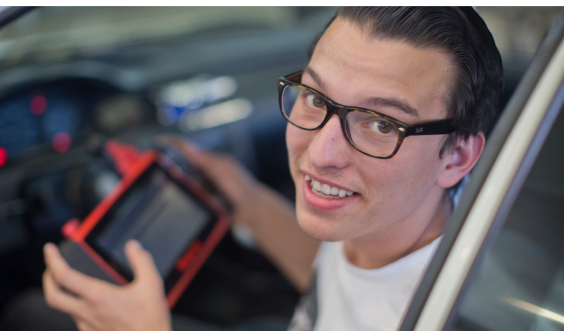AUGUST
2017

Measuring Our Success

DATA AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS AND COMMON ASSESSMENT IN THE CALIFORNIA ADULT EDUCATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

California Department of Education
Tom Torlakson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor

California Department of **EDUCATION**

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August 1, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor of California
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

Subject: Assembly Bill 104, Adult Education Block Grant Planning Report (Data and Accountability Systems and Common Assessment)

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the California Department of Education are pleased to present this progress report of the Adult Education Block Grant in response to the requirements outlined in Assembly Bill 104, Section 84920.

Assembly Bill 104, Section 84920 requires the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the California Department of Education to identify common measures for determining the effectiveness of members of each consortium. This task required that the agencies: define the specific data each consortium shall collect; establish a menu of common assessments and policies regarding placement of adults seeking education and workforce services into adult education programs to be used by each consortium to measure educational needs of adults and the effectiveness of providers in addressing those needs; establish agreements to share data related to effectiveness of consortia between their agencies and with other state agencies, including, but not necessarily limited to, the Employment Development Department (EDD) and the California Workforce Development Board; and identify the measures for assessing the effectiveness of consortia that will be used in reports to the legislature. This report addresses the above requirements by providing a description of reporting elements and processes, data definitions, and assessment policies.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Vice Chancellor of Finance and Facilities Mario Rodriguez, at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office by phone at 916-324-9508 or by email at mrodriguez@cccco.edu or Legislative Representative Debra Brown, at the California Department of Education by phone at 916-319-0821 or by email at dbrown@cde.ca.gov. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to California's adult learners.

Sincerely,

Tom Torlakson
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
California Department of Education

Eloy Ortiz Oakley
Chancellor
California Community Colleges

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under Assembly Bill (AB) 104 (Chapter 13, Stats. 2015), the California legislature outlined the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG), an integrated, regional delivery system designed to provide education and workforce services to underserved adults. To ensure that funding accelerates adults into employment, living wages, and full engagement in society, the legislation required the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and the California Department of Education (CDE) to identify common measures for determining the effectiveness of members of each consortium. This task required that the agencies:

- Define the specific data each consortium shall collect.

- Establish a menu of common assessments and policies regarding placement of adults seeking education and workforce services into adult education programs to be used by each consortium to measure educational needs of adults and the effectiveness of providers in addressing those needs.

- Establish agreements to share data related to effectiveness of consortia between their agencies and with other state agencies, including, but not necessarily limited to, the Employment Development Department (EDD) and the California Workforce Development Board.

- Identify the measures for assessing the effectiveness of consortia that will be used in reports to the legislature.[1]

During 2017, the AEBG leadership convened a series of field teams to address the complexities of establishing consistent, statewide data on populations that had previously not been fully included in agency accountability systems. Specific data points associated with adult learners needed to be integrated into reporting structures, and divergent data definitions that had been implemented in K–12 adult education and community college contexts needed to be reconciled.

This document describes the reporting elements and processes, data definitions, and assessment policies that emerged from this process, including:

- Data collection and reporting processes for K–12 adult schools, community colleges and the state agencies

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[1] AB-104 Education finance: education omnibus trailer bill.(2015-2016)

- How K–12 adult schools, community colleges, and EDD data will be linked between the agencies and with the California Workforce Board to better understand educational needs

- How AEBG will define programs and populations for data collection and reporting

- The implementation of common assessment processes

- How AEBG will capture program completion and measurable skills gain across various AEBG programs, including transition to a higher educational functioning level and the use of additional measures to capture progress in English Language (EL) Civics Education, participation in Integrated Education and Training, and achievement of an occupational skills gain

- How AEBG will capture student progress and transition from adult education into postsecondary programs and transition across adult education programs

- How employment and earnings will be captured through a data match with the EDD Wage File and through post-exit student surveys

- How AEBG will conduct further research to illuminate effective practices

DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In 2017, the AEBG Office, in partnership with CDE and other divisions of the CCCCO, initiated a field team process to develop a statewide Data and Accountability plan for adult education.

