** Establish statewide policies that encourage and enable effective partnerships between Adult Education and community colleges and provide efficiencies in serving the varying educational needs of adults. Develop guidelines and incentives for coordination or integration of services, as appropriate, in all areas of service delivery. Remove the disincentives for students to access both systems simultaneously.
- 1.4 Collaborate with workforce entities and economic development systems to facilitate students’ transitions to employment.** Strengthen state-level relationships to promote student transitions between Adult Education and employment or further training. Address data sharing with the EDD and coordination with the California Workforce Investment Board. Explore policies to promote co-location of services with One Stops. Collaborate with organizations such as the California Commission for Economic Development, the California Chamber of Commerce, statewide industry associations, and labor organizations to encourage employers to provide work-based learning opportunities and worksite training programs. In coordination with workforce agencies and the community colleges, work with these organizations to help clarify and define the necessary basic skills and training required in high-demand industries throughout the state.
- 1.5 Establish formal agreements with social service agencies to ensure student persistence and success.** Establish agreements or memoranda of understanding to formalize collaborations and mutual accountability with social service agencies. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Developmental Services, Aging, and Rehabilitation, Alcohol and Drug Programs, CalWORKs, and other programs can support educational success by removing barriers to learning. Programs focused on drug and alcohol abuse are also necessary to enable learning. In turn, Adult Education provides the educational services that enable all of these agencies to move adults to greater self-sufficiency.
- 1.6 Enhance coordination with jail education programs to promote students’ success.** Establish a formal process with jail educators and county sheriff departments addressing the broad spectrum of issues surrounding the education of incarcerated adults. Identify and implement strategies to improve jail education by aligning and forming partnerships with outside agencies to provide better access to education programs. Align jail education programs with Adult Education programs in communities to extend the educational gains achieved in jail education through and beyond the re-entry process, thus enhancing opportunities for gainful employment and reducing recidivism rates. Explore ways to introduce computer-based instruction in jails that can be continued during and after re-entry.

## **2: Academic and Career Education Transition Centers**

*Expand and strengthen existing Adult Education schools as the sustainable foundation for the establishment of ACET centers. Networking and collaboration would enable Adult Education schools and programs to deliver adult education services more efficiently and effectively, supporting the state's economic development as well as student needs. A more integrated delivery system would facilitate alignment and coordination of services to provide college and career readiness programs to students, creating pathways to further education and gainful employment.*

The successful transition of students to postsecondary education and training is a statewide priority for the California Adult Education program. This priority is in sync with the federal focus expressed by the Obama administration to provide Americans of all ages an opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to compete for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs. The ACET center model draws on regional partnerships that promote aligning programs with other educational providers to meet the needs of business and industry and produce a greater return on investment for the state.

### **Strengths**

Adult Education occupies a unique position as the system that bridges high school, community college, and work, employing innovative, learner-centered strategies that support students' success. With its distinctive competence as experts in adult learning, assessment, and instruction, Adult Education plays a critical role in supporting California's economic and educational success. Adult Education exemplifies innovation and best practices in its instruction and service delivery. With strong statewide coordinating structures, including state leadership and robust technology-assisted professional networks, and a track record of rapid response to shifts in state and federal policies, Adult Education adapts quickly to changing demands in its service delivery.

Presently, the Adult Education program is delivered through multiple providers that collaborate with numerous partner organizations. Through its WIA, Title II funded programs, Adult Education connects adult schools with high schools, community colleges, workforce development agencies, libraries, and community-based organizations.<sup>48</sup> In addition, many Adult Education programs receive Carl D. Perkins funding and work closely with regional occupational centers and programs (ROCPs) to provide CTE. As mandated partners in the One Stop workforce development system, Adult Education programs collaborate extensively with One Stop partners. To ensure students have the support services needed to succeed, Adult Education programs also collaborate with a number of social service agencies and work with agencies such as California Department of Developmental Services Regional Centers to serve adults with special needs.

Many adult schools, especially those that offer CTE, work closely with the community college districts. Articulation agreements ensure that students can seamlessly transition from one level of CTE to the next. For its Adult Basic Education (ABE) students, Adult Education has formed a link with the Career Ladders Project of the California Community Colleges to better align programs and to leverage resources. Some Adult Education programs are also partners within the "community collaborative" supported by Senate Bills 70 and 1133 (SB 70/SB 1133), the Governor's Career Technical Education Pathways Initiative. The initiative seeks to create seamless pathways that coordinate CTE programs across K-12, ROCPs,

community colleges, and four-year institutions, utilizing such strategies as career exploration and model articulation agreements.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction recently completed a report for the California legislature, pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 2648, entitled *Multiple Pathways to Student Success*. The report outlines opportunities for expanding the system of career pathways for high school students and linking them to a wide range of postsecondary education options. These pathways encompass college preparatory academics, rigorous career technical courses, and work-based learning. The report further identified necessary student services including academic support, career guidance, tutoring, assistance with textbook purchases, and case management. Adult Education is specifically highlighted in the report as a vehicle for ensuring that high school students who need extra time have the opportunity to complete their pathway programs through Adult Education. Ensuring that students receive these services requires careful coordination among partner organizations. The ACET centers will be structured and funded to intentionally incorporate these elements.

### **Needs and Challenges**

The current economic climate, coupled with state and national educational priorities, calls for an immediate response from all adult education providers to bring their capacity to bear in preparing California's adults for postsecondary education and career success. Collaboration across educational segments can reduce duplication and efficiently enhance service delivery while moving learners to higher levels of educational attainment and certifications.<sup>49</sup> In addition, dual enrollment strategies and other "blended models" are gaining currency<sup>50,51,52,53</sup> as a means to accelerate learning, enhance student motivation, and facilitate the attainment of student outcomes. Programs that allow students the opportunity to earn portable college credits and progress toward postsecondary credentials even as they address their basic skills are more likely to retain students and enable more rapid progress toward certificates and degrees. Growing evidence suggests that students who simultaneously enroll in credit-bearing college classes along with relevant, well-structured basic skills interventions do better than those in traditional basic skills classes alone.<sup>54</sup>

The dual enrollment model of accelerated and compressed learning also promotes permeability of boundaries between Adult Education and the community colleges and allows for authentic participation in community college life. Evidence suggests that individuals do better when they experience themselves as "real" college students and/or see themselves making real progress toward an occupational or other important goal.<sup>55</sup>

Successful programs also contextualize learning, often by career themes, linking academic skills to employability and, when possible, to career pathways.<sup>56</sup> These programs work closely with the employer community to bring relevance to curriculum and provide students with work-based learning and other worksite training opportunities that enable students to see how basic skills are used in the "real world."

California's Career Ladders project and other researchers<sup>57</sup> cite support services as critical to student retention. In addition to financial aid, support services should include academic and career guidance, counseling services, and job placement, as well as case management, transportation, child care, mental health services, and support for students with disabilities.

Given limited advising and planning services, students are required to navigate programs on their own to learn about the skills required or the labor market in their areas of career interest. Finally, while many programs do an excellent job of helping students learn English and attain a high school diploma or GED, they rarely have the fiscal and human resources to assist students to move beyond the adult schools to either community college or employment.

### **Strategic Response**

Expanding, strengthening, and networking existing adult schools and programs into ACET centers would enable Adult Education to leverage resources and more efficiently and effectively deliver services to local residents in collaboration with regional partners. The ACET centers can offer integrated service delivery in coordination with K–12, the community colleges as well as other educational and workforce development partners, the employer community, and social service agencies. They can thereby provide a “portal to opportunity” with operational components such as comprehensive intake and assessment services, contextualized learning, support services, and transition services.

In the ACET model, one or more adult schools will work together and with other educational and support providers to build students’ educational competencies and ensure their transition to opportunities in the workforce or postsecondary education. ACET centers would be built on a set of agreements linking adult schools, ROCPs, community colleges, libraries, economic and workforce development agencies, community-based organizations, and other support service partners to accelerate students’ skill attainment and ensure their success. Through collaborative planning processes, adult schools and their partners will define shared strategic approaches to meet the needs within their common geographic service areas.

The ACET model would promote college and career readiness for all of its students, including those completing high school, those seeking basic skills needed to pursue an area of career interest and for civic participation, or those currently in the workforce needing to upgrade their basic skills in order to succeed or advance at work. The purpose of each center would be to provide comprehensive assessment and planning services; contextualized instruction; support and referrals to remove barriers to educational attainment; and linkages to services that place every student on a path to further education and employment.

The ACET centers can facilitate alignment of programs, leveraging of resources, accelerated learning, and seamless transitions. Alignment with social service organizations can provide students access to needed support services. Dual-enrollment opportunities and team teaching with community colleges would allow students who need some remediation to enroll simultaneously in credit courses, thus accelerating their progress and promoting persistence. Co-location of services with workforce development agencies, community-based organizations, and other educational providers would facilitate access and utilization of services. Access to current technology can support students in developing 21<sup>st</sup> century information and communication skills. Additionally, vertical alignment strategies such as course and program articulation agreements and coordination of assessments would provide students with clear pathways to more advanced community college programs and the workforce.

The ACET centers would collaborate with partners within identified regions or service areas. Partners may include, for example, community colleges, library literacy programs, county economic development

agencies, labor organizations, chambers of commerce, and departments of health and developmental services. Regional collaboration and coordination will ensure local needs are met through an equitable distribution of resources, support, and services. The CDE will work with a technical working group with input from both Adult Education practitioners and external partners to optimize the ACET center model and develop a regional implementation strategy.

## **Recommended Actions**

### **2.1 Expand, strengthen, and network adult schools to establish Academic and Career Education Transition centers (ACET centers) as a new service delivery model for Adult Education.**

Develop a service delivery model built on the existing adult school infrastructure with a focus on fulfilling the mission of Adult Education as presented in this strategic plan. Services will include intake and assessment, development of individualized student action plans, academic and contextualized instruction, referrals to other support services, and transition services leading to postsecondary education and the workforce. Drawing on unique partnerships and technological resources, each center may be configured differently in order to best meet local needs and leverage resources but will conform to the following parameters:

- *Provide services based on identified regional educational and workforce preparation needs, focusing on foundational literacy and workforce readiness skills.* Serve those in greatest need based on English literacy, level of educational attainment, and economic indicators. Encourage utilization of labor market data to inform student enrollment in career pathway programs.
- *Leverage resources across systems.* Develop and build on existing agreements to leverage and coordinate resources, including personnel, facilities, technology, and data, within their service area or region. Align services among adult schools, with community colleges, and with other adult education providers, Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), regional CTE providers, and economic development entities. Promote co-location and joint use of facilities with partners to ensure adequate assessment, advising and support services, contextualization of instruction, and transition services.
- *Ensure permeable boundaries and seamless transitions.* Establish policies and procedures enabling students to move from high schools to ACET centers, as needed, and between ACET centers and community colleges or other training programs. Co-location, use of the same or coordinated assessments, and dual or concurrent enrollment between and among all potential educational partners, will promote access and seamless transitions.
- *Serve sparsely populated areas and mobile populations.* Given that some adult learners may not be able to readily access or complete courses or programs of study at a single location, develop strategies to enhance services and provide options such as mobile computer labs to serve rural and mobile populations.
- *Address specialized needs.* Develop mechanisms to serve specialized populations such as emancipated foster youth, ex-offenders, and adults with disabilities within core educational services.
- *Maintain flexibility.* Create organizational structures and procedures that can adapt to change quickly and provide services to address high-priority needs.

