ADULT EDUCATION REGIONAL PLANNING

2015

California Department of Education
Tom Torlakson, Superintendent

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Brice W. Harris, Chancellor

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March 1, 2015

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

Dear Gov. Brown:

Subject: Assembly Bill 86, Adult Education Regional Planning Process Report

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and the California Department of Education are pleased to present the final Adult Education Regional Planning Process report for 2014-15.

Assembly Bill 86, Section 76, Article 3 charged our two agencies with jointly implementing an adult education planning process with the shared goal of better serving the educational needs of California's adult learners. This report provides recommendations to support the implementation of an effective adult education system. These recommendations reflect our summary of the plans that were developed by the local consortia and submitted to the agency. The link to the regional consortia plans is provided in this report.

The guiding principles of inclusion, transparency, equality and representation of adult learners have been the driving force behind our planning effort.

Assembly Bill 86 provided a valuable opportunity to rethink and redesign an educational system establishing linkages for adult learners. If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact the AB 86 Cabinet via Van Ton-Quinlivan, vice chancellor of workforce and economic development at the California Community Colleges, by phone at 916-327-5492 or by email at vtquinlivan@cccco.edu. You may also contact Alejandro Espinoza, legislative representative, at the California Department of Education by phone at 916-319-0676 or by email at aespinoza@cde.ca.gov.

Thank you for your support in building an adult education regional planning process and your commitment to California's adult learners.

Sincerely,

Brice W. Harris, Chancellor
California Community Colleges

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

Adult Education Regional Planning

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For more than one hundred and fifty years, until 2008, California was an undisputed national leader in its commitment to adult education. The state's investment in adult learners topped $750 million, a sum greater than the combined total of every other state in the nation. However, for the past several years recession and fiscal crisis have left adult education battered and underfunded.

Since the late 1960s California's adult education system has been shared between the K-12 adult schools (K-12 Adult) and the community colleges. This governance structure exists with little coordination or alignment of policy and practice. Institutional practices impede the transition of students from basic skills courses into postsecondary education and training programs.

In response, the 2013-14 Assembly Bill 86, Section 76, Article 3 (AB 86) charged the California Department of Education (CDE) and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with jointly implementing a planning process to integrate and improve adult education. The legislation appropriated $25 million to distribute to 70 regional consortia, composed of at least one community college and one K-12 district, as well as other partners, to assess their regions and develop shared plans.

Under the leadership of State Superintendent Tom Torlakson and Chancellor Brice W. Harris, the CDE and Chancellor's Office engaged in a collaborative effort, created a Cabinet, appointed a Work Group, and established the principles that would guide the two year planning process: transparency, inclusion, and a focus on students. The unified response and commitment to creating an improved adult education system was shared by both the CDE and the Chancellor's Office.

As directed by AB 86, this report details the needs that emerged from the 70 consortia's reports and the joint recommendations of the CDE and the Chancellor's Office. Senate Bill 173 (Liu) also required this report to address the following in the provision of adult education through the K-12 Adult and community college systems: accountability; assessment, evaluation, and data collection; and fees.
The recommendations in this report are designed to strengthen the foundation for a new adult education system in California.

The adult education landscape is a challenging one. Adult education is intended to serve native English speakers with low levels of literacy and numeracy, high school dropouts who want to earn a diploma or GED, high school graduates who lack the skills they need to succeed in postsecondary education or training, immigrants who want to learn English or obtain citizenship, and workers who seek short-term vocational training to improve their career opportunities. Adult education also provides programs for incarcerated individuals and parolees.

The landscape faced by the AB 86 regional consortia as they began their planning process was one of rising demand for adult education coupled with a steep decline in resources. A growing number of Californians needed adult education services, partially due to the shifting demographics of the state. At the same time, the severe recession led to a sharp drop in funding for adult education programs and a serious fall in enrollments, estimated to be at least 800,000 students.

The adult education system that the AB 86 consortia were tasked with improving was a complex and confusing one divided into three pieces: the K-12 adult schools, community college noncredit divisions, and community college credit divisions. The many years of operating separately has produced different cultures and practices, and different administrative and legal requirements.

AB 86 provided the catalyst and structures for change. In every region over the past year, the AB 86 regional consortia have made major strides toward assessing residents' and employers' needs and developing a common plan to address those needs. Specifically, the consortia identified six challenges:

- Insufficient availability of adult education programs;
- Need for innovation in adult education programs;
- Inadequate academic, social, and financial supports for students;
- Inconsistency across the K-12 and community college districts regarding assessments for placement;
- Lack of a shared accountability approach for monitoring student progress; and,
- Limited regional coordination.

To address these challenges, this report offers the following recommendations:

- ***Increase service levels to meet the demand for adult education in the state of California.*** California must provide adult education services to a much greater share of our residents who need them. To do so, we must increase capacity by hiring more teachers and counselors, restore and expand adult education program offerings across the state, and reinstate adequate dedicated funding for adult education programs.

- ***Improve programming to better prepare students for post-secondary education and/or transition to workforce.*** Programs and curricula must be renewed as well as restored to better meet the changing needs of California's population and economy. Curricula must be strengthened and aligned, and professional development for faculty and staff should be enhanced so that they can fully support students' needs.

- ***Provide adequate academic, social, and financial supports for all students to lower barriers to enrollment and promote student success.*** Adult learners need academic and social supports to successfully achieve their educational and career goals. Programs must provide enhanced academic supports such as tutoring, mentoring, and individualized learning plans, and offer social supports such as transportation and childcare. Districts also should vary hours and sites to make programs accessible. California should ensure that there are no financial barriers to access.

- ***Align assessments for placement between the K-12 Adult and community college providers to reduce barriers to student progress toward their educational and career goals.*** Currently, the community colleges and K-12 Adult systems employ different assessment instruments and policies. The lack of alignment prevents students from easily moving between institutions and programs. The CDE contracts to offer the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) assessment. A Common Assessment Initiative (CAI) is underway in the community colleges. The process of alignment is complex and will require further planning and resources. The CDE and Chancellor's Office should establish a working group to identify a common suite of assessments that can be used by both providers.

- ***Develop a common accountability approach to documenting and evaluating student progress between the K-12 Adult and community college systems.*** A common approach to monitoring students is essential to understand their progress from provider to provider, from one system to the other, and into the labor market. The community college and K-12 Adult systems therefore should create shared data protocols capable of monitoring both inputs (e.g. costs, activities) and outputs (e.g. educational gains, employment, and wages).

- ***Maintain and extend structures for ongoing regional coordination among adult schools, community colleges, and community partners.*** The AB 86 regional consortia have been essential vehicles for on-going coordination among the adult schools, community colleges, and other community partners. The work of the consortia must be strengthened and broadened, and they must continue to have the financial and other resources necessary to support this work.

BACKGROUND

For more than one hundred and fifty years, California has been a national leader in its commitment to adult education. California opened its first adult school in 1856 and today there are 214 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and 112 community colleges reporting adult education student enrollment.

Adult schools, operated by K-12 school districts and community colleges are California's primary providers of adult education programs. Originally adult schools and community colleges were under one administrative roof. That changed in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the Legislature transferred governance of the community colleges from the State Board of Education to their own board of governors. Since then, responsibility for adult education has been shared between the two systems.

Many years of operating separately produced different cultures and practices, and different administrative and legal requirements. Too often, adult education students found the complexity difficult to navigate, and the disconnections between the systems slowed student progress and had a negative effect on student outcomes.

In the past five years, both K-12 Adult and the community colleges separately implemented new initiatives to improve student performance. CDE's adult education program launched a strategic planning process that resulted in a plan to focus adult schools more squarely on transitioning students to postsecondary education and the labor market, in addition to their mission of immigrant integration. The community colleges implemented a statewide Basic Skills Initiative. Inside and outside both systems, however, concerns continued to be raised about the lack of coordination.

Beginning in 2009, the Great Recession led to a sharp drop in state funding for adult education programs and a serious fall in enrollments, estimated to be at least 800,000 students. Significantly, K-12 school districts were given the flexibility to divert adult education monies to other educational purposes, and many used these funds for their K-12 programs.

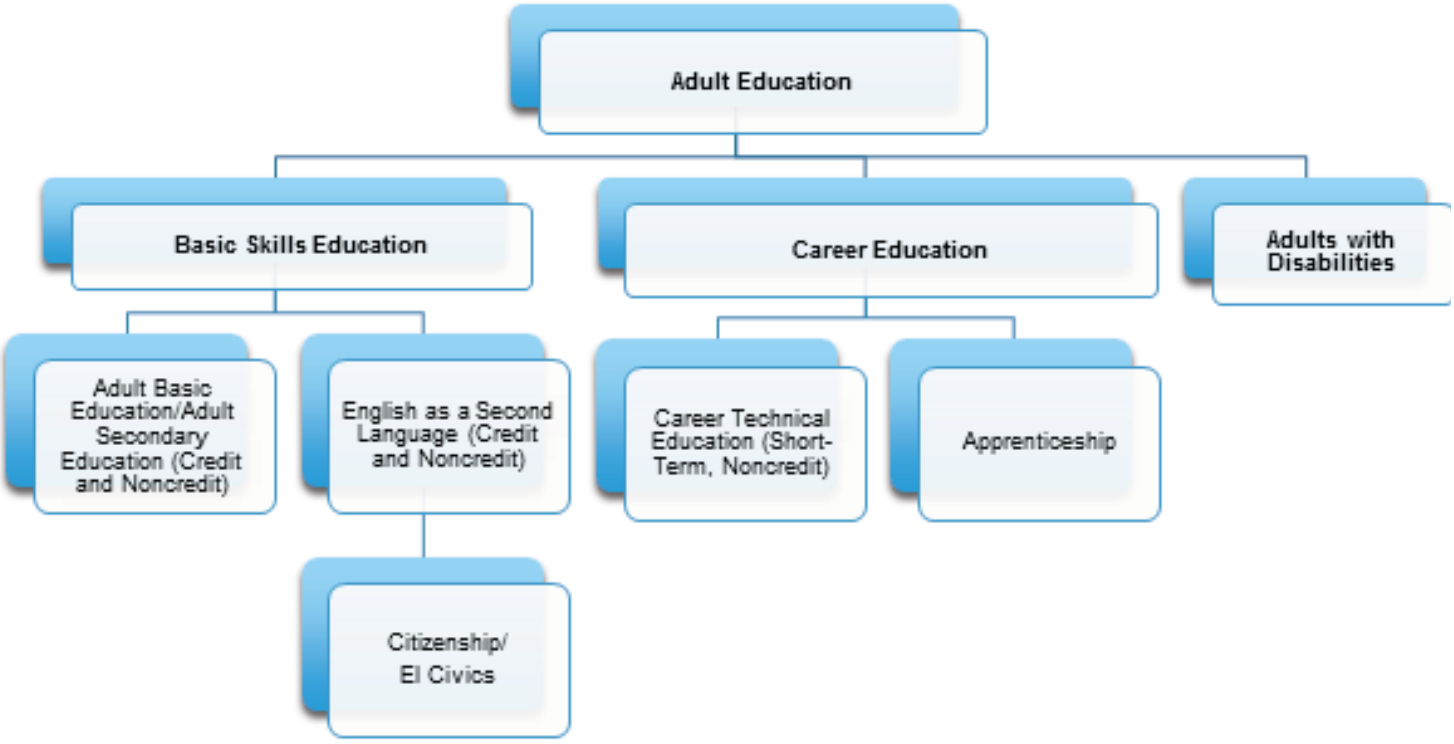
In December 2012, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) produced a major report, entitled "Restructuring California's Adult Education System," warning of the erosion of the adult education mission and pointing to the need for systemic reforms.[1] In response to the LAO's findings, in 2013 the governor proposed and Legislature approved AB 86, which charged the CDE and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office with jointly implementing an adult education planning process. In September 2014, the Legislature also passed SB 173,which tasked the CDE and Chancellor's Office to develop joint recommendations for assessment and placement practices, accountability, and fees.

AB 86 appropriated $25 million to distribute to regional consortia, composed of at least one K-12 Adult and one community college district, to develop joint plans for serving adult education students in their region. Across the state, 70 consortia were formed, representing all 72 community college and 320 K-12 school districts. (See Table 1 for the wide range of participating AB 86 partners. Not all partners enroll adult education students.)

Table 1: AB 86 Participating Regional Partners

AB 86 Partners	School Districts	CCCs	Workforce Partners	COE	ROPs	Jails	State Partners	County Social Services	CBO	Libraries
AB 86 Project Plan	320	112	59	36	22	31	29	44	50	39
Reported Enrollment	214	111	18	14	12	13	9	10	34	16

Figure 1: AB 86 Adult Education Programs



Consortia were asked to develop plans to address the five AB 86 program areas:

- Elementary and secondary basic skills (ABE/ASE), including classes required for a GED or high school diploma;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes for immigrants;
- Education programs for adults with disabilities;
- Short-term career technical education (CTE) programs with high employment potential; and,
- Apprenticeship programs.

Each consortium identified current adult education services and service gaps and developed a joint plan to address them. The programs included in this planning process (and reflected in the data in this report) were all noncredit, enhanced noncredit, and credit basic skills programs (ABE/ASE and ESL), noncredit CTE programs, noncredit programs for adults with disabilities, and formal, state-recognized apprenticeship programs. (See Figure 1) The large credit CTE programs of the community colleges and the many pre-apprenticeship programs were not included. Also not included were other programs offered by K-12 Adult schools and some community col-

Figure 2: AB 86 Implementation Timeline	
10/03/13	Survey of Interest Released
10/11/13-12/13/13	Informational Webinars
10/22/13	Survey of Interest Due
10/28/13-10/31/13	Town Hall Meetings Held Across State
12/19/13	Certification of Eligibility Released
02/24/14	Certification of Eligibility, Intent to Participate Member Forms, Management Plan, and Preliminary Budget Summary Due
07/03/14	Regional Comprehensive Plan (Completed to Date) and Expenditure Report Due
12/21/14	Regional Comprehensive Plan (Completed to Date) and Expenditure Report Due
01/31/15	Expenditure Report Due
03/01/15	Final Regional Comprehensive Plan Due
04/30/15	Expenditure Report Due
06/30/15	Performance Report Due

lege noncredit divisions, such as arts courses, parenting courses, and courses for older adults.

