



California Hospital Association
California Workforce Association
California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO
California Manufacturing and Technology Association
Career Ladders Project for the California Community Colleges
National Council of La Raza
PolicyLink
State Building and Construction Trades of California

June 3, 2013

Dear Chair and Members of the Budget Conference Committee,

California has experienced serious erosion in its adult education delivery system in recent years. Beyond that, there is considerable evidence that the old system was fragmented, duplicative, and failed to meet the education and career goals of a great many of its students. The Budget Conference Committee has a critical opportunity to both shore up program funding and retool the program to meet the needs of the 21st century. The EDGE Coalition believes that by building on the strengths of both K-12 adult schools and the community colleges, California can design an integrated adult education delivery system focused on transitions to employment and postsecondary education and capable of implementing nationally-recognized, accelerated approaches to learning. To restore funding – which is essential - without repurposing the program to focus on student success and transitions to college and career would be a lost opportunity for the growing numbers of adult students who rely on these programs to move their lives forward.

The EDGE Coalition urges the Budget Conference Committee to develop language that ensures the following:

- **Adult education has an adequate, guaranteed funding stream;** there are no further cuts; funding is allocated to regions on the basis of need; and state adult education funds and federal WIA Title II adult education funds are jointly administered.
- **There is renewed focus on adult education and integrated governance at the state level.** CDE and the Chancellor's Office work collaboratively to administer the new Adult Education Partnership, using the WIA administrative funds to support this effort; jointly issue RFAs to distribute funding, score proposals, and provide technical assistance to the regional partnerships.
- **There is a varied and well-integrated delivery system.** Funds are awarded to regional partnerships of community colleges, adult education providers, community-based and other organizations that demonstrate the capacity to provide the needed range of services, integrate course offerings, and effectively move students to their educational and career goals. Regional partnerships will determine the fiscal lead.
- **Allowable activities are limited to ABE, ASE, ESL, citizenship, GED/HS diploma, and vocational education.**
- **There is a commitment to student success, especially transition to employment or postsecondary education.** Preference is given to regional partnerships that employ approaches proven to accelerate student success, such as integrated and contextualized basic skills and career technical education, and joint programming strategies. Priority is also given to existing programs – including apprenticeship programs - with proven records in linking adult learners to family sustaining employment opportunities. There is an emphasis on accountability and outcomes.

The California EDGE Coalition believes that the Legislature now has the opportunity to make a real difference by 1) restoring funding for adult education programs and 2) revamping the delivery structure and focus of these programs. Only by doing both can we ensure that they meet the needs of the growing number of adult learners in California, including the most vulnerable, who need further education and training to successfully participate in California's economy.

Thank you,

Barbara Baran and Rona Sherriff

Barbara Baran and Rona Sherriff on behalf of the California EDGE Coalition