

Adult Education Block Grant

Defining CTE Programs and Measuring their
Outcomes Part II

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White Paper for CTE
Assessment Committee
Meeting 2

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Overview

This paper was prepared for the Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) Career and Technical Education (CTE) Assessment Field Committee to guide discussions on student outcomes related to CTE programs and workforce development for the AEBG initiative. The purpose of the CTE Assessment Field Committee is to propose definitions for program areas, and parameters for CTE measurable skills gains and completion outcomes among adult learners in consortia receiving AEBG funds allocated by the state under AB104 (2015; Chapter 13, Sec's 38, 39 and 40.

On request from CDE and the Chancellor's Office, a draft version of the report to the legislature was prepared for internal review by the state agencies, using feedback and guidance from the CTE, Basic Skills, and Data and Accountability meetings thus far. To support transparency in the overall AEBG data and accountability process, key definitions and elements from that report are included here with supporting guidance from WIOA and other resources. This includes:

- Proposed processes for data collection and reporting for K12 adult school and community colleges in the 2017/18 and 2018/19 program years.
- Guidance related to completion, measurable skills, and postsecondary credentials from WIOA and other systems considered by the committees in making preliminary recommendations.
- Proposed definitions for AEBG programs and populations
- Proposed completion and measurable skill gains for AEBG

AEBG Reporting Systems

In the AEBG Data and Accountability Committee (DAC), practitioners and state leadership evaluated how to best leverage TOPSpro Enterprise and the community colleges MIS system for reporting AEBG student enrollment and outcomes. College practitioners, in particular, reported challenges in data reporting due to the mismatch between MIS fields and required data elements in TOPSpro Enterprise (TE) and challenges in the use of CCCApply for enrollment of adult school students. K12 practitioners strongly supported the continued use of TE for reporting student enrollment and outcomes. After extensive discussion, the DAC recommended:

- That TE be used for student data reporting for all K12 adult school students *and* students in WIOA Title II funded programs,

- That the Chancellor’s Office retrofit MIS and CCC Apply to capture AEBG metrics, making it possible to track the same elements captured by TE for all community college AEBG students. The use of MIS and CCC Apply for AEBG data reporting would begin in the 2018/2019 program year,
- That all AEBG K12 adult school providers and community colleges continue to use TE for quarterly data reporting in the 2017/2018 academic year to ensure consistency during the transition to MIS for college data. The Chancellor’s Office will use end of year MIS data extracts to supplement TE data in 2017/18 to fill any gaps in data collection.
- That the Chancellor’s Office will do a comparison of TE data and MIS end of year data to build an initial baseline data set for comparison and to debug the data matching and reporting process.

WIOA, State, and Federal Guidance

Completion: WIOA and Assembly Bill 104 both count postsecondary completion as outcome indicators for participants:

- **AB104:** Completion of postsecondary certificates, degrees, or training programs
- **WIOA:** The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma.¹

Neither WIOA or AB104 provide precise definitions for postsecondary credentials, K12 adult schools and colleges are subject to different regulations that define certificate or credential minimum criteria. These were all considered in discussions regarding the recommended completion metric definition later in this paper.

- **WIOA ETPL:** In practice, most training programs on the Employment Training Panel List are under 12 months in length, are linked to regional in-demand occupations and must provide minimum completion and placement rates for participants.
- **Perkins:** Both colleges and K12 adult schools receive Perkins funding and are subject to federal reporting requirements, which specify at least two CTE courses in sequence that includes an introductory course, concentrator course, and capstone course. While individual courses may provide certificates recognizing attainment of course competencies, a

¹ Secondary diplomas or equivalents only count for this measure if is employed or enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit.

student is not considered a completer for perkins until they complete the identified sequence and capstone.