AEBG Data and Accountability Field Team Process
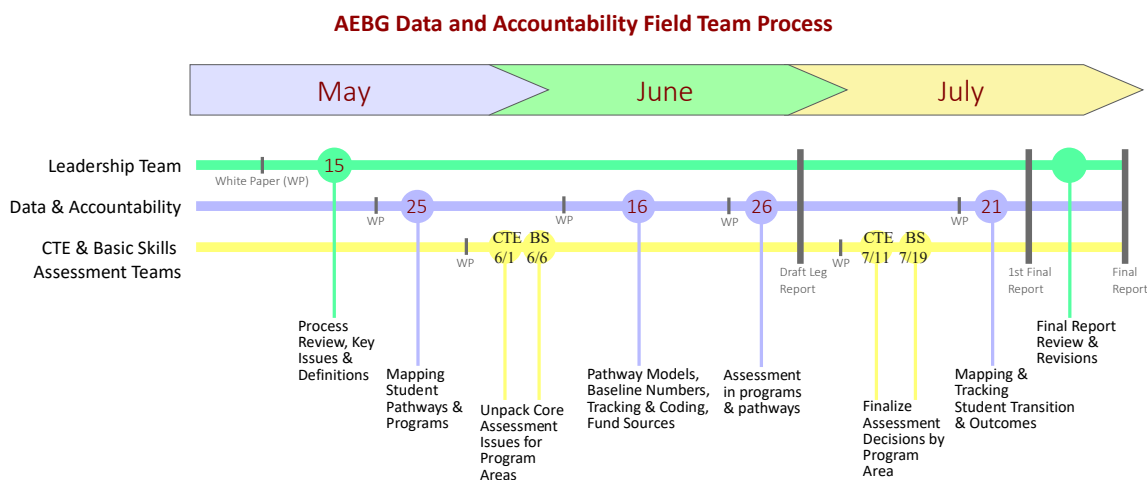
This process included representatives from K–12 adult education, community college noncredit and credit programs, the state workforce board and key stakeholders.

WestEd was contracted to convene and facilitate the field team discussions, develop white papers as background for each discussion, and prepare this final report to the legislature on behalf of CDE and the CCCCO.

In total, 35 field representatives met in three committees respectively named Data and Accountability, Career Technical Education (CTE) Assessment, and Basic Skills Assessment. Practitioners and leadership met for over 40 hours in eight meetings over two months and decisions were constantly reviewed and vetted by practitioners during the process. All committee white papers, notes, and agendas were published on a field committee page on the AEBG Office web site, to ensure transparency to the field.

The field teams and leadership reviewed documentation and regulations pertinent to adult education in California including the 2012 Legislative Analyst Office report, AB86 legislation, AB104 legislation, WIOA regulations, National Reporting System definitions, and federal student aid and accreditation guidelines among other resources in developing recommendations for a shared Data and Accountability System for community colleges and K–12 adult schools.

These committees assessed existing data systems and metrics, to provide recommendations for shared metrics and data collection processes that leveraged existing systems when possible and provided opportunities for sharing data across systems to provide better data about what happens to students when they participate in adult education programs.

AEBG DATA AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

System Elements: The AEBG Data and Accountability Systems leverage existing data collection and reporting processes administered by the CCCCO, CDE, and EDD to build a comprehensive annual data set on student enrollment and outcomes. This data set will be used for annual reporting to the Legislature on AEBG per the requirements of Assembly Bill 104 Education Code 84920 and will be housed in an integrated data dashboard available to regional consortia for evaluation of programs and data driven program improvement. This includes:

- Common Data Element Dictionary: AEBG has developed a common data element dictionary for K–12 adult schools and community colleges vetted and approved by practitioners for measuring the effectiveness of regional consortia including measures and data elements for capturing student skills gain, completion of diplomas and postsecondary awards, employment and other metrics.

- Data LaunchBoard: AEBG data collected from K–12 adult schools and community colleges will be aggregated into a comprehensive student data set in the LaunchBoard, a project funded by the CCCCO. The LaunchBoard will be the platform for matching K–12 adult school, community college, EDD wage file, and other datasets for reports to the Legislature and sharing data with the field.

- Alignment of AEBG with WIOA and Other Reporting Measures: AEBG data collection and accountability measures are aligned to WIOA, Strong Workforce, and new proposed Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins) reporting measures. This includes adoption of WIOA definitions for reportable individuals, participants, completion, and measurable skills gain.

- Alignment of Assessment Frameworks: AEBG will crosswalk the National Reporting System Educational Functioning Levels, the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) College and Career Readiness Framework, and the California community colleges CB21 Rubric (CB21) for levels below transfer that informs placement of students into transfer level college coursework. This will support the work of local consortia working to streamline transition of adult education students into postsecondary programs of study.