At the state level, the CDE and Chancellor's Office established the AB 86 Cabinet, composed of eight members, four from each agency, to oversee this process. In turn, the Cabinet convened the AB 86 Work Group comprised of twelve members, four representing K-12 Adult programs, four representing adult education programs in community college districts, and four staff members (two each from the CDE and Chancellor's Office). The Work Group was eventually expanded to include more stakeholders. The Cabinet also created an expert group to propose recommendations in response to SB 173. (See Figure 2 for AB 86 implementation timeline.)

This report describes the restructuring of California's adult education system. This report synthesizes the key needs identified by the 70 regional consortia and presents the joint recommendations of the CDE and the Chancellor's Office. Fundamental to each recommendation is a commitment to student access and student success:

- Ensuring that a growing number of Californians can access the adult education programs they need to prepare them for college and careers,
- Boosting the number who achieve core competencies across the five program areas,
- Increasing the share of adult education students who enter postsecondary education and/or the workforce, and,
- Supporting immigrants as they integrate into the fabric of California's communities.

Building on the statewide effort initiated by AB 86, this report proposes to achieve these goals by:

- Developing close collaboration at the regional level that results in seamless pathways for students between adult education programs and into college or the workforce,
- Employing pedagogies and practices that move students more successfully toward their career and life goals,
- Providing students the comprehensive support they need to succeed in adult education, and,
- Ensuring that adult education has the financial support it needs to meet the growing demand for these programs.

CURRENT STATE OF THE STATE'S ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

One of the major challenges the K-12 Adult and community college providers have faced over the years is that adult education has multiple missions and serves many different kinds of students with divergent interests and needs. Particularly in California, adult education's two central and overlapping missions are: the integration of new immigrants and the preparation of low-skilled adults and out-of-school youth (18 years and older) for postsecondary education/training and the workplace. The two principal types of services provided are basic skills education (pre-collegiate English and math, including high school diploma and GED, as well as ESL) and short-term, non-credit career technical education. The overall complexity of California's adult education landscape partially reflects the extent to which each adult school and community college offers a different mix of services, as well as institutional differences between the two systems.

Adult education serves many types of students. Adult education, as defined by AB 86, is intended to serve native English speakers with low levels of literacy and numeracy, high school dropouts who want to earn a diploma or GED, high school graduates who lack the skills they need to succeed in postsecondary education or training, immigrants who want to learn English or obtain citizenship, and workers who seek short-term vocational training to improve their career opportunities. Adult education also provides programs for incarcerated individuals and parolees.

The services offered by the K-12 Adult and community college systems differ and vary by region. Historically, the services offered by the K-12 Adult and community college systems have differed and varied by region. Community colleges offered courses through both their noncredit and credit divisions. Only a relatively small number offered noncredit basic skills and CTE. The largest were Rancho Santiago (Orange County), San Francisco, San Diego, North Orange, Mount San Antonio (Los Angeles County, and Los Angeles districts. Together these accounted for two-thirds of total noncredit full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments in 2011-12.[2] The CDE-funded programs were primarily in adult schools, but also in libraries, correctional institutions, community-based organizations, and some community colleges.

Figure 3: Glossary of Terms

- **AB 86 Cabinet:** The CDE and Chancellor's Office established the AB 86 Cabinet, composed of eight members, four from each agency, to oversee AB 86 implementation.

- **AB 86 Work Group:** The AB 86 Cabinet convened the AB 86 Work Group originally comprised of twelve members, four representing K-12 Adult programs, four representing adult education programs in community college districts, and four staff members (two each from the CDE and Chancellor's Office). The Work Group was later expanded to include more stakeholders from faculty, teachers, and other interests.

- **Adult Basic and Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE):** The primary focus of ABE/ASE is on elementary and secondary level English and math. ASE programs, particularly in the adult schools, also offer courses preparing students for the high school diploma or GED.

- **Adult Education Regional Consortium:** The 70 adult education regional consortia, formed in response to AB 86, consist of at least one school district and at least one community college district within the geographical boundaries of the community college district.

- **Adults with Disabilities Programs (AWD):** AWD classes are designed to meet the needs of adults with disabilities to support them becoming self-reliant.

- **Apprenticeship Programs:** Apprenticeship programs are typically a partnership between employers and an educational program (in a community college, adult school, labor union, community-based organization) to train for a particular industry and/or occupation against a set of registered standards. Apprenticeship programs include on-the-job training and classroom instruction, called Related and Supplemental Instruction (RSI).

- **Basic skills:** ABE/ASE, all pre-collegiate English and math, and sometimes ESL as well, are called "basic skills."

- **Career Technical Education (CTE):** The AB 86 adult education CTE offerings are short-term, noncredit vocational programs with high employment potential.

- **Citizenship Programs/EL Civics:** Citizenship programs are designed for immigrants who are eligible for educational services in citizenship and civic participation, and to prepare them for oral and written citizenship tests.

- **Community college district:** The 72 community college districts were designated by the Chancellor's Office.

- **English as a Second Language (ESL):** ESL courses provide English language instruction for non-native English speakers.

- **Faculty:** All adult education teachers and faculty in both K-12 Adult and community college providers.

- **Fiscal agent:** Each consortium identified either a school district or a community college district as their fiscal agent. The fiscal agent has the role of the "banker" and is responsible for distributing the funds and required expenditure reports.

- **K-12 school district:** In this report, K-12 school districts refer only to those districts under the authority of the California Department of Education that offer adult education. There are 1,043 K-12 school districts overall, 214 of which reported adult education enrollment during the AB 86 planning process.

- **Region:** For purposes of the AB 86, a region is defined as the geographical boundaries of a community college district.

Table 2: Adult Education Enrollment by Provider Type, 2012-13								
	K-12 Adult		Community College		Other[4]		Total	
	Enrollment	%	Enrollment	%	Enrollment	%	Enrollment	%
ABE/ASE	228,384	41%	471,945	56%	12,759	29%	713,088	49%
ESL	207,495	37%	205,035	24%	5,603	13%	418,133	29%
AWD	11,752	2%	58,507	7%	5,116	12%	75,375	5%
CTE	111,342	20%	109,678	13%	20,473	47%	241,493	17%
Total	**558,973**	**100%**	**845,165**	**100%**	**43,951**	**100%**	**1,448,089**	**100%**

Across all adult education providers, ABE/ASE was and is the largest adult education course offering, followed by ESL/citizenship, and CTE (see Table2). However, the mix of offerings differs between the two systems. In the adult schools, ESL was historically the largest course offering. In 2008-09, ESL represented 43 percent of all enrollments, followed by ABE/ASE (35 percent), and CTE (24 percent). By 2012-13 the diversion of funds and budget cutbacks had changed the mix so that 40 percent of adult school enrollments were in ABE/ASE, 37 percent were ESL/citizenship, and 20 percent were CTE.

In contrast, in 2008-09, 54 percent of adult education enrollments in the community colleges were ABE/ASE programs, followed by 25 percent in ESL, and 15 percent in CTE.[3] The enrollment mix remained essentially the same in 2012-13, despite the overall drop in adult education enrollment. (See Tables 2 and 3). Adults with Disabilities programs were a relatively small share of course offerings in both the colleges and K-12 adult providers.

Funding for the two systems also differed historically. Prior to the funding "flexibility" allowed K-12 districts in 2009, reimbursement to adult schools was based on average daily attendance (ADA) and school districts received $2,645 per ADA. ADA reimbursements for adult education were discontinued in 2009.[5] Community college noncredit courses were reimbursed based on daily course attendance ("positive attendance") and there were two different rates: the enhanced noncredit rate ($3,282 in 2013-14) for "career development and college preparation" courses and the regular noncredit rate ($2,788 in 2013-14). Credit courses were reimbursed based on the number of students enrolled in a course at a given point in the academic year and the 2013-14 credit rate was $4,636.[6]

Table 3: Total Adult Education Enrollment by Program, 2008-09 and 2012-13			
	Adult Education Enrollment		
Program	**2008-09**	**2012-13**	**Change**
ABE/ASE	932,311	713,088	-219,223
ESL	772,090	418,122	-353,968
AWD	102,586	75,375	-27,211
CTE	463,662	241,493	-222,169
Total	**2,270,649**	**1,448,089**	**-822,560**

Many adult schools (169 in 2011-12) and a handful of community colleges (17 in 2011-12) also received adult education monies from Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act (now the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act). Total state WIA funding in 2014-15 was $86.7 million.[7] Federal monies are supplemental and can only be used for ABE/ASE and ESL programs.

The community colleges are prohibited from charging fees for noncredit adult education but they have charged a per-unit fee for credit courses. Adult schools are permitted to charge fees for ESL and citizenship classes and for CTE, though the fees cannot exceed the cost of offering the course. Fee policies vary by district and adult school.

Today, the demand for adult education programs clearly outstrips supply. Against this background, the current state of adult education programs is one of rising demand coupled with a dramatic decline in resources.

- There is a significant and growing demand for adult education in California. Roughly 15.3 million adults are in the population groups targeted by the

five AB 86 adult education program areas: 5.2 million adults are without a high school diploma or GED,[8] 6.2 million adults have limited English proficiency,[9] 1.1 million adults are eligible for citizenship courses,[10] 1.9 million adults have disabilities,[11] just under 500,000 unemployed adults lack a high school diploma, and over 500,000 young adults (age 20-24) are also unemployed.[12] A number of other factors also are driving demand for adult education. For example, the 2008-09 Great Recession led to widespread layoffs in California, pushing dislocated workers into education and training to improve their economic situation. Most recently, President Obama's decision to defer deportation and offer work authorization to millions of undocumented immigrants is projected nationally to add 5.2 million to those seeking adult education, 1.5 million of those individuals are in California.[13] With the fear of deportation no longer hanging over them, it is likely these immigrants will begin to take steps to improve their career options and their integration into American society. (See Figure 4 for discussion of the EL Civics program, which supports immigrant integration.)

Figure 4: EL Civics and Immigrant Integration

The purpose of the federally-funded EL Civics (English Literacy and Civics Education) program – now a part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – is to support programs that demonstrate effective practices in providing, and increasing access to, English literacy programs linked to civics education.

The premise of EL Civics is that to effectively participate in education, work, and civic opportunities in this country, immigrants and other limited English proficient persons must not only master English but be able to understand and navigate governmental, educational, workplace systems, and key institutions, such as banking and health care.

Historically, CDE has offered grant awards in two program areas: Civic Participation and Citizenship Preparation. Citizenship preparation helps prepare participants to take and pass the citizenship test.

- The Great Recession led to decreased funding. Despite this demand, the Great Recession put intense pressure on California's financial resources and in 2008-09, the state implemented a 15 percent across-the-board cut to its adult education program's dedicated funding stream. The following year an additional 5 percent reduction was imposed. The state also cut K-12 funding by $20 billion. Beginning in 2009, the state allowed categorical funds, including adult education funds, to be used by K-12 school districts for any educational purpose. The "flexing" of the funding enabled many districts to reallocate the adult education monies to K-12 programs. It is estimated that since "flexing" was authorized, funding for adult education has been reduced by more than 50 percent. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, K-12 districts were required to maintain the same level of funding for adult education that was expended in 2012-13. This maintenance of effort restriction will be lifted in 2015 and the new K-12 Local Control Funding Formula allows districts to access previously allocated adult education funds for K-12 programs.

Decreased funding led to significant enrollment drops. The decline in state revenues affected the community colleges as well. State funding for the community colleges was reduced by more than $800 million, or 12 percent. General apportionment funding was reduced by more than $500 million, and funding for categorical programs, which supported the most at-risk student populations, was cut by $313 million, or 41 percent. Community college adult education enrollment declined by 19 percent.

Since K-12 school districts were given flexibility, districts have had to make difficult choices in the face of funding cuts and, as a result, directed funding to other critical programs and services. Due to adult education programs scaling back course offerings, significantly fewer students are being served across the four main program areas: ABE/ASE, ESL and other classes for immigrants, short-term CTE, and adults with disabilities. ESL and CTE have seen the most significant drops in enrollment, almost 50 percent in each case. K-12 adult enrollment suffered the greatest decline, 53 percent overall. (See Table 4 and Table 5.)[14]

Table 4: Enrollments in Adult Education Programs, 2008=09 and 2012-13								
	K-12 Adult Schools		Community Colleges		Other[15]		Total	
Program	2008-09	2012-13	2008-09	2012-13	2008-09	2012-13	2008-09	2012-13
ABE	363,127	228,384	560,863	471,945	8,321	12,759	932,311	713,088
ESL	510,146	207,495	259,388	205,035	2,556	5,603	772,090	418,133
AWD	34,451	11,752	64,848	58,507	3,287	5,116	102,586	75,375
CTE	287,230	111,342	156,653	109,678	19,779	20,473	463,662	241,493
Total	**1,194,954**	**558,973**	**1,041,752**	**845,165**	**33,943**	**43,951**	**2,270,649**	**1,448,089**

Table 5: Change in Enrollments in Adult Education Programs, 2008-09 and 2012-13					
Enrollment Change 2008-09 to2012-13					
Program	K-12 Adult Schools	Community Colleges	Other	Total	Percent Change
ABE/ASE	-134,743	-88,918	4,438	-219,223	-24%
ESL	-302,651	-54,353	3,047	-353,957	-45%
AWD	-22,699	-6,341	1,829	-27,211	-27%
CTE	-175,888	-46,975	694	-222,169	-48%
Total	**-635,981**	**-196,587**	**9,968**	**-822,560**	**-36%**

- The gap between enrollments and need for adult education services is significant. There is no completely accurate measure of the gap between the supply of and demand for adult education. Three proxies are: 1) the demographic data of populations eligible for adult education services compared to enrollments, 2) comparison of enrollment numbers before and after the recession, and 3) waiting lists for adult education services in local areas. By any of these measures, the gap is a serious one.