**2.2 Identify “regions” for collaborative service delivery that will enable equitable access to services.** Undertake a systematic process to identify geographic areas that support collaboration among ACET centers and their partners in order to ensure students’ equitable access to the full range of needed services. These areas, or “regions,” would be identified on the basis of geographic and jurisdictional considerations, shared educational need, demographic factors, economic development activity, and the location of existing adult schools, partner agencies, and resources. The process is to be carried out with the guidance and expertise of a technical working group, including both external experts and Adult Education practitioners. In identifying the regions, the technical working group will consider the following:

- *Existing organizational roles and relationships.* Regions will align as appropriate with existing regions and service areas, enabling ACET centers to take advantage of existing partnerships and partners’ organizational strengths. For example, community colleges, adult schools, and county offices of education already jointly conduct and administer programs; these partnerships would be strengthened through a regional approach.
- *Support for workforce and economic development.* Regions will align with areas of interdependent economic activity and relevant support structures, such as the local WIBs or regional economic development organizations such as the East Bay Economic Development Alliance or the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley.
- *Opportunities for collaboration.* Regions will aggregate both the educational need and the resources to support consistent delivery of accessible, high-quality programs and services. Opportunities for collaboration should be considered with organizations such as the state’s 21 Regional Centers, which serve the needs of adults with developmental disabilities and their families.
- *Leveraging of technology resources within the regions.* Expanded access to service requires expanded use of technology. The availability of technological resources must therefore also be considered.

**2.3 Formalize collaboration within service areas.** Require ACET centers to coordinate resources and service delivery among educational providers, workforce development organizations, economic development organizations, and other service providers. A coordinated approach will facilitate:

- Regionwide engagement of employers to inform program development based on emerging workforce needs and the required skill sets.
- Dialogue among partners to ensure that services are in place to support student persistence and transition to further education and employment.
- Capacity building and regionwide cross-segmental professional development, business-education exchanges, and ongoing learning among partners.
- Cross-segmental data collection and data-driven decisions about the direction of Adult Education in each region.

**2.4 Link ACET centers to pathway initiatives.** Pathways link academics with career themes and technical content, making the learning of basic skills relevant and engaging. They thereby support

student persistence and program completion while providing industry with a prepared workforce. To provide students access to these benefits and facilitate continuity of programming across segments, Adult Education should link its efforts to pathway strategies being developed at both the K–12 level and community colleges in partnership with many industry groups. Linking ACET centers to pathway initiatives would:

- *Integrate Adult Education into existing career pathways.* Develop statewide policies and incentives to link Adult Education to the career technical education (CTE) 15 industry sectors and their pathways, Perkins-funded programs of study, SB 70/SB 1133 – the Governor’s CTE Initiative, and the state’s “multiple pathways”/Linked Learning initiative.
- *Support pathway development within high schools.* Build upon existing relationships to ensure that students in high school career pathways can draw on Adult Education to complete their programs, recover credits, obtain their high school diplomas, and transition to further education or employment.
- *Support new pathway development from Adult Education to community colleges in targeted industries.* Develop new pathways from adult schools to community college programs, employing strategies such as articulation or transition agreements, alignment of courses and assessments, concurrent enrollment, and joint staffing.

### **3: Transition Services**

*Provide intake, planning, support, and transition services to link students to pathways and promote successful transitions to postsecondary education and employment.*

A number of services are critical to ensuring students successfully make these transitions to further education and employment. These include: a) assessment, guidance, and the development of action plans; b) tutoring, career exploration, and childcare; and c) transition and job development services to ensure that students matriculate and have the best opportunity to succeed in community college, other training programs, or the workplace. The ACET centers will provide a comprehensive delivery model that will facilitate alignment of transition resources and services.

#### **Strengths**

Recognizing the challenges faced by their widely diverse student population, Adult Education offers directly or through partnerships a wide range of services beyond the core classroom instruction. Services may include tutoring, child care, access to transportation, and linking students to outside social services and job placement agencies.

To further support transition to postsecondary education and employment, the CDE AEO successfully applied to participate in the national “Policy to Performance (P2P) Initiative.” This initiative, recently launched by the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) Office of Vocational and Adult Education, is supporting eight states in their efforts to “transition adults to opportunity.” In alignment with the broad goals of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the President’s American Graduation

Initiative, the initiative is designed to enhance and support college and career readiness for low-skilled adults through increased and quality access to training and learning opportunities. P2P will identify and support effective transition practices that will inform the development of the ACET centers and statewide educational policy.

### **Needs and Challenges**

Adult Education students have a wide range of needs that must be addressed if they are to succeed academically and in the workforce. For many students, Adult Education represents a critical opportunity to recover credits or build skills that they did not obtain in other settings. Students come to Adult Education with multiple goals and skill levels. Entering students can be unclear about their own talents and interests and often do not know what skills are needed in the workplace, what kinds of jobs are available in their communities, or how to transition to further education or employment. Cross-disciplinary and comprehensive assessment services and career guidance are therefore needed to link students to the courses that will put them on a pathway to further education, gainful employment, and long-term success.

Research has shown that other support services are also necessary.<sup>58</sup> Support services provided over the course of the students' enrollment promote persistence and success in learning, while transition services ensure that students connect successfully to further educational and employment opportunities once they are ready to move on. Such targeted transition services as exposure to college campuses and assistance with financial aid have been shown to facilitate matriculation and success in community college.<sup>59</sup> Students also benefit from exposure to the workplace and basic workplace skills through experiences such as internships. In addition, in order to enter and succeed in employment, many students need assistance with resumes, clothing, child care, and transportation. Through co-location and other forms of collaboration, Adult Education can help students access these services.

Currently, Adult Education faces a number of challenges in providing comprehensive assessment and support services. Funding restrictions have inhibited the full staffing of these functions, and teachers lack the resources or time to administer academic and career assessments, or to provide career planning services. Even though Adult Education provides some support services, the kinds of wraparound or case management services that many students need are limited. Funding and accountability systems tend to encourage insular practices rather than partnerships with other educational providers.

### **Strategic Response**

Comprehensive assessments and career and educational advising are critical to placing students on paths that will lead to long-term educational and career success. Equally important are ongoing support services and transition services to ensure that students meet their goals. The ACET centers will provide multiple services focused on transitioning adults into further education and/or employment. Essential transition services include career management skills, academic and workplace readiness, and job placement services.

Transition staff at an ACET center would provide comprehensive, cross-disciplinary assessment and planning services to help students clarify their goals, guide them to appropriate course selections, and document their ongoing progress. The transition staff would identify a learner's barriers to educational

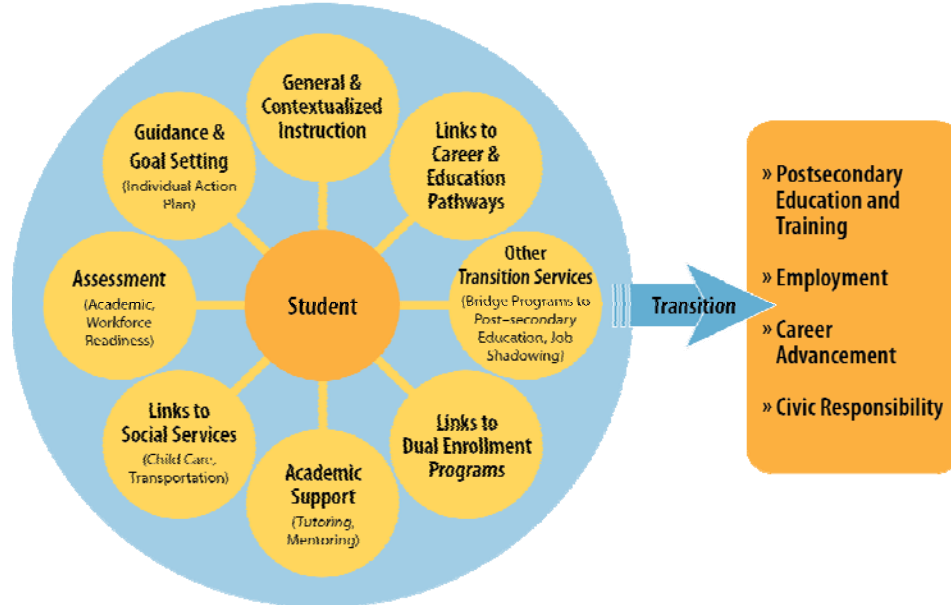
and workforce success and provide referrals for support services. Transition staff would also work with partners in community colleges, One Stop career centers, and other agencies to implement critical “bridge programs” to postsecondary education and employment. Bridge programs provide college tours, orientation to financial aid and campus student services, job shadows and internships, and job-seeking services. Staff would promote continuity of services by ensuring that individual action plans and electronic portfolios move with the students to the next level of education.

To ensure that students with diverse learning needs and students with disabilities can effectively access the curriculum, integrating support services and innovations directly into coursework is critical. Integrated support services include necessary accommodations, mentors in classrooms, online tutoring opportunities, project-based approaches to teaching and learning, portable electronic portfolios documenting skills and achievements, and job shadowing and internship opportunities connected to curriculum. Some of these strategies are particularly important when working with younger adults who may be completing their high school diplomas with little sense as to the purpose of their education or the next steps after attaining the diploma. These strategies will require targeted professional development for instructors.

To be successful in their educational and career pursuits, some students may also need support with childcare, transportation, financial aid, and mental, behavioral, and physical health issues. These can be addressed through systematic collaborations with partner agencies.

Figure 8 on the following page represents the ACET center services that prepare students to successfully transition to postsecondary education and training, employment, career advancement, and civic responsibility.

**Figure 8. Academic and career education transition services**



## Recommended Actions

- 3.1 Develop and provide integrated, comprehensive intake, planning, and transition services within the ACET center system.** Develop an integrated, comprehensive service delivery system, including: a) assessment of students’ academic skills using cross-disciplinary assessment and identification of career and employment interests and goals; b) identification and brokering of educational support services needed to motivate students to persist and facilitate learning, including necessary accommodations, mentors, online tutoring, and remediation; and c) transition services to further education and employment through dual enrollment programs with community colleges, connection of students to financial aid services, and links to job shadowing opportunities, internships, and job development services.
- 3.2 Ensure student success with the assistance of transition specialists.** Identify the role of “transition specialists” within ACET centers to address barriers to success and facilitate seamless transitions for students. Specialists would provide guidance to students in designing and developing individual action plans and link students to programs, available career pathways, and dual enrollment opportunities, as appropriate. To ensure successful transitions to further education and employment, specialists will link students to community college programs and One Stop career centers and help students access job shadowing opportunities, internships, and job development services. Transition specialists would also link students to partner agencies such as community-based organizations and social service agencies.
- 3.3 Support student success by removing barriers through collaboration with partner agencies.** Partner with social services and community agencies to address barriers to success and provide students support with issues such as transportation, child care, mental or physical limitations, or other challenges to their success. Services should follow students to the next level of education or employment to ensure ongoing success.

## 4: Curriculum and Instruction

*Expand the use of assessment, curricula, and instructional practices that will prepare students for further education and careers.*

High-quality instruction, supported by research-based curriculum, is at the heart of the services provided by Adult Education. Adult Education teachers promote updated instructional resources and continuous improvement in instructional strategies. Through the ACET center model, teachers throughout the state would have access to the curricula and teaching methodologies that are in direct support of students' attainment of basic skills, their successful transition to postsecondary education and the workforce, and their advancement from entry-level to family-sustaining employment.