- Data Sharing and Matching: AEBG includes data sharing agreements between CDE, EDD and the CCCCO to support data sharing and matching of K–12 adult, community college, EDD Wage file and other data.

- Leveraging of Existing Data and Reporting Processes: AEBG leverages the existing reporting and data collection processes administered by K–12 adult schools and community colleges and will retrofit the community college Management Information Systems (MIS) and the online gateway to California Community Colleges (CCCApply) systems to streamline collection of AEBG data by the community colleges.

Reporting Timelines: The program year for AEBG will be from July 1 to June 30. The AEBG office will issue two data and accountability reports to the California Legislature after the end of each program year that addresses the major data and outcome elements required by AB104, a preliminary report on October 30 and a final report on March 30, of the following calendar year.

AEBG Annual Cycle of Data and Evaluation Activities
(Program Year: July 1-June 30; Post Program Year: July 1 to March 30)

Quarterly Data Activities	August	September/ October	November/December	January-March
Consortia/WIOA Title II reporting in TOPSpro	End of year TOPSpro data submission	Data matching for NRS WIOA II Data Reports	Match of MIS & TOPSpro data in LaunchBoard	Match of AEBG dataset to EDD Wage File
MIS updates from local college systems	End of year of college submission to MIS	Initial analysis and preparation of Oct 30 report to legislature		End of year update of LaunchBoard data
Refresh of LaunchBoard data on match of K-12 AE and college MIS data				
	Submission of final report to legislature			

The October report will focus on preliminary enrollment data based on initial review of AEBG enrollment for the previous program year. It will also include preliminary data on AEBG completion, and measurable skill gain. It will not include transition, employment and wage data. The March final report will include all AEBG data elements including transition into postsecondary education, employment, wages and final data on literacy gains, completion of high school diplomas/equivalency or postsecondary credentials, and student skills gain. The data will be disaggregated by population and program area to illustrate to the legislature the effectiveness, and outcomes from the state investment into AEBG.

Data Collection Tools and Processes: AEBG will leverage existing data collection systems to avoid unnecessary collection of student information and to streamline data collection for K–12 adult and community college noncredit providers. These include:

- **TOPSpro Enterprise (TE):** TE is a data reporting and analysis tool from CASAS used to report K–12 adult education and WIOA Title II student data to CDE. For 16–17 and 17–18, TE is being used as the primary AEBG reporting tool while the MIS is being retrofitted to collect AEBG data elements.

- **CCCCO's MIS:** All local community college enrollment and student data is reported into the statewide MIS data system that records yearly and longitudinal educational data for all community college students in California. MIS records student information, enrollment, course outcomes (grades), and awards (certificates, degrees, and completion of requirements for transfer). Data from MIS is used to populate multiple data visualization tools including the Student Success Scorecard, Chancellor's Data Mart, and the LaunchBoard.

The AEBG field teams examined how data could be reported to generate the most accurate and comprehensive information on adult education populations. They settled on a solution which allows K–12 adult schools and community colleges to report through platforms they already use (TE, MIS, and CCCApply) and that leverages other data resources that can be linked to produce an integrated data set.

AEBG practitioners determined that MIS and CCCApply should be retrofitted to capture AEBG metrics, making it possible to track the same elements for all students. Doing so will help to ensure that data will be aligned with the California Workforce Development Board's Cross-System Analytics and Assessment for Learning and Skills Attainment system. It will also enable the CCCCO to have data elements in place when Perkins metrics are aligned with WIOA.

Given that it will take a year to make all the changes to local and statewide data systems, community colleges will continue to report on AEBG outcomes using TE during 2017–18 (beyond 2017–18, K–12 adult schools will continue to use TE and community colleges will use TE only for reporting on WIOA Title II funded programs). AEBG will analyze 2016–17 outcomes using a combined data set from TE and MIS, to establish appropriate baselines and determine how best to leverage available data systems to capture comprehensive outcomes.

Because data will be reported into two statewide systems, it will need to be merged to produce reports. AEBG will leverage the work already done on the LaunchBoard to create a mechanism for joining the data sets, as well as integrating information that comes from other sources such as EDD. The LaunchBoard will enable AEBG to produce the reports required for the Legislature, as well as provide a set of practitioner-friendly tools that show historical trends in participant outcomes. As the first step in implementation, a data element dictionary has been constructed