    - o Demographic data of populations eligible for adult education services compared to enrollments. Comparing the demographic data on populations eligible for adult education services with the enrollment numbers in 2012-13, it is clear that programs in the four major AB 86 adult education program areas served only a fraction of the high need populations.

    - o Enrollments prior to and after the recession. As Table 5 illustrates, there was a decline of over 800,000 students served from 2008-09 to 2012-13 by the K-12 Adult and community college providers. Other adult education partners (listed as "Other) were – at best – able to serve only 1.2 percent of this decline in enrollment.

    - o Local wait lists. Districts do not all have aggregate wait lists but the situation in Los Angeles is illustrative. According to the Los Angeles Unified School District, the state's largest provider of adult education services, between August and October 2014 a total of 4,560 individuals were waitlisted for ESL services; 1,491 were waiting for a seat in an ABE program; and 1,988 were waiting to get into an ASE program.

- Availability of services depends on program. The AB 86 regional consortia were mandated to evaluate current levels and types of adult education programs within their region. As Tables 6 and 7 suggest, there is considerable variability in the availability of programs across the state. (Final reports from the 70 regional consortia may be viewed at http://ab86.cccco.edu/Consortia.aspx. Please also see Appendix for maps showing regional variation in service provision and provider.)

Table 6: Number of K-12 and Community College Districts Offering Programs by Type of Program: 2012-13						
	K-12 Districts			Community College Districts		
Program Type	2008-09	2013-14	Closed	2008-09	20013-14	Closed
ABE/ASE	206	195	11	70	70	0
ESL and Citizenship	179	169	10	67	66	1
AWD	84	55	29	60	55	5
CTE	129	114	15	43	39	4
Apprenticeship	21	21	0	20	20	0
Total	**619**	**554**	**65**	**260**	**250**	**10**

Table 7: Adult Education Enrollment by Provider, Projected Need, and Region							
Region	College Adult Enrollment 2012-13	K-12 Adult Enrollment 2012-13	Need for Adult Ed Services in the Region	Percent of Need Met by CCCs	Percent of Need Met by K-12	Total Enrollment	Percent of Need Met[16]
Coastal	31,981	16,248	377,560	8.47%	4.30%	48,229	12.77%
North	11,453	4,601	224,493	5.10%	2.05%	16,054	7.15%
Greater Sacramento	42,950	20,354	636,158	6.75%	3.20%	63,304	9.95%
Inland Empire	72,466	40,497	1,557,466	4.65%	2.60%	112,963	7.25%
LA County Basin	206,973	234,523	4,512,200	4.59%	5.20%	441,496	9.78%
South Bay Area	57,166	31,127	940,379	6.08%	3.31%	88,293	9.39%
East Bay/Peninsula	121,012	59,064	1,289,869	9.38%	4.58%	180,076	13.96%
San Diego/Imperial	71,512	59,620	1,021,864	7.00%	5.83%	131,132	12.83%
Orange County	136,594	20,995	1,053,671	12.96%	1.99%	157,589	14.96%
North Bay Area	30,935	12,868	336,868	9.18%	3.82%	43,803	13.00%
Central Valley	64,142	59,076	1,715,517	3.74%	3.44%	123,218	7.18%

While AB 86 has re-energized adult education and initiated unprecedented collaboration, much work remains. Taken all together, the adult education system that the AB 86 regional consortia inherited was complex, confusing, and divided. The many years of operating separately has resulted in different cultures and practices, as well as different approaches to student assessment, different pedagogy, and different administrative and legal requirements. Although there was recognition of the need for greater collaboration and innovation, resources were dwindling and programs struggled simply to meet the growing demand for their services.

AB 86 provided the catalyst and structures for change. In every one of the 70 AB 86 regions, the consortia have made major strides toward assessing the needs of their region and making plans to address those needs, although the breadth and depth of collaborative practices and structures vary considerably across districts.[17] Yet in many regions, adult education providers from both systems are holding joint faculty meetings, co-locating programs, aligning curricula and assessments, building bridge programs, and working to collect data on students across programs.

KEY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

Despite the real and encouraging progress, significant barriers to the success of the AB 86 regional consortia remain. Specifically, the consortia have identified six key challenges:

- Insufficient availability of adult education programs;
- Need for innovation in adult education programs;
- Inadequate academic, social, and financial supports for students;

- Inconsistency across the K-12 and community college districts regarding assessments for placement;
- Lack of a common accountability approach for monitoring student progress; and,
- Limited regional coordination.

CHALLENGE: Insufficient Availability of Adult Education Programs

The availability of adult education services across the state has always been uneven. Now, however, there are many areas of California where there are few or no adult education offerings. In some cases, adult education programs have been eliminated entirely; in other cases, layoffs, early retirements, and hiring freezes have reduced the availability of classes. (Final reports from the 70 regional consortia may be viewed at http://ab86.cccco.edu/Consortia.aspx.)

Decreased funding resulted in insufficient offerings across the five program areas. Between 2008-09 and 2012-13, approximately 65 adult education programs were cut; some adult schools were closed down. Across all regions, both K-12 and community college districts faced difficult choices in prioritizing their adult learners. One silver lining of the need to prioritize was that in some cases resources were redirected in ways that improved persistence rates or increased cost-effectiveness (such as through credit recovery programs and distance learning). However, such creativity could not mask the need for more resources.

There are fewer teachers and fewer classes. Across all AB 86 program areas, there is now a serious deficit of teachers, counselors, and other staff in most of the state. There is also a real dearth of classroom space. In ABE/ASE programs, 64 percent of consortia noted personnel as a major problem in their ABE/ASE program, 57 percent in their ESL/citizenship programs, and 51 percent in their CTE programs. Similarly, 63 percent said their ABE/ASE programs had insufficient classroom space, 57 percent said that was true in their ESL/citizenship programs, and 46 percent in their CTE programs.

In some of the regions the layoffs led to reductions in the number and type of classes available to adult education students. In other regions, adult schools and community college satellite campuses were closed. The severe belt-tightening had other consequences, as well. For example, districts were forced to reduce hours, often making it impossible for students with full-time jobs to attend classes, access computer labs or other important learning resources. Taken together, these measures led to overcrowded classrooms and long wait lists for students trying to take classes.

CHALLENGE: Need for Innovation in Program Offerings

In addition to the decline in adult education programs, there is evidence that current curricula and pedagogical practices do not meet the needs of all students and in some instances may impede student progress. In the face of new demands to change current practices, professional development for faculty is inadequate. (See Figure 5 for promising practices from the regional consortia in program innovation.)

Need for innovation in curricula. One of the mandates of AB 86 was for regional consortia to identify areas of needed change in curricula and other pedagogical practices to improve student outcomes and accelerate student progress. Most consortia concluded that pathways need to be more transparent and that educational innovation is required to meet the needs of a changing economy and an increasingly diverse population of adult learners.

- *Pathways within and across systems are unclear.* Across all five program areas, regional consortia reported problems with alignment between the K-12 Adult and community college systems, which confuse and deter students. Within and across both systems, consortia identified the need for explicitly stated course sequences, so students understand how to reach their goals.

- *There is a growing need for innovation in curricula and pedagogical practices.* Consortia proposed strengthening curricula in a variety of ways. Many consortia are focused on new approaches to accelerating student progress. These include some form of dual enrollment or GED-to-higher education program, bridge programs, compressed courses, modularization, and the development of common curricula across the K-12 Adult and community college systems. To achieve this goal, consortia

Figure 5: Promising Practices from the Regional Consortia: Program Innovation

In the process of conducting their needs assessment and developing regional plans, many of the regional consortia identified promising program innovations. These are some examples of the range of ideas being proposed and implemented.

- **Mapping career pathways and career lattices:** To make career pathways more transparent, there is growing interest in curriculum and/or credential mapping to help guide both students and counselors. For example, the Sequoias Adult Education Consortium proposes a "mapping tool that lays out career pathways in the five [AB 86] program areas and across program areas." Other consortia, including Antelope Valley, Los Rios, Delta, and more also are working on mapping and graphically portraying both career pathways and career lattices.

- **Curriculum alignment:** Other consortia also propose to create new curricula that will align across systems and levels. For example, the Antelope Valley AB 86 Consortium members propose to "work collaboratively to design and utilize compatible, stackable, industry-vetted, and standards-based curriculum and credentials for adults who continue through the pathways from the K-12 district to community college (and university)-level courses." This will include both articulation of coursework and alignment of exit and entrance assessments.

- **Contextualized instruction:** San Diego Adult Education Regional Consortium proposes to develop "contextualized curriculum within a career cluster structure that [has a] bridge into postsecondary education." The Coast consortium wants to integrate contextualized instruction across the basic skills curriculum, imbedding tutoring, and in partnership with employers.

- **Bridge or transition courses:** North Santa Clara County Student Transition Consortium proposes bridge courses to "provide additional academic support to students to gain academic knowledge and skills that are needed for college readiness or to prepare for vocational training. Bridge courses are offered concurrently to the academic courses in which adult learners are already enrolled."

- **Accelerated basic skills curriculum:** The College of the Canyons has established a robust acceleration program in both math and English.

- **Review classes for adult learners:** Redwood, Ventura, and other regions, propose to develop "prep" or review classes so adult students, away from school for many years, can refresh their basic English and math skills and avoid the need for remediation.

- **Job readiness:** Shasta, MiraCosta, and many other regions have developed or are proposing to develop internships, pre-apprenticeships, subsidized work experience, and job shadowing programs to introduce students to the requirements of various kinds of jobs.

also proposed to expand the use of "contextualized" learning, that is, courses that pair basic skills education (English, math, ESL) with career technical training.

To meet student needs, some regional consortia are exploring the creation of online or hybrid classes, also known as blended learning classes. Online and distance learning courses increase student flexibility and access to classes during nontraditional times. Many consortia plans suggest that by conducting more classes over the summer, creating flexible scheduling systems, and providing online opportunities, working adults will have greater access to educational opportunities.

Some consortia are emphasizing "anchor skills", such as reasoning, critical thinking, and clear expression, which are essential foundations across all five AB 86 program areas. Other proposals included updating CTE curricula to integrate 21st century job skills (particularly technology-related skills) and providing more life skills classes for adults with disabilities.

There also is a widespread desire to deepen the links to vocations and careers across all program areas. This includes greater utilization of "earn and learn" models, such as apprenticeship.

New demands on faculty require more emphasis on professional development. To meet these new needs, adult educators themselves need professional and peer support. Adult educators have varying and declining access to high quality professional development, which limits their ability to develop innovative curricula and robust pathways for students. There also is a need for combined professional development between the K-12 Adult and community college systems so faculty and staff can begin to develop a shared language and culture, understand the constraints and opportunities of each system, and figure out how to fit the pieces together to best serve adult learners.

In addition, consortia pointed to the need for special training on career pathways, CTE, counseling students, and working with adults with disabilities. In their plans, some consortia proposed holding workshops and/or involving outside experts to train teachers in the instruction of disabled adults; others are focusing on helping teachers work with new immigrants; still others are targeting foster youth, prisoners, and mental health clients for specialized teacher professional development. Despite these efforts, consortia stressed the lack of funding for professional development as a major problem. One noted: "Faculty must be able to attend professional development programs outside of their classroom hours, and all staff must be compensated for their time" if professional development is to be viable.

CHALLENGE: Inadequate Academic, Social, and Financial Supports for Students

A third area of significant need identified by the consortia was academic, social, and financial supports for students. The limitations both the K-12 Adult and community college systems face in providing adult students the supports they need has measurable negative impacts on persistence and success. (See Figure 6 for promising practices from the regional consortia in providing support services.)

Inadequate academic support. Most adult education students need academic support to be successful, such as individualized learning plans and tutoring services. Research also suggests that students can benefit from cohort-based instruction, where they move through a class or series of classes with a group of peers. Most K-12 Adult and community college programs historically lacked sufficient resources to provide these kinds of necessary services, and the cutbacks associated with the recession took a particularly serious toll on all forms of student support.

Inadequate social services. Because adult students are also workers and parents, they require other services as well, such as transportation and childcare. Unauthorized immigrants and students with disabilities have even more specialized needs. Again, these services suffered disproportionately during the recession.

In the case of both academic and social support services, the cutback in the number of counselors is among the most critical concerns. Counselors are the only professionals in both systems whose job it is to help students clarify their academic and career goals and plot an efficient path to achieve them, apprise students of the resources available to them through their

own institutions, identify and link students with other resources in the community, and build relationships with community organizations to more fully support students' needs.

New and inconsistent fees. Finally, in the face of declining state funding, adult school districts began charging students registration fees in order to cover the cost of the course (the room and instructor). These fees place a hardship on the lowest income students and, because they vary across regions, the fee structure across the state is uneven. Further, the lack of consistency in fees between the K-12 Adult and community college systems could be problematic both for students and for the development of an integrated adult education system. Currently, community colleges charge fees for credit courses[18] but community colleges do not charge for noncredit adult education courses (though noncredit students are responsible for other costs, such as books and supplies).