### **Strengths**

The California Adult Education system and teachers are nationally recognized leaders in curriculum development, instruction, and assessment. Focus on research-based curriculum, evidenced-based instruction, and performance-based assessment continues to guide new program development and expand delivery of content through multiple modalities.

When the California K–12 public school system adopted new content standards and graduation requirements, including passage of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE), Adult Education also adopted these requirements. Adoption of these standards and requirements enables high school students who “age out” of the K–12 system to pass the CAHSEE and complete a high school diploma program in Adult Education and continue to postsecondary education or career opportunities.

To address basic literacy needs, California was one of six states selected by Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) in 2004 to pilot “Student Achievement in Reading” (STAR). The initiative piloted “best practice” reading strategies for ABE students, identified as adults reading below the eighth grade level. In 2008, Adult Education launched its own ABE initiative, offering technical assistance, resources, and professional development to teachers throughout the state.

Since 2002, Adult Education administrators and teachers have developed 47 Civic Participation language and literacy objectives and additional assessments for the English Literacy/Civics (EL Civics) program. Activities such as health screening camps, visits to city council meetings, trips to obtain library cards, workshops on immigrants' rights, and U.S. workplace expectations are some of the more common courses offered.

California Adult Education administrators and teachers have also been leaders in the expansion of distance and online learning strategies. In 2008, the CDE supported the development of “USA Learns,” a web-based curriculum to support non-English speakers who want to improve their English language skills. Educational agencies, teachers, and businesses worldwide have adopted the site for use in classrooms and the workplace. A number of states have approved the curriculum for use in their federally funded distance education programs.

Finally, California has been a leader nationally in using assessment to drive instruction and accountability. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), developed in California, is approved by the ED for assessing adult basic reading, math, listening, writing, and speaking skills within a functional context. The assessment system measures student gains in Adult Basic and Secondary Education, English as a Second Language, and Civic Participation. CASAS also provides assessments of workplace competencies. In addition to learning gains, the system measures the following core performance outcomes: get a job, retain a job, transition to postsecondary education or training, and attainment of a high school diploma or the GED High School Equivalency Certificate.

## **Needs and Challenges**

Emerging industries will require new curricula and instructional strategies to support the knowledge and skills necessary for employment. Programs for adults should be linked to available careers and opportunities in the labor market to both motivate learning and ensure that students can transition to careers. Research has shown that contextualized curriculum and instruction — connecting basic skills to students’ interests — is highly effective in engaging students and promoting persistence. Linking basic skills to career interests and pathways facilitates efficient and effective processes to move students to further education and employment.

Contextualizing curriculum and instruction allows students to meet multiple goals simultaneously, such as attaining basic skills and industry certifications. Contextualized programs integrating basic academics and career and workplace preparation will require teachers to revise curricula, collaborate extensively with their colleagues, and teach in new ways. Integrating students of diverse learning levels into contextualized classes will require teachers to be highly skilled in using differentiated approaches to instruction and the technology that supports these approaches. Implementation of contextualized curricula also requires collaboration between community colleges and Adult Education to enable students to progress seamlessly through a continuum of courses.

Educational technology makes individualized instruction accessible for all learners. Adult learners have competing claims on their time and can benefit greatly from access to online instruction and distance learning. Web-based instruction is important for serving students in rural areas, students not available during times when classes are offered, and mobile students. Technological tools are needed to address the development of a broader set of basic skills to assist with differentiation of instruction as well as to further expand access. Instructional models include television broadcasts of interactive classes, home video courses with instructor facilitation, and delivery to a variety of mobile devices. These strategies require a shift in practice. To make the shift, teachers, administrators, and other staff will need access to updated materials, professional development, technical assistance, and other technological resources.

## Strategic Response

Alignment of curriculum and instruction with the mission of transitioning students to postsecondary education and the workforce is necessary to promote effective teaching and learning and address the need for a more highly educated workforce. Integrated curriculum that couples basic academics and English literacy with career and workplace preparation is a proven model that successfully engages learners and enhances persistence. Integrated curriculum assists learners in meeting multiple goals simultaneously and facilitates efficient transitions to further education, training, and employment.

Contextualization and curriculum integration can also be used as a strategy to infuse additional relevant content into basic skills classes. Family literacy, parenting, financial literacy, other life skills, and issues related to civic engagement make basic skills classes more engaging for students while delivering important content. Contextualized instruction can also be more accessible, accelerated, and individualized through expanded use of online tools and distance learning strategies.

## Recommended Actions

- 4.1 Align curriculum, instruction, and assessments to K-12, postsecondary education, and the workplace.** Align Adult Education curriculum and instruction with those of the K–12 and community college systems, and with workforce and industry standards and certifications, to create a seamless system for educating adults. Work closely with community colleges to expand the use of common assessments to support appropriate student placement and seamless transitions.
- 4.2 Support multiple instructional strategies.** Implement instructional strategies, including contextualized and differentiated instruction, that accelerate learning, facilitate multiple goals, and address the widely diverse needs and abilities of adult learners. Best practice instructional methodologies must accommodate diverse cultural, generational, and ability levels.
- 4.3 Integrate digital literacy into instruction.** Include digital literacy and online learning and communication strategies in all curricula in order to provide learners with the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills needed for success at work and in postsecondary education.
- 4.4 Increase instructional capacity through online instruction.** Make current web-based instruction available to more adult learners by enhancing or creating common instructional and software tools for basic skills students and through the sharing of technology with the community colleges. Expand learning through online and blended instructional modalities, combining classroom and distance learning to facilitate student access to services.

## 5: Professional Development

*Align professional development and technical assistance to the mission of supporting students' preparation for postsecondary education, careers, and civic responsibility.*

Professional development is the central strategy for ensuring that teachers, administrators, and support staff have the skills and capacity to effectively serve students. The AEO has a long-standing commitment to providing high-quality, research-based professional development for California's adult educators. To support the ACET centers, Adult Education will target its professional development efforts to prepare teachers and administrators for transitioning students to postsecondary education and careers.

### Strengths

The ED, OVAE, continues to acknowledge the high quality of California Adult Education teaching standards, especially noting that Adult Education teachers hold a valid California teaching credential. This requirement distinguishes California's Adult Education at the national level and provides a solid foundation for the innovative and ongoing professional development delivered through the AEO.

Recognizing the importance of high-quality administration and instruction, the CDE's AEO prioritizes professional development. Through the WIA, Title II grant, the CDE allocates funds for three, multi-million dollar contracts that support teachers and administrators in the areas of curriculum and instruction, technology integration, and assessment and accountability. Currently, the three funded projects are the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO), the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN), and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (formerly the California Adult Student Assessment System).

CALPRO is a comprehensive professional development system providing multi-modal direct professional development and technical assistance that includes intensive, multi-session institutes, regional workshops, and an extensive "alternative delivery system" that utilizes web applications to offer an array of synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences. Emphasizing nationally recognized best practices, the Adult Education professional development system enables teachers to access virtual "workrooms," research-based content, standards-based curricula, and instructional best practices. Teachers can also engage in peer review and mentoring by participating in e-Professional Learning Communities. Through CALPRO, and in collaboration with the National Institute for Literacy, Adult Education also offers a training program entitled *Learning to Achieve: A Research Based Training on Learning to Serve Adults with Learning Disabilities*.

Through OTAN, Adult Education builds instructional capacity by increasing the use of technology in the classroom and virtually. OTAN's Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC) is a peer-mentoring initiative that develops professionals committed to leading the implementation of effective technology integration at their school sites. Additionally, OTAN provides resources and training for distance learning programs, online course development, and extensive research and reference tools for teachers.

Through CASAS, professional development focuses on accountability and assessment. Annual training is required to ensure agencies are up to date on the latest information for tracking student progress and

incorporating any changes within the federal WIA, Title II grant. CASAS also trains administrators and agency personnel to ensure that data are collected and assessments are administered properly, and that results are used to improve programs. Training is delivered locally and online.

In June 2010, California was one of 12 states selected by OVAE to participate in the initiative, Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL) Center. This project is designed to improve the quality of adult education teaching in Adult Basic Education (ABE), with an emphasis on evidence-based practices in writing instruction. The initiative runs through the 2011–12 academic year.

## **Needs and Challenges**

Program designs the quality of curriculum and instruction, and access to support services are central to achieving student outcomes. Integrating a contextualized delivery model, differentiated instruction, technology integration, and alignment of assessments across programs is complex and requires the vigilant renewal of strategies that can only be achieved by a strong professional development program. Effective professional development includes opportunities for continuous improvement and the application of knowledge gained. It also requires diligent and systematic sharing of “best practices” within the ACET centers and across the regions statewide.

Professional development also supports teachers and other personnel that will assist students in transitioning to postsecondary education and career opportunities. The ACET centers will need to develop and expand the role of specialized staff with responsibilities for intake, assessment, partnership building, and brokering of support and job placement services.

Maintaining experienced staff with the distinctive competencies and perspectives required in Adult Education is even more challenging during a fiscal crisis. Currently, Adult Education is staffed predominately by part-time teachers working varying schedules. Uncertain times create a high rate of staff turnover which augments the already high need for ongoing professional development required to implement program innovations.

## **Strategic Response**

Transformation of adult schools and programs into ACET centers to implement a new service delivery model — encompassing expanded services and partnerships — will require professional development for all administrators, teachers, and staff. The professional development system would support the ACET centers in carrying out their mission and meeting their goals by strengthening and expanding practice in a variety of areas. These include building and sustaining collaborative partnerships; implementing comprehensive student advising and assessment; developing on-site and online learning communities; delivering instruction that supports transition to postsecondary education, training, and careers; and using data to assess student learning gains and continuously improve programs.

The CDE’s AEO will work with its Leadership Projects CALPRO, OTAN, and CASAS to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to work together in developing curriculum and practicing new teaching strategies. Through online learning communities, teachers can engage in collaborative evaluation of their efforts and generate solutions to meet their professional development needs.

## Recommended Actions

### 5.1 **Align professional development to the implementation requirements of ACET centers.**

Provide training to Adult Education practitioners to support system change. Implement activities that incorporate key principles and strategies for a more collaborative approach to the delivery of Adult Education. Utilize the Communities of Practice (CoP) methodology to network and partner administrators and teachers across systems. Provide targeted training and technical assistance to support program articulation, online programming, technology integration, and the dissemination of best practices.

### 5.2 **Establish and maintain on-site Professional Learning Communities (PLCs).** Provide technical assistance and professional development to ensure that ACET center staff has the resources and training needed to initiate and sustain PLCs based on widely recognized standards for this model.

### 5.3 **Ensure teachers receive adequate professional development.** Provide training on adult learning theory and effective practices. Provide training on cross program coordination, the integration of curricula, contextualized and differentiated instruction. Create externships to provide teachers with direct exposure to the skills needed in the workplace.

## 6: Data and Accountability

*Structure the data collection and accountability systems to focus on tracking outcomes. Upgrade data collection to inform program development.*

Accountability is a key driver in the implementation of change. Comprehensive data collection and accountability systems would enable documentation of success for both federal and state reporting and for other stakeholders.

### Strengths

In development of the CASAS system, California has been a leader nationally in the use of assessments to guide and measure learning in Adult Education. The CASAS system is used for accountability purposes as well as providing data to inform instruction. The federal WIA accountability process is modeled on the work done by California beginning in the 1980s. In 1999, California took the lead and converted its accountability system to a “performance-based accountability” model, with student learning gains and attainment of “core performance” goals as the basis for distributing federal WIA, Title II funding.