that provides explicit definitions for all required elements in both TE and MIS. In addition, a preliminary list of revised data elements is currently under review by the CCCCO MIS team.
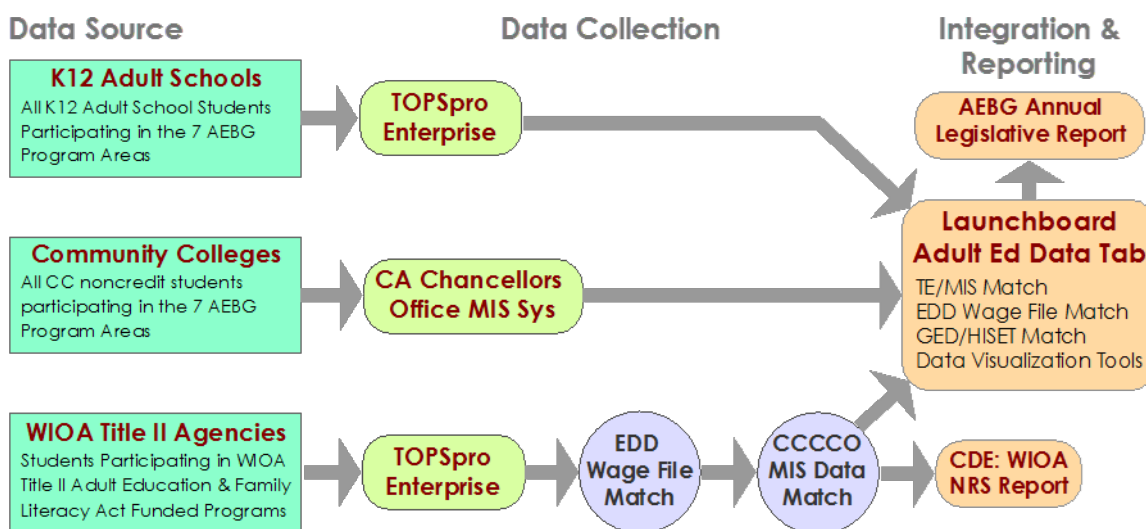
The chart above illustrates the data reporting system for AEBG that will be fully implemented by the 2018–2019 program year. While K-12 adult schools and many community colleges are WIOA Title II recipients, federal deadlines for reporting to NRS requires a parallel data reporting process which is broken out in this chart for clarity. In practice, the reporting of Title II data is highly integrated into the overall AEBG quarterly and end of year reporting process. As Perkins and other funding streams also align to WIOA, it is anticipated that these reporting processes will also be aligned to the AEBG data and accountability system as well.

The AEBG data and accountability system will allow the K12 adult schools and community colleges to report their data through existing systems and incorporates data sharing and matching between the state agencies to support reporting AEBG to the state legislature. Publishing of AEBG data in the LaunchBoard. AEBG data in the LaunchBoard will be made available to local AEBG consortia to inform local program improvement.

AEBG SECONDARY DATA REPORT

Practitioners grappled with numerous edge cases and emergent practices that may not be captured by the primary AEBG data collection and reporting process. Examples from the practitioner discussions included for credit CTE pathways aligned to the WIOA Integrated Education and Training (IET) model such as the Chancellor's Career Advancement Academies, immigrant immersion models that include outcomes related to access to government services, increased self-sufficiency, and other initiatives.

Additionally, practitioners acknowledged there were colleges with little or no noncredit offerings who had developed short term CTE and other programs as credit programs that specifically target adults with barriers to employment and education. While credit programs were ultimately not included in the denominator for AEBG reporting due to the complexity of identifying which students and courses should count, the committees recommended that AEBG conduct a yearly secondary report on emergent practices and the participation of AEBG populations in credit programs. The AEBG office will develop a proposal for this report, which will be shared with the AEBG Data and Accountability committee when it reconvenes in September.

AEBG POPULATIONS AND PROGRAMS

Reporting Universe: AEBG will collect quarterly and yearly enrollment and outcome data on all K–12 adult education and community college noncredit students participating in the seven AEBG program areas. This will include K–12 adult school and community college noncredit students whether funded by AEBG, WIOA Title II, Perkins, or community college noncredit apportionment.

The intention is to capture the capacity being developed by consortia who are braiding funding to increase services to adults regardless of fund source. The second goal is to incentivize the increase of enhanced noncredit programs developed by community colleges to supplement the state's investment in AEBG, increase the total population of students transitioning into postsecondary programs, and improve integration between K–12 adult schools and community college noncredit programs.

Populations and Programs: Assembly Bill 104 does not clearly distinguish between populations and programs in the authorization of AEBG. A recent implementation study of AEBG by the Center for Law and Social Policy identifies that the seven programs areas are in fact a mix of services delivered to populations:

- Adults with disabilities

- Unemployed adults

- Non-native English speakers

- Adults seeking to enter the workforce for the first time or after a prolonged absence from the labor force and service models or programs:

- Foundational skills for high school completion or transition to postsecondary education (Adult Basic Education [ABE], Adult Secondary Education [ASE], English as a Second Language [ESL])

- CTE programs leading to postsecondary credential attainment, which includes preapprenticeship and reentry services for workers with profound barriers to labor force participation as significant sub-categories [2]

For practical purposes, it is useful to distinguish 'populations' from 'services' to create clear protocols for data collection and reporting on the effectiveness of AEBG direct and leveraged investments. Additionally, practitioners identified where there were specific program models such as preapprenticeship or IET which should be considered subareas of CTE or that incorporated a combination of CTE and basic skills in an integrated program package.