CHALLENGE: Inconsistency Across the K-12 and Community College Districts Regarding Assessments for Placement

K-12 and the community colleges each have made progress toward standardizing assessment and placement practices within their individual systems, but practices across systems are not aligned. For too many students this inconsistency causes confusion and duplication of effort, slows their progress, and limits their achievements. Too frequently, the lack of alignment results in students having to re-take tests or repeat classes.

All K-12 adult education programs have consistently used the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) as their standardized assessment for ABE, ASE, and ESL placement. A small number of community colleges also use CASAS for adult education assessment. CASAS is one of the assessments approved by the U.S. Department of Education for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II programs.

Community colleges historically have used a wide range of assessment tools but, through the new Common Assessment Initiative (CAI), the community colleges hope to have a standardized framework in place by 2015. The proposed Common Assessment

Figure 6: Promising Practices from the Regional Consortia: Student Support Services

Consortia propose a variety of strategies to better address students' academic and other needs. The following are examples:

- Academic support: Many adult education students' need additional academic support to succeed. To address these needs, consortia such as Mendocino and Grossmont, intend to increase the use of education plans. Many others, including Cabrillo, Ventura, and Shasta, are expanding their guidance counseling services. Some are implementing mentoring programs to improve student outcomes and their transitions from noncredit adult education programs to credit postsecondary education and training. The implementation of learning communities is a strategy being implemented also, such as the First Year Experience program in El Camino.

- Social support: To address the range of other challenges faced by adult learners, consortia also are expanding social services. For example, MiraCosta is partnering with local agencies to provide childcare and transportation. To deal with the long-distances of a rural area, Redwood has set aside a significant share of their funding for travel vouchers.

- Flexible hours and locations: Some consortia are offering programs in the evenings and at other times convenient for their students. Similarly, consortia such as State Center and San Luis Obispo, offer courses in multiple locations to make them accessible to students. A unified market strategy of available courses is also being pursued by consortia, such as the one being developed in Grossmont.

will cover English, ESL, and math and is designed to support multiple measures, so that colleges can elect to combine test scores with other elements that affect college readiness (such as high school GPA or prior work experience) when making placements.

The CAI currently does not include all the fundamental literacy and numeracy topics covered in adult education but strategies for expanding its scope are under discussion. By fall 2015, twelve community colleges will begin pilot testing the Common Assessment, which once approved will be released to the remaining 100 colleges in a phased in process.

CHALLENGE: Lack of a Common Accountability Approach for Evaluating Student Progress and Program Outcomes

California lacks the ability to monitor the progress of adult education students across educational institutions and systems and into the labor market. The K-12 Adult and community college systems have no unified data system, employ different metrics, and use different student identifiers.

There is no unified approach to evaluating student progress. Currently, the community colleges employ multiple internal reporting mechanisms. The statewide data system is maintained by the Chancellor's Office and provides some outcome and demographic information on both credit and noncredit basic skills, CTE, and other adult education students. However, grades and units taken by noncredit students are not monitored.

The CDE contracts with the CASAS to provide local providers with common assessments and related accountability software to accurately measure progress, mastery of skills, and competencies needed to both complete, and advance one or more Educational Functioning Levels (EFL). The CASAS also provides standardized reporting aligned to the federal National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education.

Each local program uses the CASAS Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro® Enterprise) software to collect and report all student progress and outcome measures. CASAS provides student, class, and program analytical reports that enable local providers to have immediate access to the data for targeting instruction for continuous program improvement. The data is submitted quarterly and annually to the CDE for monitoring and aggregation into state and federal reports.

These reports include the demographic factors of the populations served, educational gains and attendance, and level completion and movement to higher instructional levels. Levels of performance achieved for other core indicators include student outcomes related to postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement, and receipt of a high school diploma or approved high school equivalency test certificate.

Each system uses its own metrics and has a different approach to accountability. The metrics used by the K-12 Adult and the community colleges to gauge student progress also are different. Community college metrics include persistence, completion (of classes and certificates, degrees, and transfer), and wage outcomes.

The federal WIA metrics used by the K-12 Adult system focus on placement in employment or education, literacy and numeracy gains, and attainment of a degree or certificate. With the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), replacing WIA, common metrics for federally-funded adult education programs will apply both to K-12 Adult and community college recipients of WIOA funds.

The CDE also incentivizes local agency performance by implementing a pay-for-performance system. Local agencies earn payment points that translate into grant award funding. In the 2013–14 program year, the CDE updated the payment point system to align with the federal NRS measures, by recognizing payment points for: completing an NRS EFL, completing a level and advancing one or more levels, attaining a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate, entering or retaining employment, and entering postsecondary education or training. Local agencies with English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) grants may also gain payment points when students pass the Citizenship Interview Test, the Government and History Test, or pass up to two California developed additional assessments under Civic Participation literacy objectives.

Different and suboptimal student identifiers are also employed by each system. The community colleges use Social Security numbers (SSNs) to identify both credit and

noncredit students. SSNs are required for credit but not for noncredit enrollments, and SSN collection is tied to eligibility for financial aid. Overall, 58 percent of noncredit community college students do not report an SSN.[19]

The K-12 system uses CASAS identifiers and each adult school has its own set of identifiers, making it difficult even to follow students who move from one adult school to another. Because so few noncredit students provide SSNs and K-12 providers do not use SSNs, it is almost impossible to assess adult education students across adult education providers or into the labor market to get reliable information on employment and wage outcomes.

CHALLENGE: Inadequate Regional Coordination and Collaboration

The final major area of concern identified by the consortia was continuing weakness and inconsistency in regional coordination and collaboration, both between the K-12 Adult and community college providers and with other community partners, including employers. Specifically, consortia underlined the need to strengthen the structures and processes launched by AB 86. (See Figure 7 for promising practices from the regional consortia in coordination and collaboration.)

Inadequate K-12 Adult and community college coordination. Despite the considerable progress made over the past two years, many regional consortia report that the linkages between the K-12 Adult and community college systems still need to be strengthened. Faculty and administrators from community colleges and adult schools must be given more opportunities to learn how each other's system works so they can forge deeper connections. A 2011 survey by the LAO found that almost half (48 percent) of community college respondents reported that there was no coordination with adult schools in the alignment of student pathways (though the work of the consortia uncovered significant areas of coordination between K-12 Adult and community college districts in some regions.)

Some AB 86 regional consortia propose to streamline students' transitions by using strategies such as articulation agreements, contextualized instruction, bridge courses, and credential and curricula mapping. Bridge or transition courses provide additional academic support to students to gain academic knowledge and skills that are needed for college readiness or to prepare for vocational training. Curricular or pathways mapping lays out the sequence of courses students' can pursue to achieve their academic and career goals.

Other regional consortia are investigating the possibility of creating new curricula that will align across systems. For example, one proposes to "work collaboratively to design and utilize compatible, stackable, industry-vetted and standards-based curriculum and credentials for adults who continue through the pathway from the K-12 district to community college (and university) level courses."

To do any of the above, the regional consortia identified serious barriers to curricular alignment that need to be addressed if these kinds of practices are going to become the norm. Consortia urge that the current structures of cooperation be maintained and new ones be developed and supported, including structures to share best practices across regions.

Insufficient integration of community partners, including business and industry. In addition to integrating the two major adult education systems, consortia identified the importance of better leveraging the resources and knowledge of community partners. Since the serious budget cutbacks, staff time to build these relationships has been significantly reduced. Key community partners include public and nonprofit organizations that can amplify the range and type of services provided to adult learners. One example is community-based organizations with deep experience in working with particular populations that can engage in outreach and offer case management and other wraparound services. The employer community also must be a major partner to the consortia. Employers can guide programs to offer labor-market-relevant training and provide students work experience.

Links to employers are particularly critical for CTE and contextualized basic skills programs. The community colleges have strengthened their focus on regional sector strategies under the Doing What Matters for Jobs and the Economy framework as a way of improving the linkage between CTE programs and employers' needs. The California Career Pathway Trust, administered by the CDE, also has better links to employers as a key goal.

Figure 7: Promising Practices from the Regional Consortia: Collaboration and Coordination

Many of the regional consortia identified promising approaches to better integrating the K-12 Adult, community colleges, and other partners in the delivery of adult education programs. Some consortia have already begun the process of implementing these new practices; others intend to do so. The goal is to provide multiple entry and exit points for students and ensure that they can move seamlessly from one program to another. The following examples are simply illustrative of the kinds of changes underway.

- **Joint planning:** In the Santa Clarita Valley, the boards of trustees of the community college and K-12 systems meet annually in joint planning sessions. Each has representatives on the other entity's advisory boards. The Lassen consortium has developed a very detailed, formalized process of working together, including a mission, bylaws, and a decision-making process. They have a strong identity as a consortium that includes and considers the needs of a wide variety of community partners, including employers. An employer is an integral member of the consortium. In Feather River, at the northern border of California, the Chamber of Commerce is a full partner in CTE training. The Citrus consortium intends to create a steering committee to foster communication between consortium members and other partners.

- **Joint data collection:** The Glendale consortium in Los Angeles proposes to create a regional data system to monitor students' use of adult education services and their outcomes across providers and programs. Contra Costa County Adult Education Consortium similarly plans to "develop a mutually shared understanding of various data platforms and identify opportunities for coordination and sharing to support seamless student transition success." Mt. San Antonio College Regional Consortium for Adult Education will form a task force to "develop a common database that will act as a uniform means of obtaining student data across member programs."

- **Integrated instruction:** Consortia are looking at ways to align curricula across systems and levels of instruction. This would include both articulation of coursework and alignment of exit and entrance assessments.

- **Support for student transitions:** The State Center consortium in the Central Valley is piloting several model programs to facilitate students' transition between K-12 adult schools and community colleges. Similarly, the Fresno Adult School and Fresno City College have developed a course designed to help students make that transition. Contra Costa is working to expand their ESL "Bridge to College" classes at adult schools; Merced is integrating college and adult school courses, and Los Rios is aligning curriculum, standards, and assessments.

- **Community engagement and partnerships:** The Antelope Valley consortium has engaged workforce and community partners to design and implement pathways to get students into the regional pipeline. Contra Costa is mapping common facilities for high cost programs. San Diego is creating an Evaluation Advisory Committee engaging partners to help evaluate overall program effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations address the challenges identified by the regional consortia:

- **Increase service levels** to meet the demand for adult education in the state of California;
- **Improve programming** to better prepare students for post-secondary education and/or transition to the workforce;
- **Provide adequate academic, social, and financial supports** for all students to lower barriers to enrollment and promote student success;
- **Align assessments** for placement between the K-12 Adult and community college systems to helpstudents' achieve their educational and career goals;
- **Develop a common accountability approach for documenting student progress**; and,
- **Maintain and extend structures for ongoing regional coordination** among adult schools, community colleges, and community partners.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Increase Service Levels to Meet the Demand for Adult Education

California must provide adult education programs and services to a much greater share of residents who need them. To do so, the state must increase capacity by hiring more teachers and counselors, and by rebuilding and expanding adult education program offerings across all regions. To accomplish these goals, the Legislature must restore an adequate, dedicated funding stream for adult education programs.

Recommendation 1.1: Across the state, restore lost capacity to deliver adult education programs. Regional consortia need to rebuild adult education delivery capacity based on their needs assessment including, as appropriate, re-opening adult schools and community college satellite campuses that were shuttered due to the recession. Additionally, regions can explore other delivery models, such as developing distance learning. Regions should look to leverage community partners, who may be able to offer space, provide students with support services, or deliver adult education content directly.

Recommendation 1.2: Hire additional full-time faculty, as well as academic and other counselors. Full-time faculty are the glue of adult schools and community college adult education programs, offering instruction to students as well as engaging in many of the activities necessary to make the AB 86 recommendations a success. These include developing and innovating new curriculum, supporting students through transitions, and delivering professional development. Additional part-time faculty may also be needed to increase the number of students served, and there is a critical shortage of counselors at both adult schools and community colleges.

Recommendation 1.3: Restore an adequate, dedicated funding stream for adult education programs. The adoption of creative strategies will make the adult education system a good steward of California's dollars. However, to meet the needs of California's residents and employers, the state must restore dedicated funding at a level adequate to meet the growing demand for these services, minimally at pre-recession levels. Governor Brown's 2015-16 Budget Proposal provides $500 million in Proposition 98 funds for an Adult Education Block Grant, an important step toward this goal but not sufficient to fully address the need. Currently, adult education providers serve a small fraction of estimated need.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Improve Adult Education Programming to Better Prepare Students for Postsecondary Education and/or Transition into the Workforce

Adult education programs need to be renewed, as well as restored, so they can better meet the changing needs of California's population and economy. Many years of budget cuts and faculty shortages have undermined the systems' ability to implement pedagogical and program innovations. However, there is much evidence that curricula and program redesign can have a major impact on student success. California's new adult education system must be effective, as well as efficient.

Recommendation 2.1: Strengthen and enhance existing curricula across all five AB 86 program areas. Steps to improve adult education curricula include: 1) enhancing existing curricula across all five AB 86 program areas, 2) aligning curricula within the K-12 adult and community college systems, and 3) aligning curricula across the two systems.

Regional consortia must implement multiple approaches to make curricula more relevant to students and employers and to reduce the time students spend in remediation. These include a focus on 21st century skills, including the soft skills needed for employment, and implementation of evidence-based innovations such as contextualized basic skills instruction, bridge programs, curricula redesign, and stackable certificates.