The Adult Education assessment and accountability system measures student gains in Adult Basic and Secondary Education, English as a Second Language, and Civic Participation. These measurements are critical to demonstrating student progress, especially at low skill levels. In addition they provide important diagnostic information to teachers and serve as the basis for reporting performance of the federally funded programs.

Adult Education’s accountability system also captures attainment of “core performance” goals in its federally funded programs. These include high school diplomas and GED High School Equivalency

Certificates, postsecondary education transfers, employment, and retained employment. These data are becoming increasingly vital in evaluating the impact of all Adult Education programs.

## **Needs and Challenges**

Documented return on investment to the state has been important since the creation of Adult Education. In recent years, there has been an increased focus by both the federal and state governments on the measurement of returns in the areas of employment, workforce preparation, and transitions to postsecondary education. The California State Plan for Career Technical Education, the recent CDE publication, *Multiple Pathways to Student Success*, and the Rand Corporation report on K–20 data systems,<sup>60</sup> among many other publications, have highlighted the need for longitudinal data systems or data-sharing agreements that would allow for the measurement of students’ outcomes across educational segments and into the workforce.

Despite this focus, the collection of outcome data remains challenging. These challenges are endemic to California’s entire educational system. To collect longitudinal data through grade 12, the K–12 system has developed the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement System (CALPADS) using a unique identifier for each student. However, participation in CALPADS is voluntary for adult schools and CALPADS data are not linked to community college data at this time. Further, there is no link to EDD’s workforce data given the inability of Adult Education to collect social security numbers as student identifiers.

Systems are also needed to facilitate data collection and reporting across the funding streams that support Adult Education, including state funding, WIA, Title II Carl D. Perkins, apprenticeship funding, and others. Currently, Adult Education administrators can only pull reports for one funding stream at a time, which is inefficient and renders analyses of outcomes across funding streams very difficult.

Collecting data across programs without interconnected databases or data-sharing agreements, or tracking students from Adult Education into postsecondary education or the workforce, is therefore extremely burdensome. Currently, Adult Education agencies must survey individual students to attain “core performance” data. Because the survey approach never produces over a 19 percent return rate, the data do not reflect the extensive work and successes of Adult Education.

Finally, state funding, unlike federal funding, is currently not tied to performance and therefore does not reward program effectiveness and efficiency. However, implementing measures that would tie funding to performance must be done carefully. Many students served by Adult Education face multiple barriers to success; any performance-based accountability measures must not create unintended incentives to target services to those who are “easier to serve.”

## **Strategic Response**

Adult Education needs an upgraded data system to ensure that collection and utilization of the information supports accountability and program development. The system should track core outcome data for its state-funded programs as well as its federally funded programs and should also include occupational certificates attained, measures of civic participation, and measures of readiness for transition

to further education and employment. A technical working group will assist the CDE in developing a detailed implementation plan for a new Adult Education accountability system.

In addition, as recommended in other policy studies, Adult Education would work directly with the community colleges to align its outcome measures and accountability processes in order to produce meaningful information about program results.

## **Recommended Actions**

- 6.1 Use data to ensure that ACET centers are serving students that meet established need criteria.** Collection and examination of student demographic and educational data will ensure that programs are serving the needs identified as high priority by the state.
- 6.2 Ensure Adult Education’s accountability system measures outcomes.** Enhanced accountability should track and report on a number of measures critical to evaluating outcomes. “Core performance indicators,” such as high school diplomas and GED High School Equivalency Certificates attained, postsecondary education transfers, employment, and retained employment, should be measured for agencies receiving state funding as well as for federal WIA, Title II. In addition to these core outcomes, measures should include career occupational certificates attained, and civic engagement measures achieved.
- 6.3 Integrate Adult Education into statewide longitudinal data systems.** Adult Education should be integrated into statewide systems aimed at demonstrating results over time and across segments. Data systems should communicate with each other if Adult Education is to be able to measure meaningful student outcomes.
- 6.4 Establish agreements for shared accountability and provide incentives for students’ successful transitions to community college.** Monitoring and program development mechanisms support and provide incentives for collaboration and goal attainment by all adult education providers. In such a scenario, partners in a collaborative effort can be held jointly accountable for program results. Data on students for which the providers are jointly responsible should be publicly reported to inform decision-making. Joint funding to reward successful transitions from Adult Education to community college should be considered as an option.
- 6.5 Use data for program development.** In addition to focusing on outcomes, the system should also capture data on program features and system linkages to ensure program quality and to inform analyses of outcomes for program improvement and development efforts. Shared accountability should be coupled with collaborative design of improvement strategies to be implemented by the ACET centers and their partners working together.

## **7: Funding**

*Implement a model that aligns fiscal resources with statewide need, promotes resource leveraging, and includes performance incentives.*

Adult Education receives dedicated funds from both state and federal sources. Its state funding totals approximately 600 million dollars per year — 87 percent of its total funds — and 80 million dollars in WIA, Title II federal funds. These funds would become the basic fiscal foundation for the ACET centers. The state can maximize its return on investment in services to adult learners if Adult Education collaborates with partner agencies, including community colleges, regional occupational centers and programs, libraries, and community-based organizations, and leverages resources such as Carl D. Perkins and WIA, Title I. Leveraging can also help reach the 5.3 million adults identified as needing adult education services. Such an approach will enable the ACET centers, as the hubs for services delivery and as fiscal agents, to deliver educational and transitional services efficiently and effectively.

### **Strengths**

California has benefitted from an Adult Education funding system that offers a stable and predictable funding stream to meet the documented need of adult learners. Federal funding that targets ABE, ASE, and ESL programs, also focuses support for capacity-building, professional development, and data collection. In addition, many agencies leverage Carl D. Perkins funds to offer robust CTE programs.

Since 1907, the state supported Adult Education with dedicated funding. State funding has traditionally been allocated to districts based upon “average daily attendance” (a.d.a.). One a.d.a. is measured by 525 hours of accumulated student seat time. In addition, each a.d.a. was worth a fixed dollar amount or the “revenue limit.” This revenue limit per a.d.a. has historically never exceeded 40 percent of the a.d.a. for a single enrollee in the K–12 system. Through this system, Adult Education offered annually over 140 million hours of education.

State funds support multiple programs, with approximately 78 percent of the education hours delivered in English literacy, academic subjects, and career technical education. Other programs specified in Education Code include Older Adults, Parent Education, Health and Safety, Adults with Disabilities, and Home Economics.

The federal WIA, Title II funds are granted to states based on the number of adults sixteen years and older lacking a high school diploma or equivalent and not enrolled in secondary school. Under this grant, Adult Education funds agencies based on student learning gains using a “performance-based accountability” system. Agencies with the most student learning gains receive a larger portion of the grant funds available. WIA, Title II grants are distributed to supplement ABE, ASE, ESL, and Citizenship Preparation programs in adult schools, community colleges, community-based organization, jail programs, and library literacy programs.

### **Needs and Challenges**

In the 2009 state budget, “categorical flexibility” — giving flexibility to superintendents in the use of categorical funds — gave control of Adult Education funds to superintendents to address budget shortfalls

in their K–12 districts. Therefore, categorical flexibility eliminated the dedicated funding for Adult Education as outlined in Education Code. School districts, now no longer bound by Education Code to use California state-budgeted Adult Education funds strictly for adults, have the option to close adult schools, maintain fewer programs, or reduce funding levels across programs. Some districts have maintained Adult Education at substantially reduced funding levels resulting in discontinued courses, teacher terminations, and growing waiting lists for services. With similar cutbacks at community colleges, the education doors for adults throughout the state are closing.

The a.d.a. system, pre-flexibility, provided predictable and stable funding. However, funding never addressed the strategic economic need of the state for a skilled workforce, nor did it recognize the differential costs involved in the administration and delivery of programs in such areas as career technical education. The federal program has identified major needs by focusing on ABE, ASE, and ESL, high school diploma or GED High School Equivalency Certificate, and the 3.3 million identified as “speaking English less than well.”

Adult Education is fiscally structured to generate revenue through student attendance — “seat time” — and not on student performance or the return on investment for the state. In addition, an attendance-based funding system also creates the scenario whereby students receiving educational services outside the adult school may result in less seat time. The potential loss of revenue therefore creates a disincentive to collaborate or leverage resources with other adult schools, community colleges, or other partners.

Finally, the prior funding formula, established some forty years ago, does not take into account population shifts or offer equal access to all adults in California. Some geographic areas were not included in the initial 1978 funding process establishing the Adult Education fund in the state budget nor were they added during 1990–1992, the last time districts could become a part of the Adult Education program. A revenue-shifting mechanism was not built into the funding formula; as a result, some areas have no Adult Education programs and some have unexpended resources.

## **Strategic Response**

A dedicated state funding stream is needed to serve the core educational and workforce needs of millions of undereducated and underemployed adults and provide the greatest return on investment to the state. Federal resources have always been intended as an augmentation to state resources; while they help shape policy and drive results, in a state as large and diverse as California, they cannot be the primary source for operational funding. A state investment in Adult Education will enable adults to contribute to the economic recovery and mitigate expenditures on public assistance programs and other social costs.

In light of the unbalanced allocation issues that existed prior to the current budget crisis and the ramifications of categorical flexibility, this plan suggests a new funding allocation system rather than reinstatement of the previous formula. A new “needs-based” formula for distribution of resources would target core services and ensure participation within areas not currently receiving allocations. The new formula would align to the renewed mission of Adult Education: preparing adults for college, career, and civic responsibility. To this end, it would include incentives for performance, implementation of best practices, and innovation. It would also reward collaboration and leveraging of resources to maximize efficiencies and promote the highest use of existing services, expertise, and facilities.

## Recommended Actions

**7.1 Implement a new model for more efficiently allocating funds.** Convene a technical working group and work directly with adult education providers and stakeholders to develop and adopt a new funding model. This funding model would provide a framework to incorporate both state and federal funds and reinforce the mission and principles outlined in the strategic plan. The model would align funds to need across the state using both educational and economic indicators; it would ensure equitable distribution of resources and provide for cost-effective service delivery in sparsely populated areas. The funding model would create performance incentives for bringing students to readiness for transitioning successfully to postsecondary education and careers. It would focus on distributing funds according to the need for Adult Education as defined by the need metrics below:

Need Category	Indicator
Educational Attainment	Percent of population lacking a high school diploma or GED High School Equivalency Certificate
Economic Need	Percent of population in poverty Percent of population unemployed
English Language Need	Percent of population speaking language less than well

**7.2 Promote the leveraging of funding sources and collaboration among partners.** Provide models and incentives for leveraging other federal or state funding such as Carl D. Perkins, ROCP, library literacy, and WIA, Title I and for collaboration with community colleges and other partners.

**7.3 Consider the relative cost of various services.** Explore differential funding to address the high cost of various courses in such areas as career technical education or other specialized programs requiring additional operational expenses.

**7.4 Support best practices.** Structure the funding to promote contextualization and integration of curricula (e.g., ESL and CTE), both within Adult Education and across Adult Education and community colleges.

**7.5 Support performance.** Use “performance-based” strategies to reward programs for student outcomes such as learning gains, course completions, attainment of diplomas or GED High School Equivalency Certificates, transitions to postsecondary education and apprenticeship programs, attainment of recognized industry certificates, and job placements.

**7.6 Fund support services.** Fund specialist positions that provide students with career counseling, program management, job placement assistance, and other support services needed to ensure students’ successful transitions into college and careers.