In tackling the related issues of AEBG populations and programs, practitioners established clear definitions for the major programs and populations that should be tracked by the AEBG Data and Accountability System and for program sub-strategies that require separate data flags or that should be pulled with population data flags.

Four main program areas will form the backbone of the AEBG data system:

- English as a Second Language (ESL): provides instruction in the English language to adult, and non-native English speakers with varied academic, vocational, citizenship, and personal goals.

- Adult Basic Education (ABE): provides instruction in foundational academic skills, such as reading, writing, and basic mathematics, as well as learning and study skills. These programs include courses that are below Low Adult Secondary Education–ninth grade level.

- Adult Secondary Education (ASE): provides instruction in foundational academic skills, such as reading, writing, and basic mathematics, as well as learning and study skills. These ASE programs include courses that are at Adult Secondary Education–ninth grade level and above, leading to a high school diploma, General Education Development (GED), or high school equivalency certificate.

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[2] Mortrude, Judy and Anna Cielinski (2017); Prosperity through Partnership: Opportunities for AEBG to Strengthen Systems and Communities; Center for Law and Social Policy.

- **Short Term CTE:** prepares adult learners to enter the workforce in a year or less.

In addition, five sub-areas will provide greater insight into the needs of specific populations and key training strategies:

- **Adults with Disabilities (AWD):** Encompasses both programs specifically designed to meet the needs of adults with disabilities, and people with disabilities who are enrolled in other adult education program areas.

- **Workforce Entry/Re-Entry:** Focuses on populations with systemic barriers to economic success who enroll in CTE programs, including adults 55 and older, participants with cultural barriers, displaced homemakers, ESL, ex-offenders, foster care youth, individuals with disabilities, homeless, long-term unemployed, low-income, low levels of literacy, migrant farmworkers, seasonal farmworkers, those exhausting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/ California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWorks) within two years, and single parents.

- **Pre-Apprenticeship:** Prepares individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship program, conducted in coordination with one or more apprenticeship programs approved by the Division of Apprenticeship Standards through a Memorandum of Understanding.

- **Integrated Education and Training (IET):** Offers instruction that simultaneously provides adult education and literacy and workforce preparation and training.

- **Adults Training to Support Child School Success:** Provides education and training to adults, typically parents and community members, to help school-aged children succeed in school.

WIOA Alignment: In the development of this framework, practitioners identified specific data flags and population descriptors for capturing this data in TE and MIS. Practitioners also agreed that for some programs or population criteria with clear definitions under WIOA, that AEBG would adopt the WIOA definitions for the purpose of alignment with other state systems such as the State Workforce Board. Examples include:

- **Population Descriptors:** Including adoption of the WIOA definitions for economically disadvantaged individuals and WIOA barriers to employment categories such as displaced homemaker, ESL, long-term unemployed, no TANF/CalWorks within 2 years, ex-offender, etc.

- Preapprenticeship: Using the WIOA five criteria defining a quality preapprentiship program including the requirement for a formal agreement for entry into a registered apprenticeship program upon completion.

- Integrated Education and Training: Which is defined as concurrent participation in education focused on foundation schools (basic skills/ESL), workforce preparation, and workforce training contextualized and directed towards a specific occupation or career.

AEBG yearly reports to the Legislature will both include the aggregate outcomes defined under AB104 and disaggregate those outcomes by the four program areas, populations identified by AB104 and WIOA, and provide additional metrics for key program sub-strategies or special programs such as preapprenticeship or workforce entry or reentry.

AEBG REPORTING ELEMENTS AND DEFINITIONS

A critical step in developing the data system for reporting on adult education is the development of a common data element dictionary for community colleges and K–12 adult schools to use in collecting information about students to populate the system. The AEBG data element dictionary includes not only those reporting elements required under AB104, but the identification of additional reporting elements deemed by practitioners to be important for measuring the effectiveness of their programs. The complete dictionary identifies in detail which data flags in TE and the college MIS should be used by practitioners for reporting their student data.

1. Adults Served by the Consortium: Reportable Individuals, which includes all K–12 adult education or community college noncredit students, who have one or more hours of instructional contact hours in any of the seven program areas and or received support services. For this reporting element AEBG is adopting the WIOA definition of a Reportable Individual (OCTAE 17–2; pp 25–26).