Key goals of instructional innovation are enhancing relevance, accelerating student progress, and improving student success. Most of the work of enhancing existing curricula will be done at the school/college and regional levels but the state should incentivize and support these efforts, as well as ensure consistency across them.[20]

To facilitate student progress, curricula also must be aligned. The first step is alignment within each system so students can move easily from one course to the next and from one community college or adult school to another. The alignment initiative recently undertaken by community college faculty in the basic skills disciplines of reading, writing, math, and ESL is an example of the kind of work that needs to be done. In this case, faculty experts defined the outcomes and levels of curricula through the basic skills pathways leading to transfer level English or math. Curricula also must be aligned between adult schools and community colleges to provide transparent pathways students can understand and follow without having to repeat coursework.

Recommendation 2.2: Strengthen professional development for faculty and staff so they can effectively implement these recommendations and fully support all adult education students. To improve professional development across the state, regional consortia must assess professional development needs in their region and design programs to address them. One goal is to help faculty and counselors better understand the entire adult education landscape so they can more effectively support student transitions. The CDE and Chancellor's Office can stimulate innovation by encouraging regions to share best practices. Professional development work at the local and regional levels must involve faculty and faculty organizations, such as unions and the academic senate.

Some regions have already begun the practice of shared professional development. Lessons from collaborations such as San Mateo's ALLIES project can help jumpstart similar approaches in other regions. Any new statewide effort also can learn from the experiences of the California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO). CALPRO has for many years worked to provide professional development to adult educators across the K-12 Adult system.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Provide Academic, Social, and Financial Support to Students

Adult education students need academic and social support to attain their goals. Most adult education students also face time constraints and economic hardships, making it essential that there are as few barriers as possible to accessing adult education services.

Recommendation 3.1: Provide enhanced academic support to students. Many adult education students need enhanced academic/learning support, both in and outside the classroom to succeed. These supports might include tutoring, extra skills practice, and the creation of individual learning plans. For example, one community college district offers students "skills labs" staffed by adult education faculty. By enrolling in these labs, students can practice specific skills (for example, verb conjugation for ESL students) in a low-risk environment.

Recommendation 3.2: Provide enhanced social support for students. Each region should inventory and develop a system of comprehensive student supports, ensuring that students have the assistance they need to be able to persist and succeed in adult education. These supports can be provided either by the school or by a community partner. Critical support services include transportation, childcare, counseling, healthcare (including mental health), and special support for undocumented students and students with disabilities.

Many adult education providers already have elements of a support services infrastructure in place that they can build on. One district, for example, provides free childcare for students in both morning and afternoon classes and has arranged to have a community bus stop at the adult schools. Another district has developed a partnership with the California Department of Rehabilitation to provide support for students with

disabilities and with Catholic Charities and the local Workforce Investment Board to provide case management and other services. However, as described earlier, existing partnerships address only a small fraction of adult students' needs. Regional consortia can support the development of a denser network of student supports by adopting standard practices for assessing student needs, creating inventories of local resources – including those within the community colleges and adult schools – and developing a system of referrals.

Recommendation 3.3: Vary course hours to meet the needs of a diversity of adult learners and partner with community organizations to offer services at convenient sites. Adult learners have multiple family and work constraints on their time. Districts must implement varied scheduling, including courses at nights and on weekends, to make it easier for students to find a time that fits their schedule. And since eligible students often do not know their options, districts should engage in outreach activities to inform students of the range of adult education courses, programs, and schedules available to them. Districts also should form partnerships with community organizations to offer adult education services in settings that are convenient and familiar. All providers within a region also should consider coordinating their outreach about course availability.

Recommendation 3.4: Reduce financial barriers to accessing adult education services. The fee structures of the CDE and the Chancellor's office are currently mandated by separate education code and policy regulations. The fees for adult education classes are locally determined by K-12 providers. Community college providers are prohibited from charging fees for courses, but require students to pay for related items such as parking, health fees, and tools.

The lack of consistency and alignment between fee policies may create confusion for students and even hinder access for lower income students. The AB 86 Cabinet and Work Group therefore examined the issues involved in developing a more uniform policy for the five AB 86 program areas.[21] The two principal options identified were, first, fees could be eliminated entirely for all AB 86 adult education courses, ensuring formal consistency across all programs, reducing confusion and financial barriers to access. The major concern raised to this option is that some programs would then have insufficient funding to continue.

Alternatively, programs could continue to have the option to charge fees, but fee levels would be made consistent across the state and/or other criteria established for fee levels, ensuring that they are fair and reasonable. The fees would leverage state funding and might ensure that students are less likely to drop a course. This option raises the concern that adult education courses might become inaccessible to the lowest-income students.

Given the complexity of the issues, the CDE and Chancellor's Office recommend that the Legislature consider the trade-offs and make the determination whether to eliminate fees or establish guidelines for charging fees, which ensure that there are no financial barriers to students being able to access adult education services; there is consistency across programs, courses, and providers; and there is adequate reimbursement for program costs.

RECOMMENDATION 4: Align Assessments for Placement Between Adult Education and Community College Courses

Until assessment instruments and policies are aligned, adult education students will face significant barriers to transitioning among institutions and between the K-12 Adult and community college systems. The process of alignment is complex but – as described earlier – a significant effort, the Common Assessment Initiative (CAI), is already underway in the community colleges. The goal of the CAI is to develop a comprehensive common assessment system within the community colleges that will "reduce unnecessary remediation, align to state legislation, and provide statewide efficiencies for the academic placement process within and between California colleges."

An early recommendation by the Work Group suggested that the K-12 Adult and community college systems should build on this effort and develop one common assessment used by both. Upon further feedback from the field and research by the CDE and Chancellor's Office, it was determined that this recommendation needs further exploration. With the goal of making student transitions more seamless across the systems

and reducing the potential for inconsistent and/or incorrect placement, the CDE and Chancellor's Office should establish a working group to gather further information and identify a suite of assessments that could be used by both K-12 Adult and community college providers. Adoption of a common suite of assessments would facilitate data collection across both systems to evaluate student progress. Steps to achieve the goal of aligned assessments are detailed below.

Recommendation 4.1: Determine how to align the Common Assessment with CASAS and TABE. Beginning in fall 2015, the CDE and Chancellor's Office should convene a working group made up of faculty from the K-12 Adult Ed system and community colleges, experts on CASAS and TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education), and the CAI developers to examine the competencies being documented by the various testing systems and to determine gaps between expectations for exiting adult education and entering non-remedial community college courses. This will require partnership with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges for faculty appointments and funding for stipends for all participants and meeting costs.

Recommendation 4.2: Develop an integrated assessment system that addresses the needs of both adult education and community colleges. A joint initiative should be created and funded that would address the following issues:

- Integration of data/student information systems between K-12 Adult and community college systems, including security and software development considerations;
- Exploration of expanding the CAI data warehouse design to integrate adult education student information with data security considerations being paramount;
- Exploration, identification, or development of a career readiness assessment to examine skills outside of literacy and numeracy;
- Development of customized reporting requirements from adult education to vendor(s) for creation of reports that will be used for student placement;
- Creation of a comprehensive outreach plan to address adult education students, faculty, and staff understanding of the importance of the assessment process;
- Establishment of a comprehensive professional development plan to cover training on the assessment system for adult education faculty, organizations, and assessment practitioners, encompassing both front end (students and assessment staff) and back end (IT and research staff) users;
- Development of a revised plan for implementation of validity, reliability, and fairness as psychometric indicators to assess whether the tool is effective for all students being tested, and that conforms to the requirements of both the Chancellor's Office and the federal government for test validation; and,
- Exploration of the impact of WIOA on this effort.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Develop a Common Accountability Approach for Documenting and Evaluating Student Progress

A common approach to data collection and data exchange between the K-12 Adult and community college systems is essential to understand student progress from provider to provider, from one system to the other, and into the labor market. The California adult education system therefore should develop a shared approach capable of monitoring both inputs (e.g. costs, activities) and outputs (e.g. educational gains, employment, and wages).

Recommendation 5.1: Create a common approach to monitoring inputs and outputs

- *Leverage an existing system for monitoring inputs:* The CDE currently uses the California Accountability and Improvement System (CAIS) to monitor the activities of local educational agencies (LEAs), and is planning to use it for adult education providers. CAIS allows CDE to ensure that LEAs are meeting federal and state fiscal and program requirements, and it provides tools for storage and retrieval of LEA documents as well as electronic communication specific to compliance monitoring. The community college system does not use the CAIS.[22] The CDE and Chancellor's Office should establish a working group to determine the feasibility of using the CAIS as a shared system for monitoring adult education inputs.
- *Create a centralized clearinghouse for monitoring student outcomes:* To monitor outputs, data bridges should be established to map student outcomes within and across both systems.

Recommendation 5.2: Develop a shared set of enrollment and outcomes data

- *Establish common enrollment metrics:* The K-12 Adult and community college systems should, at a minimum, report the following common enrollment metrics: student headcount for each academic term and year by provider, consortium, and statewide total, disaggregated by demographic group (age, gender, race/ethnicity); fulltime equivalent students/average daily attendance by each of the five AB 86 program areas; and course sections by instructional area.
- *Establish common outcomes metrics:* The K-12 Adult and community college systems should, at a minimum, report the following common outcomes metrics: degrees/certificates attained (high school diplomas/GEDs, CTE skills certificates); learning gains (e.g. increases in scores on pre-and post-assessment tests, students advancing to a higher instructional level); employment outcomes (e.g. entered employment, retained employment, and wage gains); and transition to postsecondary education or training. Selected metrics should be consistent with reporting requirements and metrics in the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). (See Figure 8)

Recommendation 5.3: Employ a common suite of student identifiers. The K-12 Adult and community college systems should move toward a suite of common student identifiers to be used for different purposes. One purpose of common identifiers is to follow students across systems, monitoring their placement into appropriate courses and measuring educational gains. The two systems can use several identifiers for this purpose including the Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) and/or the California Driver's License Identification Number (CDL/ID), in addition to SSNs. The federal SSN and ITIN are traceable both statewide and nationally; the CDL/ID can be traced regardless of legal status. Implementing these would require modification of the fields used in the Chancellor's Office and K-12 Adult databases. Other student identifiers that should be included in the common suite are: first name, last name, middle initial, school code, last enrolled term, and date of birth.

SSNs are the only reliable method for tracking students into the labor market but given the problems with using SSNs, particularly the large population of undocumented residents served by adult education programs, the two systems need to evaluate the most viable option for mapping students' employment and wage outcomes.

Figure 8: Aligning with WIOA

As described earlier, the new federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is an important source of funding for adult education in California. WIOA funds can be used for basic skills (ABE/ASE and ESL) and citizenship programs. In particular, WIOA can be an essential funding stream for immigrant integration through its EL Civics monies.

As California moves to more effectively integrate its adult education system, it will be essential to ensure that any new reporting system is aligned with WIOA requirements and that program priorities, design, and implementation are consistent with federal mandates.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Maintain and Extend Structures for Ongoing Coordination Among Adult Schools, Community Colleges, and Community Partners

California must maintain and extend the infrastructure that support coordination among the systems and their partners. This includes maintaining the work of the regional consortia on an ongoing basis and supporting the development of structures for collaboration among faculty.

Recommendation 6.1: Support and strengthen the regional consortia. The regional consortia have made major strides in assessing the needs of their regions and developing plans to address them. California must now support them in deepening that work and in implementing their plans. This includes providing funding for the work of the consortia going forward.

In his 2015-16 Budget Proposal, Governor Brown provides 5 percent of each regional adult education allocation for the work of the consortia and added an additional responsibility to the consortia by tasking

them to designate an allocation board responsible for planning and allocating the $500 million new Adult Education Block Grant funds. The board would consist of seven members who represent community colleges, K-12 districts, other adult education providers, local workforce investment boards, rehabilitation programs, and one public member with relevant expertise. Remaining details of the structure and function of the consortia should be determined through budget negotiations and/or legislation.

Recommendation 6.2: Develop collaborative faculty structures. In an increasing number of regions, adult education faculty in community colleges and K-12 schools are developing joint committees and similar forms of collaboration to work on projects of curriculum design and alignment, alignment of assessments, development of bridge programs, combined professional development, and more. Both the CDE and the Chancellor's Office, as well the consortia, must provide support and incentives to deepen faculty collaboration since it is the cornerstone of the effort to better integrate the two systems.

MOVING FORWARD

The governor's proposed budget allocates $500 million to provide adult education services. This is a good start but the regional consortia have documented that $500 million is not enough to serve the educational and training needs of California's adult education students. Today, six million Californians live below the poverty line and California ranks 35th in the nation for overall poverty. At the same time, many California businesses cannot find sufficient numbers of skilled workers.

The CDE, Chancellor's Office, K-12 Adult, and community college providers have worked hard over the past year and a half to build a foundation for the kind of adult education system that California needs. The regional consortia stepped up to the AB 86 challenge and engaged in the work of identifying regional needs and service gaps. Administrators, faculty, partners, and students came together to identify strategies to more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of California's adult learners.

Moving forward, the new consortia and regionalized delivery system should increase accountability, coordination and collaboration, and keep decisions close to local need. Enhanced collaboration will allow for the leveraging of resources, make programs better integrated, and improve student success. The diversity of partnerships at the local level will provide multiple access points across the adult education system and offer new opportunities and choices for students. The result should be an adult education system that offers students accelerated pathways to their college, career, and life goals and that provides employers greater access to a skilled workforce their businesses need.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Legislative Analyst's Office, "Restructuring California's Adult Education System", December 5, 2012.

[2] Legislative Analyst's Office, "Restructuring California's Adult Education System", p.12.

[3] The community colleges have very large CTE programs but most are in the credit divisions of the colleges and therefore not considered part of the adult education offerings.

[4] "Other" providers of adult education include correctional institutions, libraries, community-based organizations, and more.

[5] From 2009-10 to 2012-13, funding remained at the 2008-09 allocation. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, K-12 Adult funding was based on 2012-13 school district expenditures for adult education.