**7.7 Support innovation and short-term initiatives.** Use set-asides or other mechanisms to meet additional policy objectives such as supporting innovation programs and addressing short-term, high-priority needs of the state.

**7.8 Solicit alternative support to leverage public resources.** Alternative funding sources, including those available from private foundations and other funders, would enhance the resources available to Adult Education in California.

## **TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

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This strategic plan represents both an affirmation and expansion of existing exemplary practice and a departure from the past in calling for a more focused mission and a level of collaboration, fiscal discipline, and accountability. The shift to this more “strategic” approach to service delivery will require a transition period. This transition phase will enable the CDE and the field, working together and with partners, to further hone and test the new delivery, funding and accountability mechanisms, identify weaknesses and unintended consequences, explore solutions, and identify successful practices for replication.

The strategic plan is intended to be implemented as a “living plan” that would be updated periodically to reflect emerging trends or changes in the environment. A key concept guiding both the plan and future implementation is responsiveness to critical state needs. As is evident in this plan, the current focus is on the state’s workforce and economic development needs. While economic and workforce concerns will drive Adult Education in the foreseeable future, this focus does not preclude other targeted responsive educational initiatives that may be required concurrently or in the future with changes in such areas as immigration or health policy or reforms in the prison system or to Social Security. In fact, excluding these areas of concern from the purview of Adult Education would represent a gross underutilization of the system’s capacity, strengths, and historical purpose in service of the state.

Adult Education is uniquely positioned to mobilize itself rapidly to address such critical issues using both technology and face-to-face delivery strategies. Adult Education may address these issues in two ways: by targeting educational programs to specific populations, as would be the case with prison reform that may require more effective educational programming for prisoners reentering society; or by integrating crucial, relevant content, such as information on health care regulations or financial literacy, into existing language and literacy programs, thus promoting public policy goals while maximizing opportunities for educational impact.

## **Transition and Implementation Process**

Successful transition and plan implementation requires a systematic, transparent and inclusive process. Implementation would include clear timelines and accountability, while ensuring that the vital perspectives of Adult Education practitioners and external partners are included.

The role of the CDE AEO would include providing implementation frameworks and guidelines based on the strategic plan; convening and facilitating technical working groups; ensuring timely progress and accountability; and providing data and other supportive resources.

The purpose of the technical working groups would be to propose statewide solutions and policies and to outline the processes for local and regional application of the statewide directions. The technical working groups would also conduct detailed analyses and recommend specific implementation strategies in particular areas. Individual groups would target specific elements of the blueprint in a collaborative process that intersects with other groups. The groups would draw on research, data, technical tools and other resources provided by the CDE and other experts. The needs assessment and strategic plan will provide the foundation for the work. Potential topics might include:

- Collaborative Leadership — development of memoranda of understanding among key partner agencies and the creation of a cross-segmental coordinating body that can guide ongoing work
- ACET Centers — establishment of procedures and processes for adult schools to become “ACET centers” and identification of regional service delivery areas in which they will operate
- Funding — development of the fund allocation model and application of the need indicators
- Accountability — development of an expanded accountability system focused on outcomes
- Policy and Legislation — development and changes in Education Code

Participation would be based on the specific topics under consideration, and include technical experts, external stakeholders, and representatives from adult education agencies. In each area, working group participants would provide guidance and input on technical issues, implementation strategies, policy issues and required legislation, and the professional development and technical assistance that will be necessary to implement the plan.

## **Collaboration as a Central Concept during Implementation**

Given the importance of Adult Education for students across educational and workforce systems and the focus on regional collaboration, partnership during the transition phase is particularly important. Engagement of partners is critical in defining the policies and procedures that will guide the roll-out of ACET centers and identification of service areas. In addition, such operational functions as aligning assessments across systems will require input from all component systems. The need for collaboration applies particularly to statewide coordination between Adult Education and community colleges. Direct engagement among partners is needed to develop workable structures and processes that meet both individual organizational needs and shared collective goals and outcomes.

## **Adaptive Management: Creating a Living Plan**

The CDE and its implementation partners would also establish an ongoing review and data-driven continuous improvement processes to create a “living plan.” This approach will allow Adult Education to test innovative strategies and adjust practices as data on results become available. Adaptive management is particularly important since the strategic plan includes some substantial changes. It also allows Adult Education to respond effectively to changes in state budget requirements and in federal requirements as presented in Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. In addition, the plan would be updated on a periodic cycle to ensure that the overall priorities and approach of the Adult Education system are optimally aligned to the needs of the state.

As we enter the second decade of the century, with the state, the nation, and the world in transformation, the renewal of Adult Education in California is of vital importance. Its mission of preparing adults for “college, career, and civic responsibility” addresses not only the need for a strong economy but also the need for all Californians to be fully engaged in civil society and democratic processes. For California’s millions of adults, and their families and communities, Adult Education is committed to working diligently with the community colleges, the K–12 system, economic and workforce development agencies, the social service sector, and other partners to realize the vision presented in this plan, “Linking Adults to Opportunity.”

## Appendix A. Glossary

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### General Terms

**21<sup>st</sup> century skills.** The cross-disciplinary skills necessary for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such as critical-thinking, problem-solving, communication, creativity, and teamwork skills, in addition to core academic skills and technical skills.

**Adult Basic Education (ABE).** Courses of instruction in mathematics, reading, language, and workforce readiness skills for adults functioning at an 8th-grade level or below.

**Advisory board.** A group of volunteers made up primarily of industry, education, and, where appropriate, parent, student, and other community representatives that meets regularly to provide advice and support. Advisory boards to career technical education or pathway programs provide industry input to curriculum and help connect students with employers for work-based learning. Some funding streams, such as Carl D. Perkins, have specific requirements regarding the composition and operations of advisory boards.

**Adult Secondary Education (ASE).** Courses through which an adult education learner prepares to take the General Educational Development (GED<sup>®</sup>) Test or receives high school credit that leads to a high school diploma; courses are designed for learners functioning at a 9th-grade level or above.

**Articulation.** The practice of aligning curriculum from one educational segment to another to encourage a seamless transition between courses, grades, and/or education institutions. Most commonly, high school, regional occupational center and program (ROCP), or adult education courses articulate to community college courses; depending on how the articulation agreements are structured, students may sometimes receive college credit for completing articulated courses.

**Average Daily Attendance (a.d.a.).** The total number of days of student attendance divided by the total number of days in the regular school year. A student attending every day would equal one a.d.a. One a.d.a. in Adult Education is measured by 525 hours of accumulated student seat time. In addition, each a.d.a. was worth a fixed dollar amount or the “revenue limit.” This revenue limit per a.d.a. has historically never exceeded 40 percent of the a.d.a. for a single enrollee in the K–12 system.

**Basic skills.** Basic skills can be defined in several ways. *Basic Skills as a Foundation for Student Success in California Community Colleges* describes basic skills as “those foundation skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and English as a Second Language as well as learning skills and study skills which are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work. Courses designed to develop these skills are generally classified as pre-collegiate, basic skills, or both, and may be either credit or non-credit.” Basic skills can also be defined from the workforce perspective as the academic foundation needed to ensure basic educational competency of the workforce. This includes not only the reading, writing, math, and English skills needed for success in college-level work but additional skills such as<sup>61</sup>:

- Ability to solve semistructured problems where hypotheses must be formed and tested
- Ability to work in groups with persons of various backgrounds
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing
- Ability to use personal computers to carry out simple tasks

**California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).** An exam administered to students in 10th grade intended to enable students to demonstrate grade-level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics. All California public school students except eligible students with disabilities are required to pass the CAHSEE in order to receive a high school diploma.

**Career pathway.** A multi-year program of academic and career technical study that aligns adult education, postsecondary education, and/or occupational training, enabling students to attain recognized credentials that will qualify them for career advancement in areas of projected employment opportunity.

**Career technical education (CTE).** According to the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, and the California State Plan for Career Technical Education, the term “career and technical education” means organized educational activities that — “(A) offer a sequence of courses that — (i) provides individuals with coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions; (ii) provides technical skill proficiency, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree; and (iii) may include prerequisite courses (other than a remedial course) that meet the requirements of this subparagraph; and (B) include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills, and knowledge of all aspects of an industry, including entrepreneurship, of an individual.”

**Career technical education (CTE) course sequence.** A multi-year sequence of CTE courses that emphasizes technical skills and work-based knowledge while integrating the academic skills and knowledge necessary for the industry sector. The sequence typically includes beginning, intermediate, and capstone courses, as well as work-based learning (WBL) experiences, and is intended to provide students with preparation for the workplace and postsecondary education.

**Categorical flexibility.** The granting of expenditure flexibility to school districts in approximately 40 previously restricted state “categorical” programs, including Adult Education, through 2012–2013, as stipulated in California’s 2009 Budget Act. Such flexibility enables district superintendents to use otherwise restricted funds to support any of their programs.

**College.** “College,” as used in this plan, refers to a wide array of postsecondary options for students, including moderate-term and long-term on-the-job training, industry certification programs, apprenticeship, the military, two- and four-year college and university programs, and high-level technical schools.

**Concurrent enrollment.** See “Dual enrollment.”

**Curricular integration.** A series of strategies used to connect the content of one or more academic and CTE courses so that what is learned in one discipline is combined with and reinforced in the other disciplines over an extended period of time. The aim of these strategies is to make learning more effective, meaningful, and engaging. Ideally, integrated curriculum includes a combination of various academic and CTE subjects and goes beyond textbook instruction by requiring students to use their skills and knowledge or acquire new learning in order to solve complex, real problems that are often industry-based.

**Differentiated instruction.** An instructional approach in which the teacher adapts the content, process, and product of lessons to match each student’s readiness, learning style, and interests. In differentiated instruction, the learning goals for all students are the same, but the required tasks, instructional approach, and materials used vary according to the needs of the individual students.

**Distance learning.** A delivery mechanism which provides educational opportunities to students who are not physically “on site” in a traditional classroom or campus.

**Dual enrollment.** A strategy whereby high school or adult education students enroll in college courses while still enrolled in high school or adult school. Courses may be offered either on the school or college campus. Students who are dually enrolled may earn college credit.

**Effective practice.** Organizational, administrative, instructional, or support activities engaged in by programs that have been validated by research and literature sources or which are judged by experienced and knowledgeable practitioners in the field as having the potential to be highly successful.

**English as a Second Language (ESL).** A program of instruction designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language.

**General Educational Development (GED).** A test that may be taken by students 18 years old and older for the purpose of receiving a High School Equivalency Certificate. The examination tests knowledge in five subject areas: Language Arts, Writing; Language Arts, Reading; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies.

**Integrated curriculum.** See “Curricular integration.”

**Mission.** A formal short, written statement of the purpose and goals of an organization. A mission statement explains what the organization does, for whom, and guides the actions and decision making of the organization while providing a sense of direction. (See also “Vision” below.)

**Needs-based.** An approach which allocates resources based on the extent that they are determined to be needed.

**One-Stop career centers (“One Stops”).** Centers established under the federal Workforce Investment Act, Title I, designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof. The One Stops are overseen by local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), of which there are 49 in California, each of which has a service area. There may be more than one center in a service area, depending on need, resources, and other factors. The One Stops offer in-person and online access to training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services.

**Postsecondary articulation.** See “Articulation.”

**Postsecondary education.** Non-remedial coursework in a variety of postsecondary settings, including moderate-term and long-term on-the-job training, apprenticeship, the military, two- and four-year college and university programs, and high-level technical schools.

**Professional learning community.** A collegial group of educators who are united in their commitment to student learning, share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review each other’s classrooms, and participate in decision making together.