2. Adults Served by Members of the Consortium Who Have Demonstrated the Following Measures of Progress: Students tracked for educational or workforce attainment will include K–12 adult school or community college noncredit adult participants in each the seven program areas served by the consortium. For the reporting elements described below, AEBG is adopting the WIOA Title II AEFLA definition of a program participant who has received 12 or more contact hours of instruction (OCTAE 17–2; p 27).

(A) Improved Literacy and Basic Skills: Related to this outcome measure, AEBG will go beyond the guidance in AB104 and report on measurable skills gain for all AEBG basic skills programs which include ABE, ASE, ESL, and EL Civics education in K–12 adult education and community college noncredit programs. AEBG is adopting the WIOA definition of measurable skills gain, which for ABE, ASE, ESL, and EL Civics includes the attainment of a National Reporting System (NRS) defined Educational Functioning Level (EFL) documenting increased competency in reading and writing, numeracy (ABE/ASE), or English speaking and listening skills.[3]

ABE and ASE: Allowable mechanisms for measuring attainment of an educational functioning level in K–12 adult education and community college noncredit ABE and ASE programs include:

- K-12 AEBG programs: Will use National Reporting System approved instruments.

- Non K-12 AEBG programs: Will have the option of using NRS approved instruments or attainment of a functional level tied to completion of a course using a crosswalk of the National Reporting System EFL's and the community college CB21 course rubric for levels below transfer.

ESL and EL Civics Programs: Allowable mechanisms for measuring attainment of an educational functioning level in ESL and EL Civics programs include:

- K-12 AEBG programs: Will use National Reporting System approved assessment instruments. For EL Civics, providers will use the CASAS Civics Objectives and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs).

- Non K-12 AEBG programs: Will have the option of using NRS approved assessment instruments or attainment of a functional level tied to completion of a course or a Career Development and College Preparation (CDCP) certificate using a crosswalk of the National Reporting Service EFL's and the community college CB21 course rubric for levels below transfer. For El Civics, providers can report measurable skills gain through the completion of an EL Civics course

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[3] Division of Adult Education and Literacy, US Department of Education (2016); Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System for Adult Education.

based on a crosswalk of EL Civics competencies between K12 adult schools and community colleges. CCCO MIS has an EL Civics flag that will be leveraged for this purpose.

Other ABE, ASE, and ESL Measures: In addition to the above metrics, the field teams identified other measures of completion and progress they wanted to include for AEBG reporting and evaluation. These included:

- Participants who transition to a new/higher level program area, such as from ESL to ABE or ASE, from ABE to ASE, or who complete a CDCP certificate in basic skills

- Students who transition from ABE, ASE, or ESL to a CTE program

(B) Completion of High School Diplomas or Recognized Equivalents: For capturing diploma or high school equivalency completion, AEBG will require K–12 adult schools and community college noncredit programs to report the following:

- Students who complete their high school diploma using appropriate data flags in TE for K–12 adult schools and MIS for community college noncredit programs.

- Student participation in high school equivalency programs using TE for K–12 adult providers and appropriate MIS course flags for community college noncredit programs.

- A data match of the AEBG student population with the data sets from the GED, HiSET, and TASC testing services.

The AEBG office will work with CDE to expand the existing match of adult education enrollment data with GED, HiSET, and TASC attainment data provided by the GED, HiSET, and TASC testing services to provide comprehensive data on AEBG students who obtain their equivalency with support from AEBG providers.

(C) Completion of Postsecondary Certificates, Degrees, or Training Programs: Completion of a postsecondary award for AEBG reporting is considered to be any of the following:

- For CTE programs, completion of a credential aligned to an occupation and that is not a workforce preparation (e.g. work readiness) or occupational safety certificate (e.g. Occupational Safety and Health Administration or Safeserv). This would include, but is not necessarily limited to, CDCP CTE certificates with more

than 48 contact hours, locally approved certificates eligible for inclusion on the Employment Training Provider List, or certificates that meet the threshold for Title IV Federal Student Aid.

- Completion of any for–credit college award, certificate, degree, or transfer that is not developmental.

Additional Metric–Occupational Skills Gain: The AEBG field teams stressed the value of capturing data on students who achieve milestones in CTE programs, but who do not complete their credential or certificate because they obtain employment or realize a short term goal related to other occupational or personal goals. As a result, the committees voted to implement a measure for an occupational skills gain that leverages two of the additional WIOA categories for a measurable skills gain:

- Satisfactory or better progress towards established milestones, such as completion of an on-the-job training, one year of apprenticeship, or similar milestones reported by an employer or training provider.

- Successful passage of an exam required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills, evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as a knowledge based exam.

Such milestones or competency benchmarks could be captured in some cases by course completion related to occupational skills, passage of an exam related to an occupational attainment, or other measure. The committees acknowledged additional work needed to be done to clarify and expand the above definitions. For the purpose of an occupational skills gain, workforce preparation and occupational safety would be included in this metric.