[6] The 2015-16 governor's budget proposal would raise enhanced noncredit programs to the credit rate.

[7] California Department of Education.

[8] U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 American Community Survey (ACS).

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Cornell University Disability Report on California (2012)

[12] Migrant Policy Institute, National and State Estimates of Populations Eligible for Anticipated Deferred Action and DACA Programs.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Data are from the AB 86 plans.

[15] The AB 86 data suggest that enrollments in adult education providers other than the K-12 adult schools and community colleges rose slightly over the 2008-09 to 2012-13 time period. It is not clear why. It is possible that this simply reflects better data collection; it is also possible that other providers began to try to fill gaps left by the two major systems.

[16] This chart only includes the share of need met by K-12 Adult and community college providers.

[17] Collaboration around professional development follows this same pattern, with strong individual examples but insufficient statewide consistency.

[18] Though more than half of all students receive Board of Governor waivers and therefore are exempt from paying these fees. (In the California community colleges, fees are charged rather than tuition.)

[19] However, with the new emphasis on employer-valued credentials, the community colleges may begin to collect six data elements on students in order to monitor student workforce outcomes when SSNs are not available.

[20] Course Identifiers (C-IDs) can help facilitate articulation of CTE courses.

[21] Adult education offerings outside these five program areas were outside the scope of the AB 86 process.

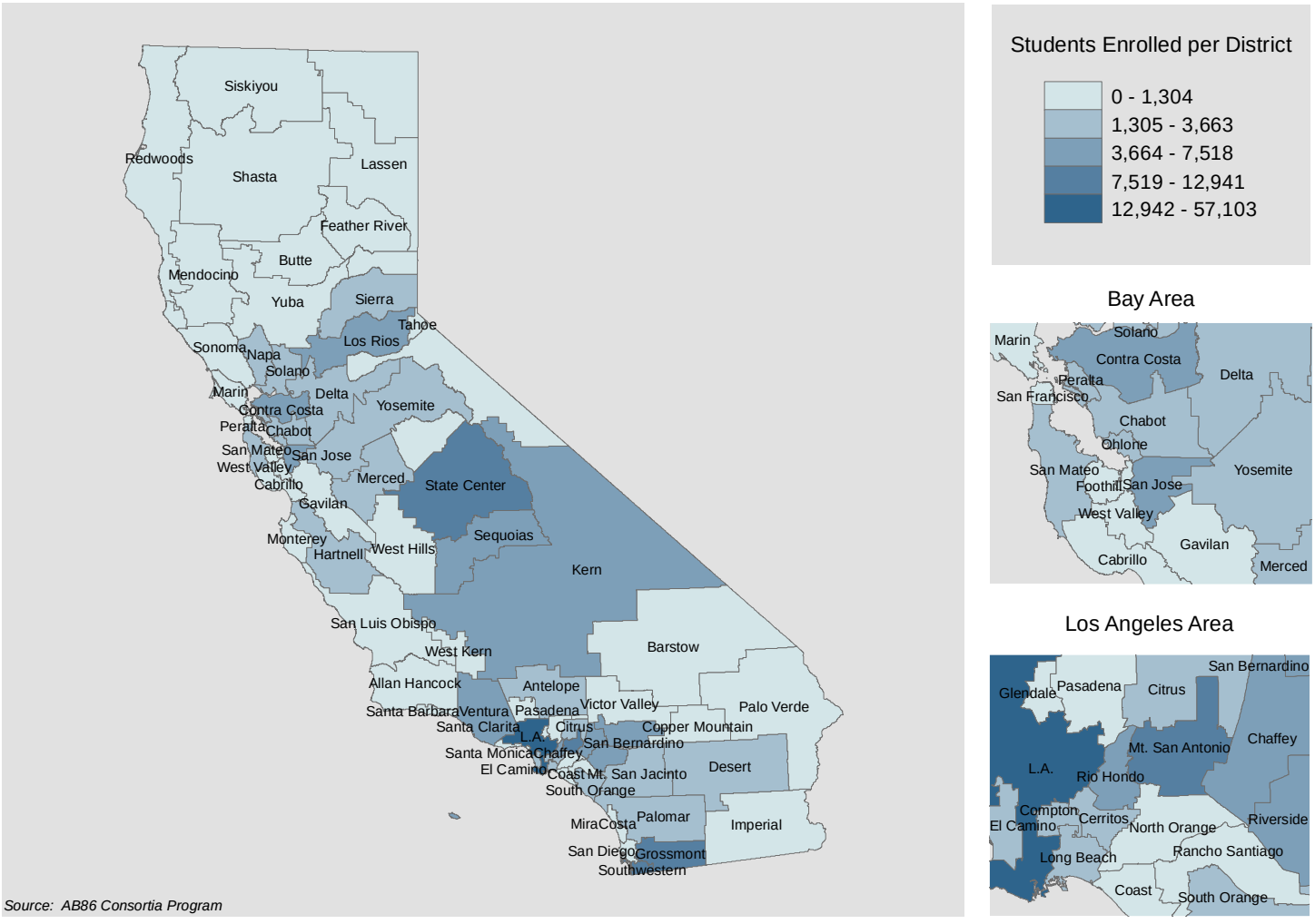
[22] However, the Chancellor's Office has created a tool called Salary Surfer to map student success in the labor market.

Appendices

The following maps contain enrollment data submitted by the seventy AB 86 consortia in their 12/31/2015 reports for the 2012-13 school year. The maps are organized by educational agency (K-12 adult schools, community colleges, and other local partners). There are four maps for each program area: Adults with Disabilities, Basic Skills (ABE/ASE), English as a Second Language, and Career Technical Education. Each map displays the AB 86 consortia boundaries and the level of enrollment by program area and educational agency.

Also see the Chancellor's Office online consortia interactive map: http://ab86.cccco.edu/HelpfulResources/DistrictBoundariesMap.aspx. Please note that there are several counties - Modoc, Sierra, Alpine, Mono, Inyo, Mariposa - outside the 72 community college district boundaries that have been included in the AB 86 consortia, but are not reflected in the interactive map.

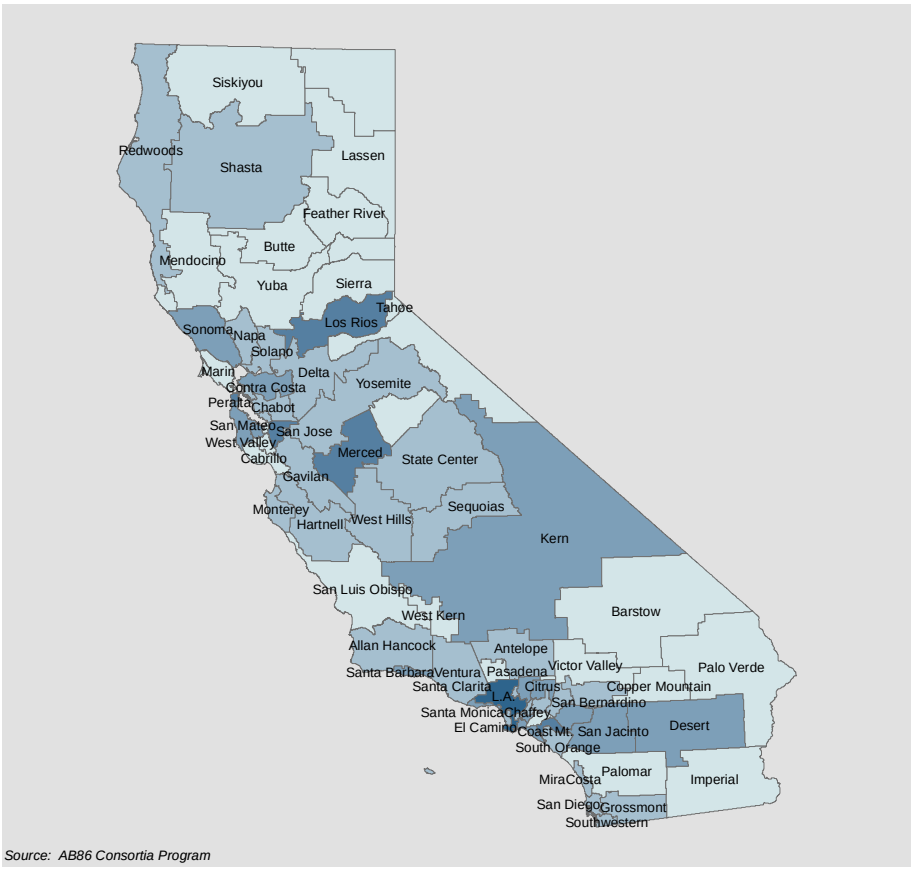
K - 12 2012 - 2013 Basic Skills Enrollment



Source: AB86 Consortia Program

Although the six counties mentioned above are not reflected on the enrollment maps, the student enrollment numbers have been added to the consortia totals.

California Community Colleges 2012 - 2013 Basic Skills Enrollment

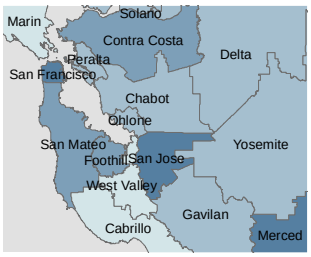


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

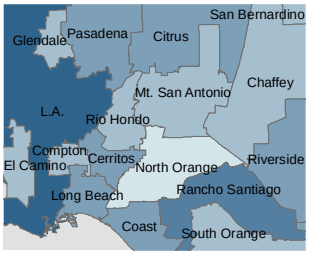
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 2,284
- 2,285 - 6,784
- 6,785 - 14,123
- 14,124 - 23,976
- 23,977 - 58,552

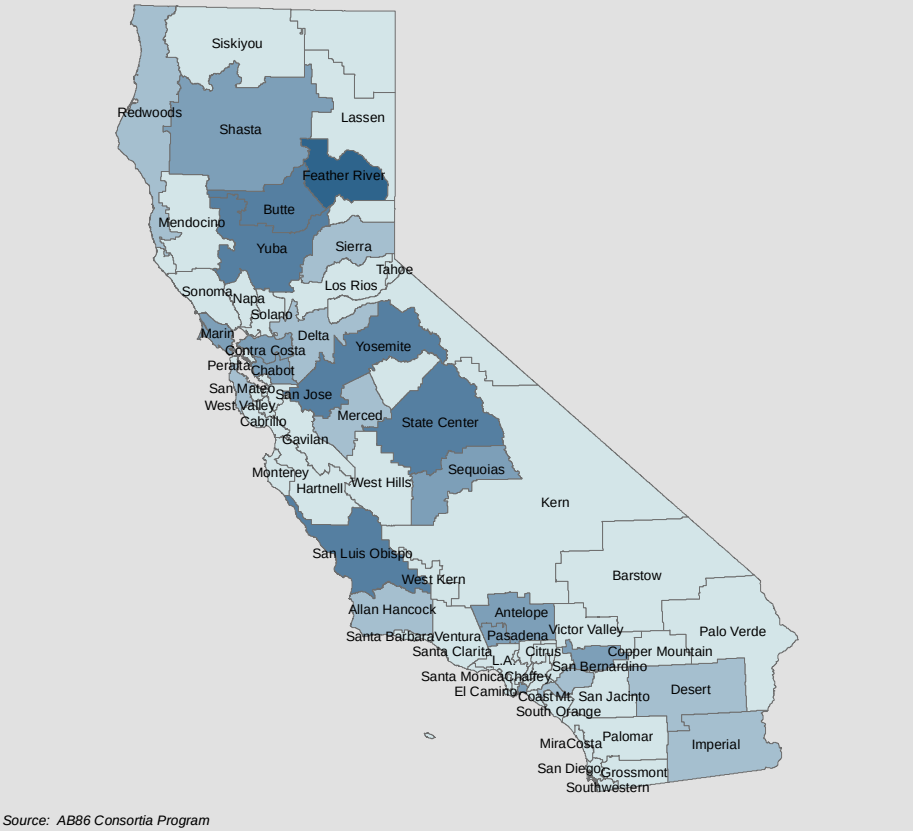
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



Local Partners 2012 - 2013 Basic Skills Enrollment

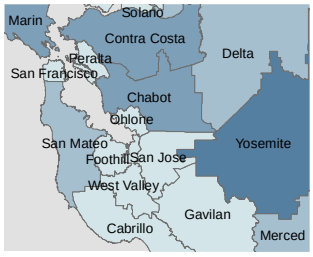


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

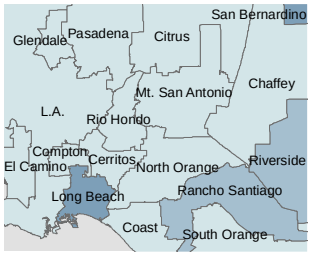
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 29
- 30 - 200
- 201 - 667
- 668 - 1,304
- 1,305 - 2,299