- **Title IV Federal Student Aid:** In addition to community colleges, many K12 adult schools are accredited as Vocational Postsecondary Institutions and have programs approved for students to receive federal student aid. Most adult schools participating in Title IV programs are accredited through the Council on Occupational Education and provide programs at least 15 weeks in length with 600 clock hours and must lead to gainful employment. Programs must also demonstrate attainment of a 60% completion rate, 70% in field placement rate, and 70% occupational licensure rate.
- **Community College Certificates:** In California community colleges, short-term certificates are defined by the Chancellor's Office as 30 units or less, and Chancellor's Office approved certificates of achievement may be as low as 18 units. CDCP certificates for enhanced noncredit funding must include at least two courses. The Strong Workforce Program incentive funding formula recognizes both approved and local certificates, but does not include any credit certificate under 6 units or any noncredit certificate under 48 contact hours.
- **Locally Approved Certificates:** Colleges and K12 adult schools both offer locally approved certificates that include recognition by an industry advisory committee. This includes college for credit certificates less than 18 units, which while not approved by the Chancellor's Office, are reportable in MIS.

Measurable Skills Gain: WIOA includes measurable skills gain as one of the five indicators for participants in education or training programs leading to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment. Along with credential attainment, it is one of the two performance indicators that can be counted for a participant prior to exit from services. They include:

- Achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the post-secondary education level.
- Attainment of a secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent.
- Secondary/post-secondary transcript or report card that shows a participant is meeting the state's academic standards – 12 credit hours in a semester if enrolled full-time or 12 credit hours over a year if enrolled part-time.
- Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of on-the-job training or completion of one year of

an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training.

- Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.²

All participants in WIOA AEFLA Title II funded programs are considered in an educational program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and are subject to the WIOA measurable skills gain indicator. For ABE, ASE, and ESL programs, this requires that the participant demonstrate achievement of at least one educational functioning level gain in one of three ways:

- Comparison of skill gains through pre- and post-testing of participants using a National Reporting System-approved testing instrument.
- For participants in state-recognized adult high school programs only, states may report educational gain through the awarding of credits or Carnegie units.
- A student who exits a program below the post-secondary level and enrolls in post-secondary education and training.³

Preapprenticeship: The Department of Labor (DOL) provides a clear definition and quality framework for effective pre-apprenticeship programs, which has also been adopted by the CCCC under its California Apprenticeship Initiative. DOL defines pre-apprenticeship as a “program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship programs,” and includes:

- Approved training and curriculum based on industry standards and approved by a documented registered apprenticeship partner.
- Recruitment, educational, and pre-vocational strategies that prepare under-represented, disadvantaged, or low-income individuals to meet the entry requisites of one or more registered apprenticeship programs.
- Access to appropriate support services.

² US Department of Education: Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (2016); “Program Memorandum OCTAE 17-2: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV Core Programs. <http://www.nrsweb.org/foundations/Program%20Memorandum%2017-2%20OCTAE.pdf>

³ US Department of Education: Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (2016); “Program Memorandum OCTAE 17-2: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV Core Programs. <http://www.nrsweb.org/foundations/Program%20Memorandum%2017-2%20OCTAE.pdf>

- Meaningful hands-on training that does not displace existing paid employees.
- Formal direct entry or articulation agreements with its registered apprenticeship partners.⁴

Integrated Education and Training: Under WIOA, integrated education and training (IET) means a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for educational and career advancement.⁵ Specifically, IET programs must include:

- Foundational Skills including contextualized basic math, English, or spoken English education,
- Workforce Preparation including what is often called work readiness, soft skills, or workforce preparation,
- Workforce training meaning specific skills and competencies required to enter into a defined occupation

IET programs are designed to address the barriers to workforce success for adult for adults with a variety of barriers to employment, recognizing that there are multiple competency domains related to success in a given occupation and that adults may have barriers beyond technical competency to perform a specific job.

IET is a fundable strategy across all levels of service delivery in WIOA AEFLA Title II and Title I, and can include a wide variety of WIOA Title I career and training services as well as adult basic education and English language civics. Participants in IET programs are reportable under WIOA Title II in the National Reporting System, and states are strongly encouraged to invest in IET models that not only include foundational skills but also incorporate supportive services (IET+S). IET programs are considered integrated if they balance instruction across the three components (foundational skills, workforce preparation, workforce training), activities occur simultaneously, and they use occupationally-relevant materials for basic skills as well as workforce training activities.⁶

⁴ Department of Labor Training and Employment Notice 13-12 (2012). *Defining a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program and Related Tools and Resources*. https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEN/TEN_13-12.pdf