(D) Placement Into Jobs: AEBG will align data reporting to WIOA to capture employment two and four quarters after exit using two methodologies:

- A match of AEBG Participant data and the EDD Wage File.

- Implementation of a participant post-exit survey to capture data for AEBG participants who do not provide social security numbers and who are unlikely to show up in a data match against the EDD wage file.

(E) Improved Wages: AEBG will capture increased wages for participants using the same EDD wage file match and survey methodologies mentioned above. To align data collection with WIOA and other reporting systems, AEBG will report the following:

- Participant wage gain four quarters after exit

- Participant median wage two quarters after exit

- Participant attainment of a living wage

This reporting metric exceeds WIOA requirements which requires only median income two quarters after exit, however, it is aligned to outcome measures tracked for the Chancellor's Strong Workforce Program.

(F) Transition to Postsecondary: K–12 adult schools and community colleges both offer CTE pathways that include college level content and that are accreditable under Title IV Federal Student Aid as postsecondary credential programs. For that reason, AEBG will define transition to postsecondary in two ways:

- A student who transitions from ABE, ASE or ESL K–12 adult or college noncredit program into a CTE program at a K–12 adult school, community college noncredit or for credit college

- A student who transitions from any ABE, ASE or ESL K–12 adult or college noncredit program into a for-credit college program that is not developmental

AEBG will use CTE data flags in TE to track transition into CTE programs from basic skills in K–12 adult schools and will conduct quarterly data matches of AEBG K–12 data with the community college MIS system to capture students who enroll into college CTE and for credit programs after leaving K–12 adult.

COMMON ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Background: To make recommendations for a unified Data and Accountability System, practitioners had to contend with the best mechanisms for assessment of student competencies and skills gain. This is important in two contexts: the initial placement of participants into appropriate programs and assessment of student progress. Disconnects become especially important when participants transition from one system to the next;

particularly if college assessments place participants at a lower level than the K–12 adult school they came from.

Placement: In K–12 adult schools and community colleges, practitioners use multiple measures for placement that takes into account student goals, scores on standardized tests, and other assessment tools. The precise combination of instruments varies from one institution to the next, taking into account the populations served, the local curriculum, institutional resources, and established local norms.

NRS approved assessment instruments are in wide use by both K–12 adult schools and community colleges as the designated assessment instruments for WIOA Title II programs in California. Not only are NRS approved assessments used for initial placement, re-testing is used to measure skills gain for ABE, ASE, and ESL students. WIOA Title II requires that institutions use a federally-approved test (CASAS is one option) for both placement and skills gain measurements, which are tied to payment points in the State of California. All federally-approved tests are normed to EFL established through the federal Department of Education's NRS. In this way, student skills and curriculum can be normed against a common standard.

However, community colleges face a disincentive for using NRS approved instruments as a primary placement tool. The Student Success Act of 2012 specifies that if colleges use a test to place students into developmental education, they must use the common test designated by the CCCCO as part of the Common Assessment Initiative (CAI). This test is currently under development, so the directive has not yet been implemented.

In 2009, a broadly inclusive faculty process established common ESL, English, and math rubrics across credit and noncredit community college curricula that mapped content to the various levels below transfer, as designated by an MIS code CB21. In this process noncredit faculty cross-walked the CB21 levels to the National Reporting System educational functioning levels. In the documentation for the rubric, the gap between content is called out explicitly:

One level prior to transfer is reserved for non-ASE courses as the faculty did not feel that the ASE courses actually met the outcomes of this level as defined in the Reading, Writing and Math CB 21 rubrics. This gap represents the reality of the GED curriculum and the mismatch between outcomes defined for this level in GED and California standards and college-level entry skills.[4]

Summary of CB21 and NRS Levels from the CB21 Rubric

Transfer level English, Reading or Math
CB 21 A – reserved for non-ASE courses in English, Reading or Math (intentional gap)
CB 21 B - ASE (Adult Secondary Education) highest level
CB 21 C – ASE (Adult Secondary Education) lowest level
CB 21 D – ABE (Adult Basic Education) highest level
CB 21 E – ABE (Adult Basic Education) intermediate level
CB 21 F – ABE (Adult Basic Education) beginning and literacy level

Student Progress: For WIOA Title II funded programs in California, measurable skills gains are recorded based on the CASAS test scores which are normed to the NRS EFL's. As is the case with placement, multiple measures are often used to determine the specific courses that participants should take, looking at a more holistic set of metrics. For example, a student might meet the cut score to go from ESL to ASE, but remain in an ESL program because his speaking fluency is not sufficient for the higher-level courses. Similarly, a student may meet the cut score to meet an EFL attainment, but not advance to the next level course because their speaking or listening fluency is not sufficient for the higher-level course.