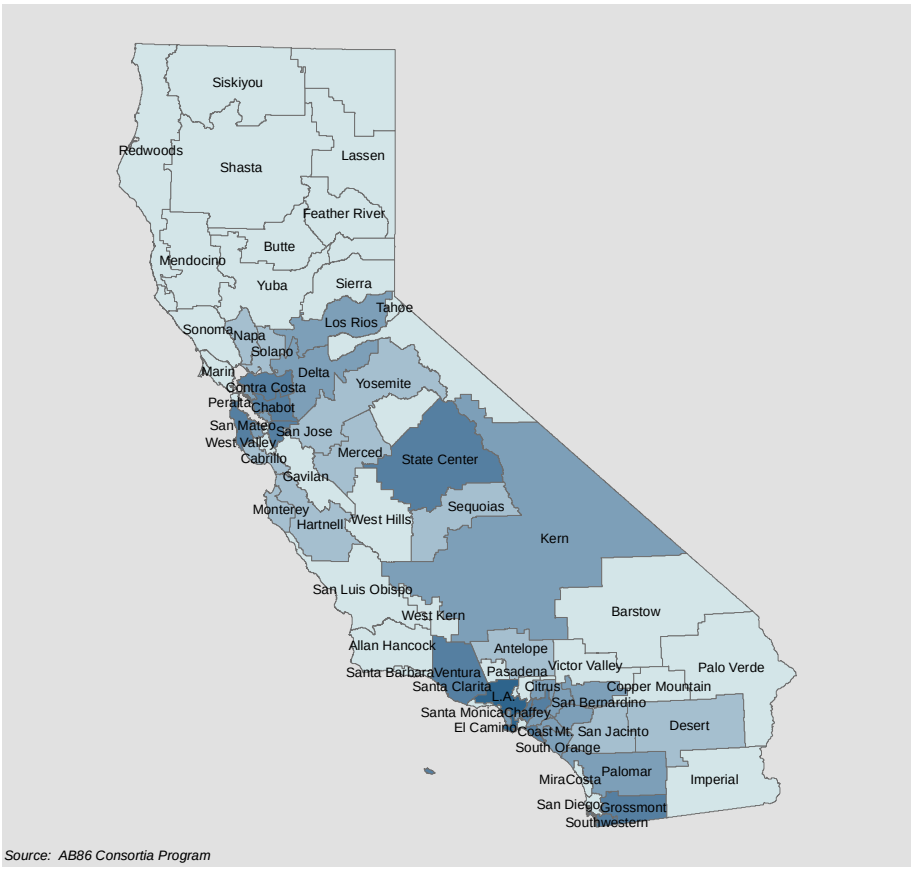
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



K - 12 Adult Schools 2012 - 2013 ESL Enrollment

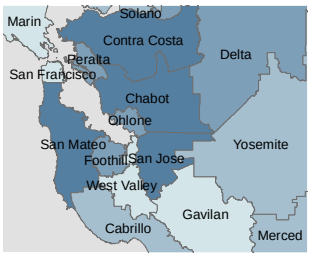


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

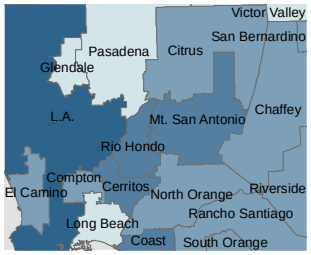
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 697
- 698 - 2,132
- 2,133 - 4,588
- 4,589 - 8,562
- 8,563 - 55,913

Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



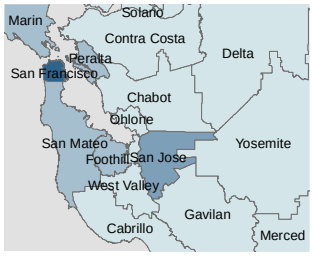
California Community Colleges 2012 - 2013 ESL Enrollment

Source: AB86 Consortia Program

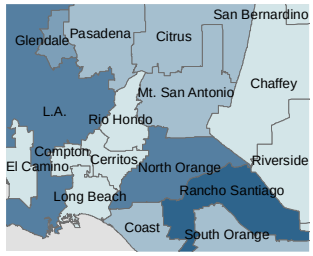
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 1,487
- 1,488 - 5,470
- 5,471 - 10,269
- 10,270 - 16,389
- 16,390 - 29,018

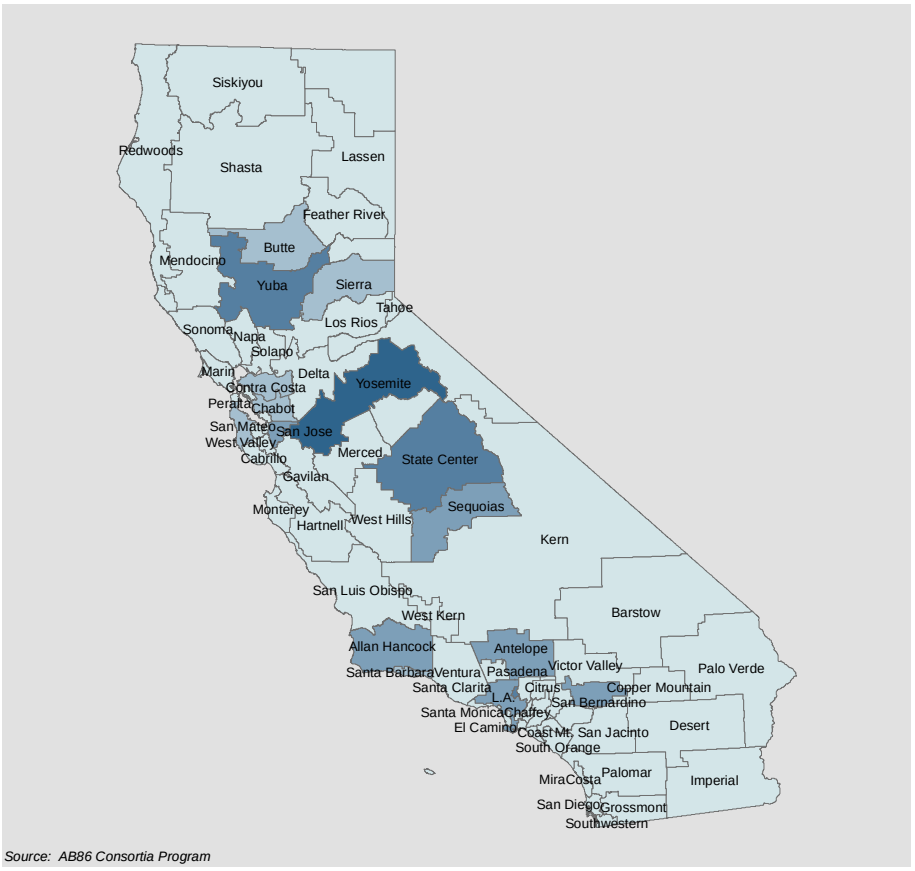
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



Local Partners 2012 - 2013 ESL Enrollment

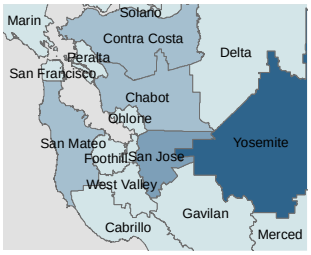


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

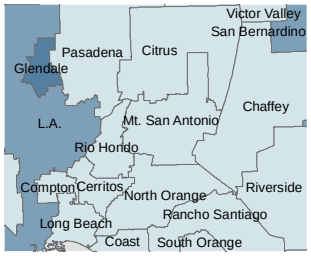
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 30
- 31 - 156
- 157 - 402
- 403 - 653
- 654 - 1,295

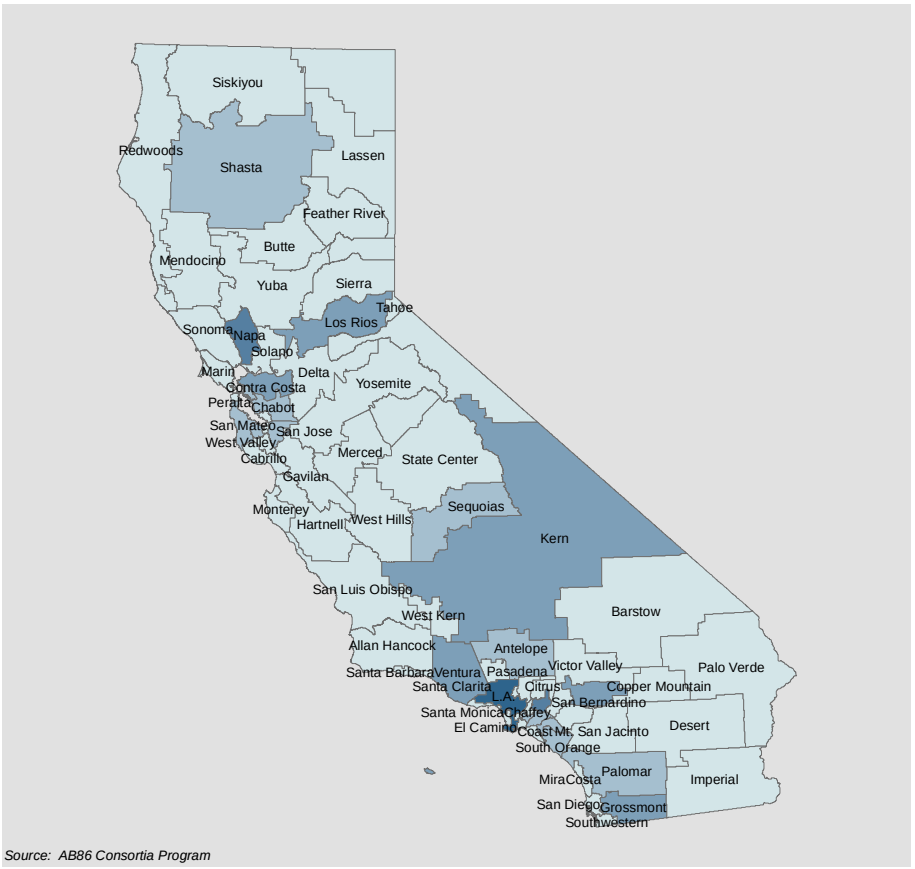
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



K-12 Adult Schools 2012 - 2013 AWD Enrollment

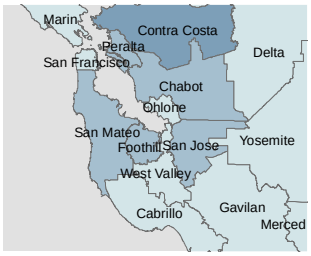


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

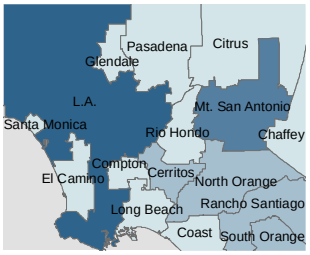
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 93
- 94 - 272
- 273 - 580
- 581 - 1,316
- 1,317 - 3,850

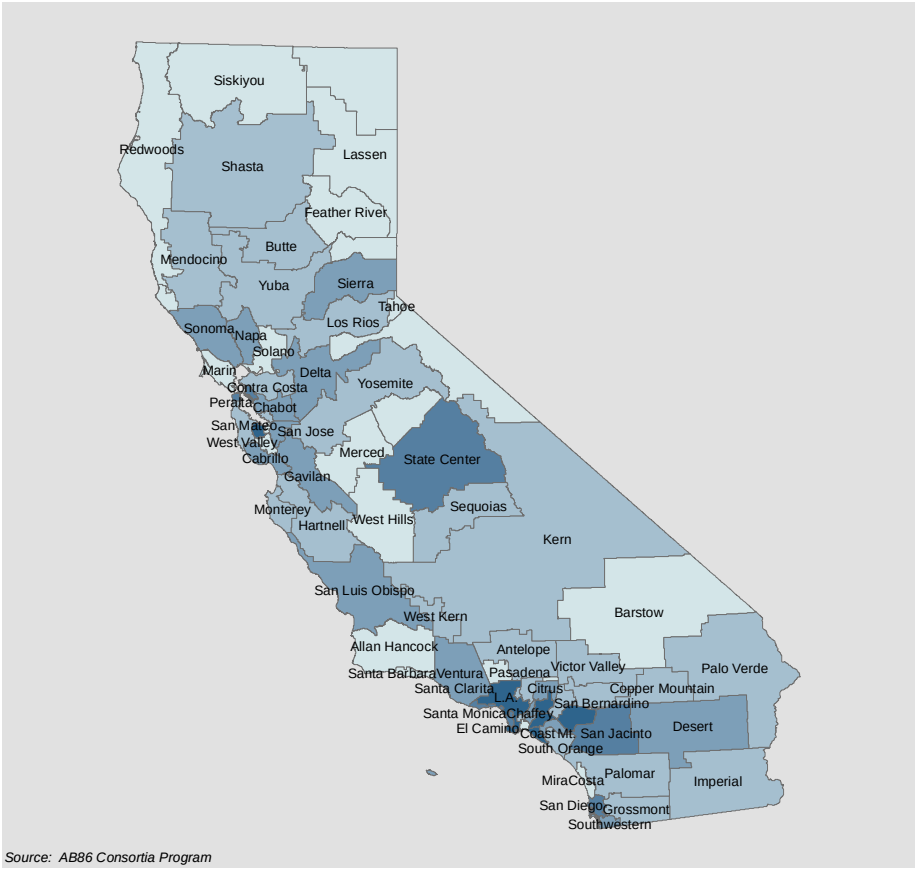
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



California Community Colleges 2012 - 2013 AWD Enrollment

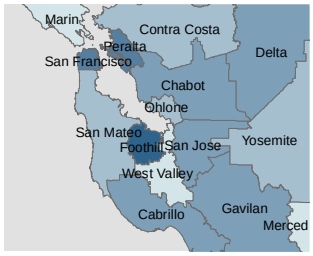


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

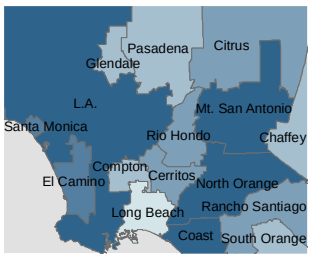
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 182
- 183 - 600
- 601 - 1,198
- 1,199 - 2,428
- 2,429 - 5,146