**Project-based learning.** A systematic teaching methodology that engages students by focusing on a complex question or problem and having them investigate answers to that problem over an extended period of time. Projects are often “hands-on,” linked to “real world” situations outside of the classroom, and require demonstration of competence through products and presentations.

**Region.** For the purposes of the strategic plan and future implementation of the plan, the identification of regions will consider educational need; demographics; economic and workforce development needs; the location and capacity of existing adult schools, other adult education agencies, K–12, community college and other educational partners; community resources; existing and planned economic development activity; and existing jurisdictions.

**SCANS (Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills).** A commission appointed in 1990 by the U.S. Secretary of Labor to examine the demands of the workplace and determine the specific skills needed for success in the workplace. The commission completed its work in 1992 and issued a report, *What Work Requires of School: A SCANS Report for America 2000*, now known as the “SCANS Report.” The SCANS foundation skills and competencies presented in the report serve as the basis for the foundation skills found in the California State Plan for CTE.

**Supplemental instruction.** Instructional strategies that provide a venue for both students who are struggling and students who are excelling so that they can either catch up or expand their knowledge. Strategies may include modified curriculum such as shortened or lengthened assignments, targeted reading assignments, after-school instruction, tutoring, mentoring, reduction of class size, extended school year, summer school, etc.

**Support services.** Various strategies and programs intended to assist students in reaching learning and performance goals and outcomes. With regard to academic support, these services might include tutoring, academic intervention strategies, online support programs, CAHSEE support, supplemental instruction, credit recovery programs and counseling. Career-related services include career assessments, reflection exercises and advising, and career exploration opportunities such as speakers, informational interviewing, and job shadowing. In addition, support services may include non-academic services such as health services, transportation, and child care. Finally, support services include transition services which assist students in progressing in their educational and career development — both within adult education and across segments and sectors.

**Transition services.** Those support services specifically designed to facilitate students’ transitions from one level of education to another, from education to the workforce, or from one level of career preparation to another, bridging across educational institutions and across education and employment sectors as necessary. Examples include access to speakers, mentors, and information about postsecondary options, college tours, assistance with applications, assistance in securing financial aid, internships linking classroom curricula to the workplace, assistance with resume-writing and job interviews, and job development services.

**Vision.** A statement describing how the future will look if an organization achieves its mission. (See also “Mission” above.)

**Work-based learning (WBL).** An educational strategy that links school-based instruction with activity that has consequences beyond the class or value beyond success in school, and is judged by professional standards; it uses the workplace, or in-depth experience with employer or community input, to engage students and intentionally promote learning and access to future educational and career opportunities.

**Workforce readiness.** The literacy, mathematics, and technical skills, as well as cross-cutting workplace skills necessary to transition to short-term on-the-job training and employment.

**Workplace skills.** The combination of basic skills, critical thinking skills, and life and self-management skills and competencies necessary for success in the workplace. (See also “21<sup>st</sup> century skills.”)

## Organizations and Initiatives

**Adult Basic Education (ABE) Initiative.** The ABE initiative offers technical assistance, resources, and professional development to practitioners throughout the state to increase the learning gains of adult students, and improve the strength and effectiveness of adult education programs throughout the state.

**Adult Education Office (AEO).** Under California's Department of Education, AEO serves state and national interests by providing life-long educational opportunities and support services to all adults in California.

**Alternative Delivery Systems Initiative.** A program that utilizes web 2.0 to offer an array of synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences.

**Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) Adult Education Council.** A council formed with the goals of identifying and studying issues relating to adult education, recommending legislative positions to ACSA and advocating for legislation that advances public adult education, enhancing and promoting adult education's role within the education community, and planning and coordinating professional growth opportunities for administrators of adult education programs.

**California Adult Educators Administrators' Association (CAEAA).** A statewide organization open to administrators or management personnel who work in, or support, adult education programs. The purpose of the organization is to support and promote public school adult education offered through unified and union high school districts.

**California Council for Adult Education (CCAEE).** An organization which provides support for adult schools, staff members, students, and communities by working with the Legislature to develop and support legislation that provides assistance to adult education, providing professional growth opportunities for adult education staff members, and recognizing the achievements of outstanding adult educators and students through scholarship and awards at the State, Section, and Chapter levels.

**California EDGE Campaign (Education, Diversity, and Growth in the Economy).** A nonprofit coalition of major employers, educators, regional workforce development leaders, labor, and industry associations focused on preparing Californians for the high-wage, skilled jobs that drive California's economy.

**California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO).** A comprehensive professional development system providing multi-modal direct professional development and technical assistance.

**Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS).** The system for assessing adult basic reading, math, listening, writing, and speaking skills within a functional context.

**Linked Learning Initiative/Multiple Pathways Initiative.** A high school reform initiative that supports the development of career-themed pathways in school districts, to better prepare students for both postsecondary education and careers. In the Linked Learning approach, pathways include rigorous academic course sequences integrated with rigorous CTE, work-based learning, and student support services. With the publication of *Multiple Pathways to Student Success* in 2010, the CDE committed to expanding this model of high school reform in California, and including Adult Education in these efforts.

**Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN).** A network providing electronic collaboration and information, and support for instructional technology and distance learning to literacy and adult education providers in California.

**Policy to Performance (P2P) Initiative.** The P2P initiative supported by the ED OVAE aims to assist states with effective policy development that will support college and career readiness for low-skilled adults and adult learners.

**Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCPs).** ROCPs provide career preparation that includes both technical skills and related preparation for meeting statewide academic standards, enabling students to be employed in skilled occupation and successfully continue into postsecondary education.

**Senate Bill (SB) 70/Senate Bill (SB 1133), The “Governor’s Career Technical Education Pathway Initiative.** This initiative seeks to improve and strengthen career technical education” (CTE) by creating seamless pathways that coordinate CTE programs across K–12, ROCPs, community colleges, and four-year institutions, utilizing such strategies as career exploration and model articulation agreements.

**Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) Program.** Supported by the ED OVAE, STAR is a comprehensive Tool Kit and training package built upon evidence-based reading instructional strategies. STAR helps adult education teachers and administrators improve reading outcomes among intermediate-level learners — those learners who read at the fourth- to ninth-grade levels.

**Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL).** The TEAL Center is designed to improve the quality of adult education teaching in content areas. Focusing on the content area of writing for Adult Basic Education (ABE) students, the TEAL Center offers an intensive program of professional development and individualized technical assistance to participating local staff in 12 states.

**Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC).** A peer-mentoring initiative that develops professionals committed to leading the implementation of effective technology integration at their school sites.

**USA Learns.** A web-based curriculum to support non-English speakers who want to improve their English language skills. Educational agencies and businesses worldwide have adopted the site for use in classrooms and the workplace, and a number of states have approved the curriculum for use in their federally funded distance education programs.

**WIA, Title II.** Federal funds granted to states based on the number of adults 16 years and older lacking a high school diploma or equivalent, and not enrolled in secondary school. Grants are distributed to supplement ABE, ASE, ESL, and Citizenship Preparation programs in adult schools, community colleges, community-based organizations, jail programs, and library literacy programs.

## Appendix B. Overview of Adult Education in California

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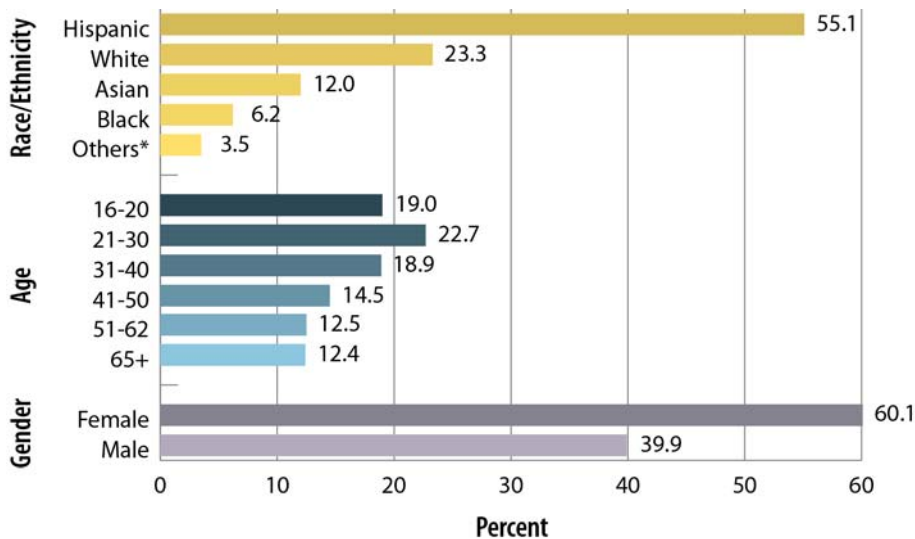
The following provides a brief overview of Adult Education enrollments, funding, and key partnerships.

### Enrollments

The CDE's Adult Education system reaches approximately 1.2 million adult learners across California each year. In 2007–08, Adult Education classes were provided in 335 adult schools. Adult Education classes are held in over 2,000 location within K–12 district classrooms, community centers, community college classrooms, storefronts, churches, businesses, jails, libraries, and migrant camps. In addition, it provides the infrastructure that has allowed approximately 350,000 students per year to take a wide array of fee-based courses.

**Demographics.** Figure B-1 below presents the demographic distribution of students in Adult Education. Over half are of Hispanic origin, reflecting enrollments in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. In addition, the vast majority are adults of working age, and over 60 percent are female.

**Figure B-1. Adult school learner demographics, 2008-09**



\* "Others" includes American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander.

Source: CASAS, California Adult Education, Student Progress and Goal Attainment Report, 2009.

**Program enrollment distribution.** Table B-1 below presents the distribution of programs and enrollments. Approximately 76 percent of Adult Education enrollments are in the areas of ABE, ESL/citizenship, adult secondary education (ASE, including GED/high school diploma), and career technical education (CTE).

**Table B-1. Adult school enrollment by instructional program**

Instructional Program	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>ABE</b>	64,965	5.3	62,410	5.4	63,626	5.3	81,976	6.6	76,516	6.3
<b>ESL</b>	492,914	40.3	481,881	41.6	478,217	39.6	466,235	37.6	444,892	36.7
<b>ASE/GED</b>	215,703	17.6	198,995	17.2	204,953	17.0	223,521	18.0	226,053	18.7
<b>Citizenship</b>	3,300	0.3	3,261	0.3	4,743	0.4	5,126	0.4	2,985	0.2
<b>CTE</b>	177,195	14.5	158,652	13.7	168,535	14.0	177,636	14.3	180,494	14.9
<b>AWD</b>	33,613	2.7	30,831	2.7	29,440	2.4	27,821	2.2	26,839	2.2
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b>	24,700	2.0	24,943	2.2	31,270	2.6	30,745	2.5	26,911	2.2
<b>Home Economics</b>	19,570	1.6	17,924	1.5	18,813	1.6	19,178	1.5	17,371	1.4
<b>Parent Education</b>	56,193	4.6	50,436	4.4	62,695	5.2	62,365	5.0	67,688	5.6
<b>Older Adults</b>	136,108	11.1	128,669	11.1	144,572	12.0	144,846	11.7	142,319	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,224,261</b>		<b>1,158,002</b>		<b>1,206,864</b>		<b>1,239,449</b>		<b>1,212,068</b>	

Source: CASAS, California Adult Education, Student Progress and Goal Attainment Report, 2009.