In contrast, community colleges have put considerable emphasis on student progression from one CB21 level to the next, as well as passing English and math gateway courses to evaluate student success. Progress along this developmental pipeline is used for the purpose of basic skills funding, using the Basic Skills Progress Tracker—a tool on the CCCCO Data Mart that shows student progression and provides disaggregated data. Progress from developmental to

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[4] Coding the Student Progress Pathway through Basic Skills English, ESL, Mathematics and Reading Courses in California Community Colleges (2009).

transfer-level coursework is also featured on the Student Success Scorecard. Most K–12 adult schools focus on progression within course sequences as well, particularly in the context of ASE programs where participants are working toward diplomas or high school equivalencies.

The Common Assessment Initiative test, unlike CASAS, was designed to only be used when a student first enrolls in college, to support initial placement into ESL, English, and math—it is not intended for pre- and post-testing. Therefore, the reporting associated with the test provides information as used in the placement process and high-level summary data for faculty. Assessment results are not provided in a manner that would allow for comparison between testing intervals.

Transition: Given that placement processes are locally defined, there is no consistent policy that governs the types of courses participants must enroll in upon transitioning from K–12 adult school to community college, or between adult education providers. Even in the context of credit developmental education, placement is based on local curricula and policies, meaning that a student with the same competencies might be assigned to different CB21 levels and advised to take different courses at various colleges.

For adult education participants, particularly given gaps that have already been identified between the highest levels of adult school and the level before transfer, transitions may be rocky. There is no objective measure of whether participants lack sufficient preparation or are being under-placed. Many consortia are working to align their curriculum through AEBG to address these challenges, but articulation agreements are being negotiated between each institution, as opposed to a statewide set of standards. And without consistent data definitions, it will be impossible to examine how prevalent the gaps truly are.

AEBG Assessment Policies and Practices: Despite the policy and practice barriers that make it difficult to establish a menu of common assessments and policies regarding placement into adult education programs, significant work that has already been done could be leveraged to create a common standard. The CB21 creates a high-level crosswalk between measurements used in the K–12 adult school and community college systems that AEBG will leverage to align assessment across the two systems.

In the Common Assessment Initiative development phase the competency maps underlying CB21 were expanded and normed by college faculty against multiple assessment rubrics including NRS, the Smarter Balanced Assessment System, the California Noncredit and Adult Education ESL Model Curriculum Standards, and the intersegmental faculty standards for college readiness among others. This resulted in the development of competency maps that

provide a much more nuanced continuum of pre-collegiate skills, knowledge, and abilities from the lowest competency addressed by community colleges to the highest, with key intermediate milestones identified along the way. The maps reflect many skills that are well below grade eight state standards and were reviewed by adult education and community-based providers who felt they tracked the critical concepts taught in adult education.

AEBG will create a unified crosswalk that would allow for alignment and consistent measurement of skills across both NRS EFLs and CB21 levels, with the ability to access the more granular information available in the CAI test when it becomes available. This crosswalk will be created by convening a working group of K–12 adult schools, community college noncredit, and community college credit faculty in fall 2017.

Once established, K–12 adult schools and community colleges will be instructed to leverage the crosswalk to inform, and accelerate the development of articulation agreements and local placement policies. Because the rubric will norm the content of both tests and courses, adult education providers can continue to use their local instruments and polices for placement and measuring skills gain, but will have the ability to evaluate offerings and student outcomes from other institutions. Demonstrated mastery of concepts included in the crosswalk could also be used as a multiple measure to allow adult education students to transition directly to the most appropriate college courses, without having to go through an extensive placement assessment.

The crosswalk will also be used to conduct analyses regarding consistency of curriculum and gaps in sequences at the state level. For example, the committee recommended that additional metrics be tracked to determine the rate at which adult school students are placed into developmental courses upon enrolling in community college, particularly those who enroll in credit basic skills courses. These metrics have already been identified in the LaunchBoard data element dictionary.

SUMMARY

The policies and practices described in this report will allow the AEBG office to provide comprehensive participation and outcome reporting to the state Legislature on a yearly basis. This data will validate the state's ongoing investments into the AEBG program as well as the parallel state and federal investments into enhanced noncredit programs, Strong Workforce, Perkins, and WIOA. The AEBG Data and Accountability System will document the increase of services to adults as a result of consortia activities and increased outcomes over time–more and better.

In 2016–17 and 2017–18 the AEBG office will compile the first unified dataset for adult learners participating in K–12 adult and community college non-credit programs including comprehensive employment, wage, and transition to postsecondary outcomes for that population. This data will be shared in the annual reports to the Legislature, and it will be warehoused in the CCCCO LaunchBoard for access by consortia to support program expansion, new program development, and data driven program improvement practices in the field.

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