⁵ WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy. [www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/docs/wioa/WIOA Title II.doc](http://www.wa.gov/esd/1stop/docs/wioa/WIOA_Title_II.doc)

⁶ CLASP; *Integrated Education and Training: Model Programs for Building Career Pathways for Participants at Every Skill Level*. (2016); <http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/WIOA-IET-Model-Programs.pdf>

AEBG Programs and Populations

Program Universe: AEBG will collect quarterly and yearly enrollment and outcome data on all K12 adult education and community college noncredit students participating in the 7 AEBG program areas. This will include K12 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 K12 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 of study of AEBG by the Center for Law and Social Policy identifies that the the 7 “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 (ABE, ASE, 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.⁷

For practical purposes, it is useful to distinguish ‘populations’ from ‘services’ to create clearer protocols for data collection and reporting on the effectiveness of

⁷ Mortrude, Judy and Anna Cielinski (2017); *Prosperity through Partnership: Opportunities for AEBG to Strengthen Systems and Communities*; Center for Law and Social Policy.

<http://aebg.cccco.edu/Portals/1/docs/AEBG%20Reports/6.6.17%20Prosperity%20Through%20Partnership%20-%20Opportunities%20for%20AEBG%20to%20Strengthen%20Sy....pdf>

AEBG direct and leveraged investments. Additionally, practitioners identified where there were specific program models such as preapprenticeship or Integrated Education and Training 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, non-native English speakers of English 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 skills and study skills. These programs include courses that are below Low Adult Secondary Education/9th grade level.
- [Adult Secondary Education \(ASE\)](#): provides instruction in foundational academic skills, such as reading, writing, and basic mathematics, as well as learning skills and study skills. These programs include courses that are at the Low Adult Secondary Education/9th grade level and above and/or lead to a high school diploma, GED, or high school equivalency certificate.
- [Short Term Career and Technical Education \(CTE\)](#): 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, English language learners, ex-offenders, foster care youth, individuals with disabilities, homeless, long-term unemployed, low-income, low levels of literacy, migrant farmworkers, seasonal farmworkers, those exhausting TANF/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 an MOU or formal agreement.
- **Integrated Education and Training (IET):** Offers instruction that simultaneously provides foundational (basic) skills, workforce preparation (readiness) skills, and workforce training with contextualized instruction and an occupational focus.
- **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.

AEBG Reporting Elements and Definitions

A critical step in developing the data system for reporting on adult education is the development of a comment data element dictionary for community colleges and K12 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 TOPSpro Enterprise and the college MIS system should be used by practitioners for reporting their student data. Included here are key elements and definitions related to that dictionary.

1. **Number of Adults Served by the Consortium:** Reportable Individuals which includes all K12 adult education or community college noncredit students who 1 or more hours of instructional contact hours in any of the 7 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. **How Many Adults Served by Members of the Consortium Who Have Demonstrated the Following Measures of Progress:** Students tracked for educational or workforce attainment will include K12 adult school or community college noncredit adult Participants in each the 7 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 gains for *all* AEBG basic skills programs which include Adult basic

education (ABE), Adult secondary education (ASE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and English Language Civics education (EL Civics) in K12 adult education and community college noncredit programs. AEBG is adopting the WIOA definition of a measurable skills gain, which for ABE, ASE, ESL, and EL Civics includes the attainment of an NRS defined Educational Functioning Level (EFL) documenting increased competency in reading and writing, numeracy (ABE/ASE), or English speaking and listening skills.⁸

Adult Basic and Adult Secondary Education: Allowable mechanisms for measuring attainment of an educational functioning level in K12 adult education and community college noncredit ABE and ASE programs include:

- **WIOA Title II AEFLA programs:** Title II funded programs will use CASAS National Reporting System approved CASAS pre- and post-testing instruments. Title II ASE programs have the option of using completion of Carnegie units for documenting a measurable skills gain.
- **Non WIOA Title II funded programs:** Programs not receiving WIOA Title II funds will have the option of using attainment of a functional level tied to completion of a course using a crosswalk of the National Reporting Service EFL's and the community college CB21 course rubric for levels below transfer.