As seen in Table B-2, the career technical education enrollments span all of California's 15 industry sectors, but the greatest percentage (41 percent) are in the Finance and Business sector; another third combined are in Health Science and Medical Technology and Information Technology. Many of the Finance and Business and Information Technology courses are entry-level computer literacy courses.

**Table B-2. Adult Education 2007-08 CTE enrollments, by industry sector**

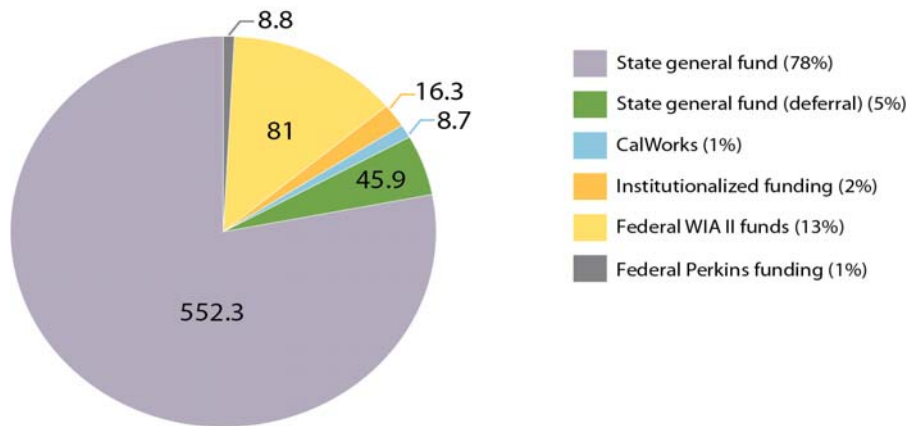
Industry Sector	Total Participants	Percent
Arts, Media, and Entertainment	2,734	2%
Information Technology	28,018	16%
Building Trades and Construction	4,867	3%
Education, Child Development, and Family Services	4,706	3%
Transportation	3,583	2%
Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation	5,158	3%
Marketing, Sales, and Service	11,258	6%
Health Science and Medical Technology	27,713	16%
Engineering and Design	559	0%
Agriculture and Natural Resources	1,909	1%
Energy and Utilities	2,396	1%
Public Services	4,481	3%
Fashion and Interior Design	1,899	1%
Manufacturing and Product Development	4,810	3%
Finance and Business	71,928	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176,019</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: CDE AEO, 2009. Total enrollment numbers differ from those listed in program enrollment table above because they are based on different program years; program enrollment data is cited for the previous year to be consistent with available data from other systems.

## Funding

Prior to the state’s fiscal crisis and categorical program flexibility, the CDE’s Adult Education program received funds from multiple state and federal sources. Figure B-2 below presents the percentage of federal and state funds that make up Adult Education.

**Figure B-2. Adult Education program funds, in millions of dollars, 2008-09**



Source: California Department of Education, Adult Education Office.

**Federal funding.** The primary source of federal funding for adult education is the federal WIA, Title II. Adult Education receives approximately 81 million dollars in federal WIA, Title II funds. WIA, Title II provides federal funding to supplement Adult Education programs in three focus areas:

1. Adult Basic Education (ABE)
2. English as a Second Language (ESL) & Citizenship
3. Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

Federal WIA, Title II funds are allocated to states based on the number of adults 16 years and older who do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, and are not enrolled in secondary school. Existing state adult education providers are granted funds based on “performance points” measured by student learning gains. The majority of the state’s federal Title II funding (78 percent)<sup>62</sup> is allocated to adult schools; Title II funding is also allocated to community colleges, libraries, jails, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Department of Developmental Services, county offices of education, and community-based organizations.

Adult Education programs offering career technical education may also draw on funds from the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins). The Perkins Act centers on the improvement of secondary and postsecondary courses and programs that are intended to build the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and experiences needed to enter and succeed in the world of work. Adult education programs access Perkins funding through their local education agencies (K–12 school districts and other eligible agencies).

**State funding.** State funds for Adult Education totaled nearly \$750 million in 2006–07. Due to a 20 percent mandatory budget reduction in the 2009 state budget, these funds were cut to about \$552 million. In addition, “categorical flexibility” — giving flexibility to superintendents in the use of categorical funds through 2012–13 — has given control of Adult Education funds to superintendents to address budget shortfalls in their K–12 districts, resulting in a de-funding of many adult schools.

Presently, state law authorizes adult schools to be reimbursed for use of state general apportionment funds for the following ten (10) adult program areas:

1. Parenting
2. Elementary and secondary basic skills (equivalent to the federal ABE and ASE programs, including high school diploma/GED programs)
3. English as a second language (ESL)
4. Citizenship for immigrants
5. Adults with disabilities
6. Career technical education
7. Older adults
8. Apprenticeship
9. Home economics
10. Health and safety programs

Consistent with the distribution of enrollments, approximately 78 percent of education hours delivered are in the areas of ABE, ASE, ESL/Citizenship, and CTE. WIA, Title II priorities — ABE, ASE, and ESL/citizenship — comprise over 63 percent of the total hours; CTE comprises approximately 15 percent.

### **Key Educational Partners**

California's educational systems form a complex provider network. Effective service delivery therefore calls for coordination among K–12 districts, adult education programs, workforce programs (WIA, Title I California Workforce Investment Board) community-based organizations, library literacy programs, and community colleges. Particular attention needs to be paid to the alignment between the community colleges and adult education programs based on the distinctive competencies and mission of each provider.

**K–12.** Adult Education supports the K–12 system by helping students who are deficient in credits needed for graduation and who have failed to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). It also provides career and technical skills training beyond those attainable through the regular high school curriculum. Adult Education also proactively helps a large number of students who drop out or age out of high school. Finally, concurrent enrollments approach 50,000 students annually, and due to flexibility and cuts in K–12 budgets these numbers are growing.

The 2010 CDE report, *Multiple Pathways to Student Success*, recommends that Adult Education resources be drawn upon to extend high school beyond four years for students who need the extra time to complete high school successfully. Students can not only benefit from the expertise of instructors who specialize in adult learning theory, but from the career-related courses and other contextualized programs that are available through the Adult Education system. In addition, Adult Education's ABE, ESL, and family literacy programs can be targeted to strengthen the literacy of the K–12 parent population, with benefits for the K–12 students as well.

**Community colleges.** The core mission of the community colleges is to offer credit courses that can lead to two-year degrees, other recognized credentials, and transfer to a four-year college or university.<sup>63</sup> Within that mission, the community colleges offer remedial basic skills courses in English, math, and ESL to prepare students for college-level work. The community colleges offer both non-credit basic skills courses equivalent in content to those offered by the CDE Adult Education program, and credit basic higher level remedial skills courses intended to move students rapidly into academic and certificated career technical education programs.

Many Adult Education schools collaborate closely with the community colleges throughout the state. In six communities the community college is the exclusive provider of adult education. In other communities, Adult Education and the community colleges coordinate efforts so that students can transition smoothly from Adult Education to credit-bearing classes at the community college. Seventeen community colleges receive funding from the Adult Education-managed WIA, Title II grant.

In 2006 the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) launched the Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) to improve student access and success at the community colleges. The project provided for specialized funding, literature reviews, and professional development focused on credit and non-credit basic skills as well as adult education. One literature review, *Promising Practices for Transitioning*

*Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education*<sup>64</sup> enumerated many of the same recommendations presented in this Adult Education strategic plan. An emphasis is placed on increasing the collaboration and articulation between community colleges and Adult Education programs, allowing each to work within its own core mission and areas of strength to provide complementary services to California's adults.

**Other organizations.** Adult Education is well-situated to partner with other organizations and in the case of the Regional Occupational Centers and Programs (ROCPs), had a mandate to do so prior to the current budget situation. Many adult schools are also ROCP providers, while others collaborate closely with them to coordinate CTE programs. Adult Education continues to be a mandated partner in the One Stop centers operated by California's Workforce Investment Boards and funded through WIA, Title I. Adult Education also partners with apprenticeship programs which are developed and conducted by program sponsors including individual employers, employer associations, or jointly sponsored labor/management associations. These are established to provide "related and supplementary instruction" (RSI) to their registered apprentices on a contract basis. Adult Education's presence in the jails makes them a natural partner with local correctional and transition programs, as well as the Department of Corrections at the state level, in planning for transitional services for formerly incarcerated adults.

Because Adult Education serves populations that are often most in need, it frequently has client overlap with workforce investment boards, vocational rehabilitation programs, Even Start programs, and social services. These partnerships can be leveraged more fully to broaden the capacity of Adult Education services to meet local need, fill local demand for academic and career training, and increase the pool of knowledge and resources available to the shared clients.

## Appendix C. Planning Process

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The CDE, AEO initiated the strategic planning process in January 2009. It retained WestEd to conduct a needs assessment, organize and implement the planning process, and work with the AEO and Adult Education practitioners to develop the plan. The planning process included three overlapping phases: needs assessment, planning and plan development, and review and approval. To keep the field apprised of the plan's progress, the CDE documented the process via a Web site created for this purpose, available at <http://www.otan.us/strategicPlanning/index.html>. Adult Education practitioners also provided input to the needs assessment and feedback on drafts of the plan through the Web site.

A number of groups were convened and consulted in order to obtain a wide variety of stakeholder and expert opinions throughout both the needs assessment and the planning process. These groups included:

- *The Project Team (PT)*. A small group of representatives from the AEO and WestEd which met weekly to deal with logistics and planning issues related to the needs assessment and strategic planning process.
- *The Steering Committee (SC)*. A group of practitioners from the field and the PT members which provided guidance on the planning process, conducted, reviewed, and helped synthesize primary and secondary research. The Committee periodically convened to synthesize information gathered from Adult Education practitioners (administrators, teachers, and support staff) and integrated that input into the planning process.
- *The Field Partnership Team (FPT)*. A standing committee convened by the CDE, made up of regional representatives of adult schools, the directors of the Adult Education professional associations (ACSA Adult Education Council, CCAE, CAEAA), and the directors of the three "leadership" projects (CASAS, OTAN, and CALPRO). The FPT serves as a vehicle for informing the AEO of regional perspective and issues, disseminates information, and serves as the catalyst for implementing change initiatives and policies that strengthen Adult Education.
- *The Expert Panel*. A group of strategic thinkers identified by the Project Team with state and national expertise in a broad set of issues pertinent to both the content of the plan, and the process of change. Areas of expertise included research, policy, organizational change, measurement, and evaluation; economics; workforce development; K–12 education reform; intersegmental coordination and postsecondary transition; immigration; civic participation; support services needed for transitioning adults; and national adult education policy and trends. The Expert Panel met twice.
- *The Stakeholder Panel*. Agencies, organizations, and educational systems supporting adults in educational attainment, workforce skills, issues related to health and aging, and independent living skills of adults. The role of this panel was to provide input to the assessment and planning process, and to provide a review of the final draft plan.
- *Planning Group*. A group including the FPT, the Steering Committee, and Adult Education staff, charged with providing primary input to, and reviewing multiple drafts of, the plan. The group met three times for all-day planning sessions, in November 2009, January 2010, and March 2010.

## **Needs Assessment (January – September 2009)**

The needs assessment process included a review of pertinent literature and extant policy analyses; analysis of demographic, workforce, and educational data available through the U.S. Census and other publically available sources; research on adult education programs in other states; and key informant interviews with leaders at the CDE as well as external leaders in postsecondary education, technology, assessment and accountability, and professional development, researchers, policy analysts, and the Legislative Analyst's Fiscal and Policy Office.