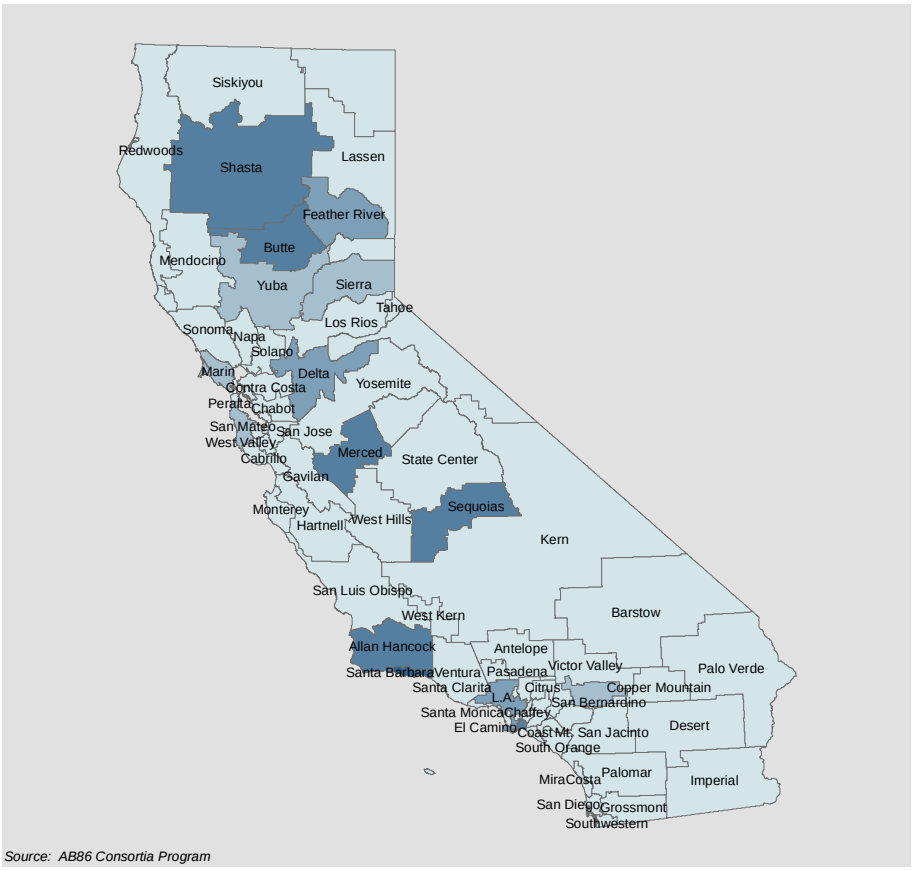
Bay Area



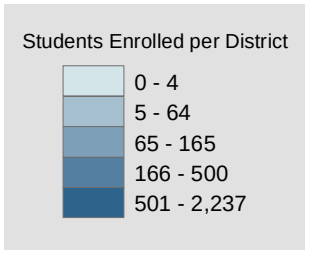
Los Angeles Area



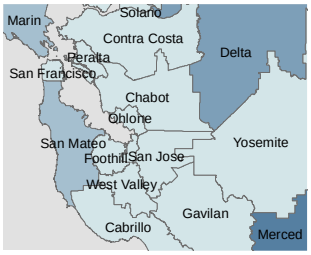
Local Partners 2012 - 2013 AWD Enrollment



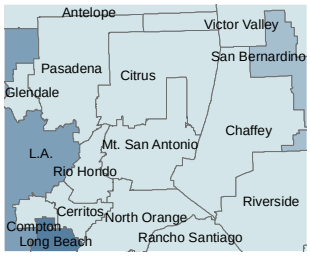
Source: AB86 Consortia Program



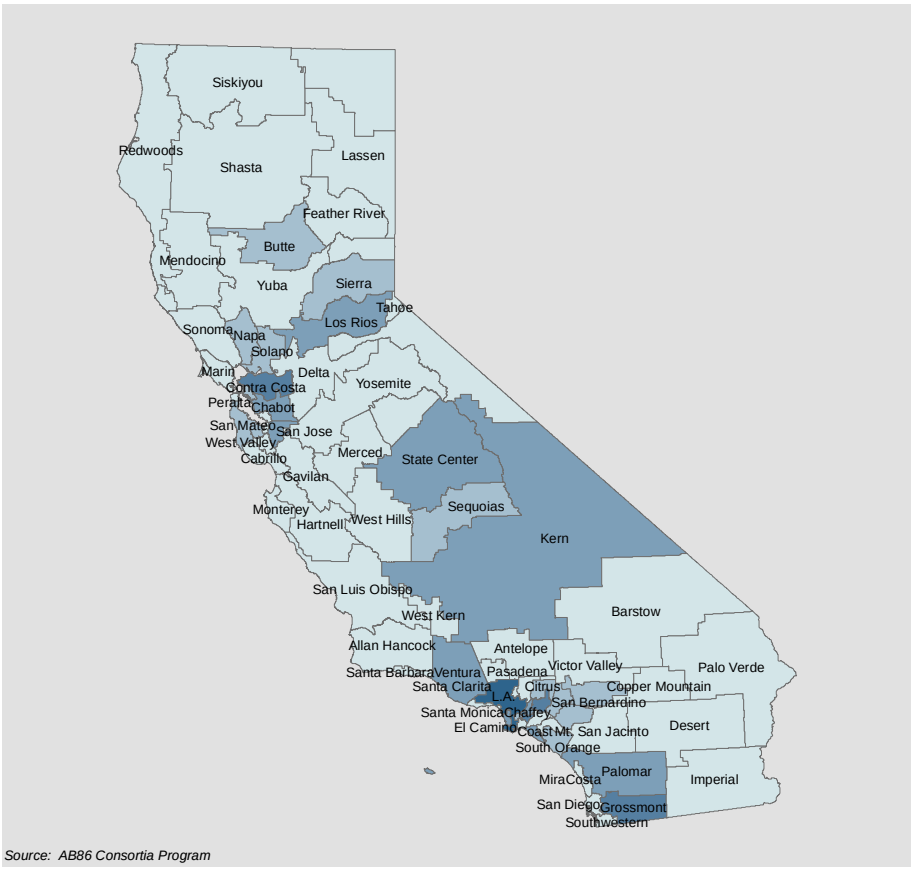
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



K - 12 Adult Schools 2012 - 2013 CTE Enrollment

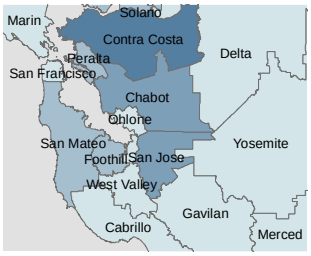


Source: AB86 Consortia Program

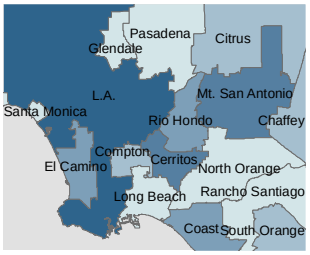
Students Enrolled per District

- 0 - 546
- 547 - 2,057
- 2,058 - 4,823
- 4,824 - 10,869
- 10,870 - 20,134

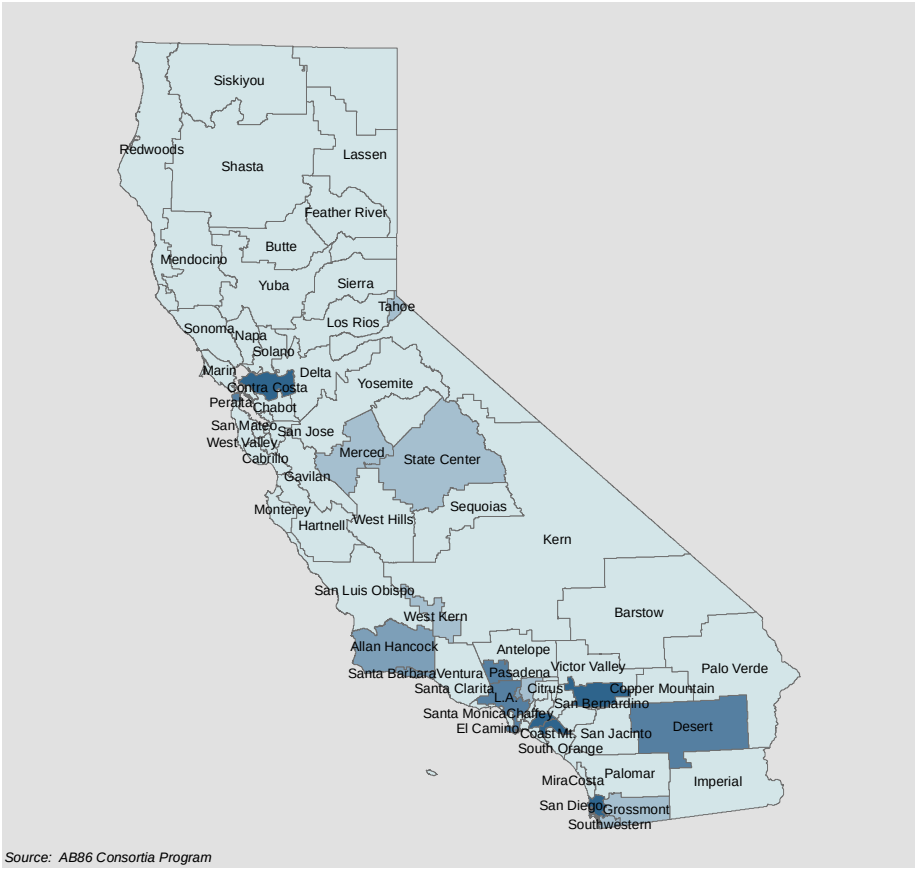
Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



California Community Colleges 2012 - 2013 CTE Enrollment



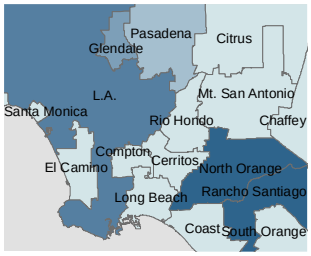
Source: AB86 Consortia Program

Students Enrolled per District

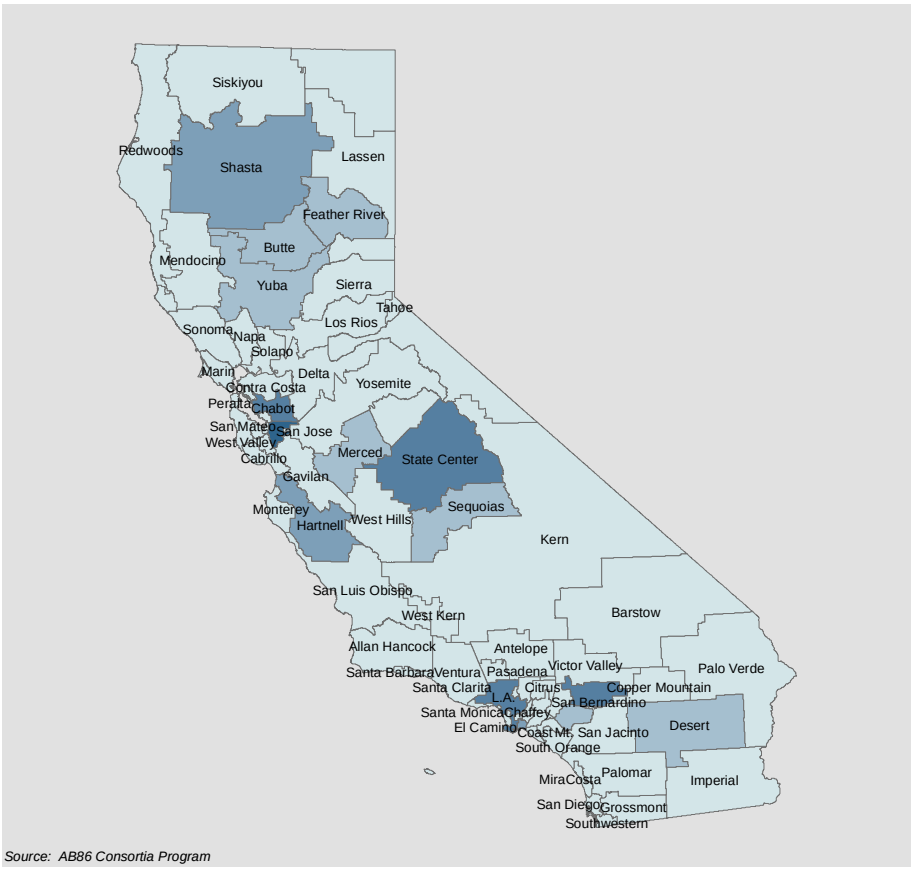
- 0 - 332
- 333 - 1,386
- 1,387 - 3,328
- 3,329 - 8,090
- 8,091 - 16,556

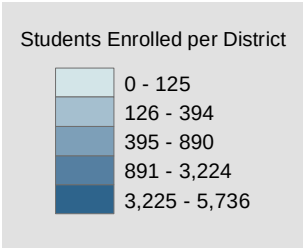
Bay Area

Los Angeles Area

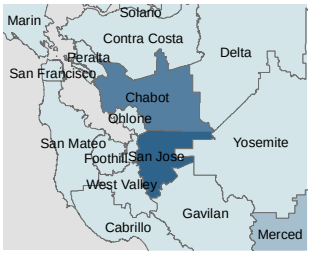


Local Partners 2012 - 2013 CTE Enrollment

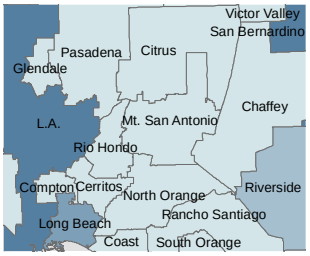




Bay Area



Los Angeles Area



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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