English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Civics (EL Civics) Programs: Allowable mechanisms for measuring attainment of an educational functioning level in ESL and EL Civics programs include:

- **WIOA Title II AEFLA programs:** Title II funded programs will use CASAS National Reporting System approved CASAS pre- and post-testing instruments. For EL Civics providers will use the CASAS Civics Objectives and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs) which are tied to the CDE payment points for EL Civics,
- **Non WIOA Title II funded programs:** Programs not receiving WIOA Title II funds will have the option of using attainment of a functional level tied to completion of a course or a CDCP certificate using a crosswalk of the National Reporting Service EFL's and the community college CB21 course rubric for levels below transfer. For

⁸ Division of Adult Education and Literacy, US Department of Education (2016); *Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System for Adult Education*. <http://www.nrsweb.org/docs/NRS%20Implementation%20Guidelines%20rev%20to%20February%202016.pdf>.

El Civics, non WIOA providers can report measurable skills gain through the completion of an EL Civics course based on a crosswalk of EL Civics competencies between K12 adult schools and community colleges. College 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 include participants who transition to a new or higher level program area such as:

- Students who transition from ESL to ABE or ASE,
- Students who transition from from ABE to ASE,
- Students 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 Their Recognized Equivalents:** For capturing diploma or high school equivalency completion AEBG will require K12 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 K12 adult schools and MIS for community college noncredit programs. WIOA II agencies will enter information into TE for reporting to CDE for payment points.
- Student participation in high school equivalency programs using TE for K12 adult providers and appropriate MIS course flags for community college noncredit programs. WIOA II funded agencies will continue to report completion of GED, HiSet or TASK in TE for payment points.
- 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 TASK attainment data provided by these 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. OSHA 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 (ETPL), or certificates that meet the threshold for Perkins or Title IV Federal Student Aid.
- Completion of any for-credit college award – certificate, degree, or transfer that is not developmental. This is a longitudinal measure and would be captured via data match in the Launchboard after the student has transitioned into a for credit postsecondary program.

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 shorter 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 OJT, 1 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.

Additional CTE Program Metrics – In addition to capturing the above, the field teams recommended the following CTE related reporting elements:

- **Pre-Apprenticeship:** That AEBG distribute guidance on the formal definition of preapprenticeship using the DOL quality indicators. In

TE providers will use the preapprenticeship flag for capturing students participating in preapprenticeship and MIS will implement a preapprenticeship course flag for college tracking.

- **Integrated Education and Training:** That, similar to preapprenticeship, that AEBG adopt the WIOA definition of integrated education and training. In TE providers will use the IET special programs flag for tracking IET participation and the Chancellor's office will consider expansion of the Career Advancement Academies Special Populations Flag to identify students participating in IET programs at the colleges.
 - **Adults Entering/Reentering the Workforce:** AEBG will perform a data extract using special populations criteria to identify individuals with barriers to employment relevant to this program area such as the long term unemployed, displaced homemakers, reentry after incarceration, within 2 years of exiting TANF, etc. Providers will not be expected to report on this area.
 - **Workforce Preparation:** In TE providers will use the workforce readiness program and milestones flags to capture students participating in workforce readiness programs and realizing skills gains. In MIS this will be captured by using workforce readiness course flags.
- (D) **Placement Into Jobs:** AEBG will align data reporting to WIOA to capture employment 2 and 4 quarters after exit using two methodologies:
- A match of AEBG Participant data and the EDD Wage File.
 - Implementation of a participant post-exit survey 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 two 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](#): K12 adult schools and community colleges both offer CTE pathways that include college level content and that are creditable 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 K12 adult or college noncredit program into a CTE program at a K12 adult school, community college noncredit or for credit college,
- A student who transitions from any ABE, ASE or ESL K12 adult or college noncredit program into a for credit college program that is not developmental,

AEBG will use CTE data flags in TOPSpro to track transition into CTE programs from basic skills in K12 adult schools and will conduct quarterly data matches of AEBG K12 data with the community college MIS system to capture students who enroll into college CTE and for credit programs after leaving K12 adult. TE will track transition into K12 CTE programs from ABE, ASE, and ESL for K12 adult schools.



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