Early needs assessment activities also included field participation at statewide professional organization conferences (California Adult Education Administrators Association [CAEAA] and the California Council for Adult Education [CCAEE]) in order to get an initial perspective on “driving forces” and their potential implications for the future of adult education. Driving forces, in this exercise, were defined as contextual elements that had a strong current or potential impact on the scope or direction of Adult Education's future.

In addition, WestEd engaged the Field Partnership Team for primary input to the needs assessment at its January, April, and June meetings. During the needs assessment phase, WestEd and the Project Team also convened the Steering Committee seven times, both face-to-face and via conference call, during the needs assessment phase to synthesize information and provide guidance to the Project Team.

Most importantly, Adult Education practitioners were given a direct opportunity to provide input through an online field input survey administered in July 2009. The responses were consistent with much of the other input to that point, stressing the importance of English language attainment, basic skills, and workforce preparation. All regions and types of providers were represented in the group that provided input. Also, input from all the groups, and from the field via professional conference activities and the field input survey, was incorporated into the needs assessment to inform the strategic plan.

## **Planning and Plan Development Process (March 2009 – September 2010)**

The planning and plan development process overlapped substantially with the needs assessment. Information on potential strategic positioning and direction was collected and analyzed concurrently with data on state needs and program strengths, so that, when the strategic planning phase was scheduled to begin in late 2009, a significant amount of input had already been gathered.

During the planning and plan development stage, WestEd continued to work closely with the CDE and the Steering Committee, and reconvened the Expert Panel. However, the substantive planning work was taken on by a larger *planning group* to ensure representativeness and transparency. The planning group included the full Field Partnership Team and CDE Adult Education staff, in addition to Steering Committee members. This group of approximately 30 people met three times for full-day planning sessions — in November 2009, January 2010, and March 2010 — to develop, discuss, and provide input on the key elements of the strategic plan, allowing for in-depth engagement and a full breadth of perspectives. During this period WestEd also met individually with concerned groups of stakeholders.

The first draft of the plan was completed in March of 2010, and the remaining six months of planning, input, and discussion were devoted to clarifying and refining its message and goals. The following timeline summarizes the input and feedback on the plan provided by a wide variety of contributors.

**March 2009: Stakeholder Panel Input.** In March of 2009, a group of 68 stakeholders external to Adult Education, including representatives from the community colleges, workforce development, and social service agencies, were contacted with information about the Adult Education strategic plan, to let them know that they would be asked for input on the draft plan.

The Project Team used this communication as an opportunity to seek this group's perspectives on Adult Education in California. Stakeholders broadly indicated that the key knowledge and skills adults in California need to succeed are basic SCANS competencies, basic reading, writing, and mathematics skills, and "digital literacy." When asked about the educational needs of their constituents, basic education, workforce preparation and training, and English language development rose to the top of the priority list. Stakeholders reported that the role of Adult Education should be to provide basic reading, writing, mathematics skills education, workforce preparation and training, and English language development and literacy. Integration of "soft" skills and computer skills into basic skills courses could help meet the identified needs of Adult Education students. Partnerships and collaboration (including development of career pathways, delineation of responsibility, articulation, communication, and collaboration) emerged as the consistent top strategy for creating change.

**May 2009: Expert Panel Convening #1.** In May of 2009, WestEd convened a panel of experts to consider potential future directions for the state's adult education system. The panel discussed Adult Education's role within the overall system of education and training. The role of the group was to address broad statewide system-level questions that cross organizational and topic-area boundaries.

The panel developed and narrowed a list of possible goals to four:

- Increase educational attainment (up to postsecondary literacy level, including attainment of a high school diploma and family literacy as a higher level education of parents benefits their children)
- Increase acquisition of English as a second language
- Increase citizenship (formal and capacity to participate in civic life)
- Support workforce skill attainment

The panel further agreed that the overall goals should drive desired outcomes, and that desired outcomes should drive system design.

System design principles were elicited from the group. These included designing programs around the learner, providing system transparency to students, creating connections to student services (for example, through interagency alliances and public-private partnerships), aligning adult education with other systems; building on the comparative strengths of various providers, accommodating local and regional needs, ensuring that public funding is directed to public needs, use of fee-for-service or contracting to meet non-public-priority needs, providing for a facilitative state role through capacity building of local agencies, aligning of WIA, Title I and WIA, Title II, and building in accountability measures aligned to goals to demonstrate outcomes. A more integrated service delivery model was discussed.

**June and July 2009: Field Input.** The online field input survey provided an opportunity for Adult Education practitioners to engage in the planning process directly. Administrators of each adult school were invited to engage their staff in responding to the survey that included specific questions, such as: “What are the key statewide issues you think should be addressed in the planning process?” and “What directions do you think should be considered at both the state and local level in planning for the future of adult education?” An analysis of the top six responses for each question were nearly identical, with three key statewide issues and future directions for Adult Education overlapping: funding, clarifying Adult Education’s definition and priorities, and delineation of function, articulation of services, collaboration with other agencies and programs, or partnership with other organizations. Participants were also prompted to rate the relevance of identified functional skills in meeting the future needs of learners in their service area, as well as to provide open-ended commentary on other issues. English language attainment, high school diploma and GED completion, basic education of adults (attainment of 8th-grade literacy), workforce preparation skills (pre-employment skills), and technical skills (career technical education) received the highest ratings, followed by family and parent education to promote children’s literacy, civic engagement, family and parent education to promote broad child development, and life skills.

**September 2009: Field Partnership Team (FPT) Meeting.** WestEd engaged the Field Partnership Team (FPT) to transition from the needs assessment process to the strategic planning phase. The Steering Committee members also attended the session and participated with the FPT. WestEd presented a draft of the needs assessment and a preliminary draft of a broad strategic plan framework. The participants discussed the assessment’s findings and offered suggestions for improving the report. The participants also reviewed the strategic plan framework, which presented a structure linking the findings of the needs assessment with the vision and mission of Adult Education, key focus areas, and implementation planning. The framework also included an update process to ensure that the document would be a “living plan” that would be responsive to ongoing changes in the environment. To end the meeting, the participants identified best practices in adult education and generated ideas that would inform a new vision and future direction for Adult Education.

**November 2009: Strategic Planning Group Meeting #1.** The first meeting of the full Planning Group focused primarily on development of preliminary mission components, discussion of how the mission could address the range of educational services needed in California, discussion of the planning process itself, identification of Adult Education strengths and innovative practices, and development of a range of organizational design concepts. The concepts highlighted such themes as “bridging to success in a global economy,” “linking to opportunity,” “comprehensive access and services,” “skill and career development centers,” and collaboration among partners.

**December 2009/January 2010: Additional Outreach.** Based on feedback provided at the first Planning Group meeting, WestEd met independently with several key informants and interest groups, including the Bay Area Adults with Disabilities Network and educators from several Southern California agencies representing programs for older adults. WestEd also conducted a site visit to Mt. Diablo Adult School to observe classes and speak with teachers in parent education programs.

**January 2010: Strategic Planning Group Meeting #2.** The focus of the day was to collect input to use in developing the conceptual foundation for the strategic plan. Planning Group members had the field

survey results for consideration. Discussion items included: building a foundation on guiding principles; further refining a mission statement; developing a positioning statement that would resonate with funders and key stakeholders; targeting public resources; planning to meet the needs of constituents; aligning services to need, and basic parameters for funding. The Group determined that Adult Education must collaborate with other providers to leverage its expertise and resources. The Group also reviewed core system elements and provided targeted input on the topics of data and accountability, service delivery, standards and assessment, curriculum and instruction, and support services. The ideas generated were incorporated directly into a first draft of the strategic plan.

**March 2010: Expert Panel Convening.** In March, 2010, WestEd convened the Expert Panel for the second time, to review the needs assessment and a working draft of the strategic plan. The Expert Panel provided specific input on the needs assessment and strategic plan. The panel’s overall recommendation was that the plan should create focused attention across California’s educational systems on basic skills and literacy to support participation in civic life and the economy. A key “positioning” concept included the idea of Adult Education as a “portal,” providing assessment and guidance services to students as well as instruction.

To support this overall focus, the Expert Panel recommended that the plan should include supporting strategies regarding coordination/governance; shared systemic goals; funding; accountability; and implementation.

The panel also made five supporting recommendations:

1. Align funding to need
2. Align funding to accountability with appropriate safeguards against “creaming” and otherwise unintended consequences
3. Support statewide collaboration and coordination
4. Support regional collaboration and coordination
5. Create pathways with career themes

A summary of the Expert Panel’s discussion served as additional input for future planning.

**March 2010: Strategic Planning Group Meeting #3.** WestEd facilitated the third meeting of the Planning Group on March 18, 2010. The day began with WestEd reviewing the progress from the previous two meetings and debriefing participants on the main discussion points from the March 5<sup>th</sup> Expert Panel meeting. Participants discussed the concept of Adult Education as a “portal to opportunity” for adults in California. The portal concept posits Adult Education as providing a range of intake and instructional services, and working closely with the community colleges and other partners to ensure student success. The Group also discussed regional service delivery as a means to ensure equitable, needs-based distribution of resources across the state.

The Group discussed and approved the draft mission, focused on college (used as a “collective” term to represent all postsecondary options), career, and preparation for civic responsibility. Participants stressed that the overarching need is to refine priorities and be more focused given California’s financial and budgetary challenges. The Group also discussed that a focused mission still allows for contextualized

courses and partnerships to meet diverse student needs, and that local and regional collaboration and partnerships will be encouraged.

The Group also provided feedback on the following system elements and concepts: partnerships, staffing and professional development, accountability, awareness and marketing, and funding.

**April – September 2010: Plan Editing and Review.** Using the input from a review of the draft plan in April by the Steering Committee, WestEd worked with the CDE in developing a final draft of the plan for posting on the OTAN Web site <http://www.otan.us/strategicPlanning> (Outside Source). The Project Team continued to solicit feedback from various committee members and selected stakeholders on interim drafts. The concept of ACET centers was used to integrate concepts developed during the planning process and to provide a preliminary model for review by the field that could inform implementation. In August, the full Planning Group received a draft for review and comment.

**September – November 2010: Plan Review by the Field.** A preliminary draft plan was posted on the OTAN Web site and discussed at the Adult Education ACSA meeting. A subsequent draft plan, with minor clarifying edits based on feedback at ACSA, was posted in mid-October on the OTAN Web site for review and comments by adult educators statewide. This comment period was open for three weeks, through November 5, 2010. Comments were posted in their entirety on the Web site. On November 17<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Group convened for a full-day session to review the field input and provide guidance to the Project Team about needed edits or further clarification. Another draft was prepared incorporating input from the November 17<sup>th</sup> planning session. A primary concern was that the proposed delivery system for adult education services appeared to supplant the existing adult school system. In the updated draft, it was clarified that this was not the intention; the adult schools remain at the heart of Adult Education and any new services, partnerships, or delivery mechanisms were proposed as enhancements to the existing system. Another issue, the importance of adult education for parents of children in the K–12 system, was also discussed in depth in the November 17<sup>th</sup>, meeting and text was inserted into the plan to address this.

## **2011: Stakeholder and Field Review**

## Appendix D. Participants in Needs Assessment and Planning Process

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>48</sup> The 375 adult schools are funded by state funds; of these, 174 receive supplemental funds through WIA, Title II federal grant. WIA, Title II also funds the 34 CBOs, 21 jail institutions, 17 community college districts, nine library literacy programs, and seven county offices of education.
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