

Adult Education

Mission: The mission of the Adult Education Program (AEP) is preparing adult learners for college, career, and civic responsibility by providing them the literacy, mathematics, and technical skills they need to succeed.

Funding: Historically, roughly 90 percent of funding for the AEP came from the state's General Fund; the rest was from Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). In 2007-08, the AEP received \$754 million from the General Fund and \$77 million from WIA. The February 2009 Budget Act cut the state funding and made a dramatic change, giving local school districts the ability to use AEP funds for other educational programs from 2008-09 through 2012-13, which was recently extended through 2014-15. With this flexibility option, a significant share of state funds has been shifted to K-12. Total state funding available to local AEPs has declined to under \$400 million in 2009-10 and continues to erode annually. However, the WIA II funding, based largely on the state's population lacking high school diplomas, provides a measure of relief to local educational programs with \$87.6 million in 2011-12.

Administration, Governance, and Service

Delivery System: The California

Department of Education (CDE) administers the state AEP and the federal WIA programs. Adult schools have historically been the largest provider at the local level. Over half the adult schools also provide WIA educational services. Other key WIA providers include community colleges (17 community colleges offer adult education programs), correctional institutions (prisons and jails), the Department of Developmental Services, libraries, and community-based organizations.

Population Served: The AEP serves high school dropouts and other adults returning to school – many of them immigrants. All federal WIA and most AEP students are enrolled in basic skills such as reading and writing, mathematics, or English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Some AEP students are enrolled in additional subjects to complete their GED certificates or high school diploma requirements. ESL students comprise approximately half of the AEP basic skills enrollment and two-thirds of all students in the federal basic skills programs; of these, more than a quarter are at the beginning ESL level. The other major AEP enrollment area is career technical education (CTE) serving 94,500 students. In addition to basic skills and CTE, the AEP has served older adults and adults with

disabilities, and provides courses in citizenship preparation, health and safety, home economics, and parenting. However, since the 2009 budget bill, local districts have focused more sharply on basic skills and CTE. The total number of AEP students served has declined since enactment of the 2009 budget bill, from a total of 1.24 million students in 2007-08 to 776,850 students in 2009-10.

Accountability: The AEP accountability system, mandated for WIA recipients by the federal government, measures student progress in completing 11 literacy levels within a single program year. Since many adult education programs are open entry/open exit, students counted in any

one year could have been in the program for only a short time or as long as one year. The current system does not facilitate tracking of students across program years or from one school to another. The AEP reporting system is not linked to that of the community colleges, so AEP students cannot be tracked into higher education. Both of these issues can be overcome when the AEP has access to the Statewide Student Identifiers (SSID) and the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) that are currently available for K-12 students. Because Social Security numbers are not used to identify students, they currently cannot be tracked into the labor market.