

Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II



2002-2003
End-of-Year Progress Report
to the Legislature

Prepared for the California Department of Education by **CASAS**

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*Prepared by CASAS and the
California Department of Education, Adult Education Office*

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INTRODUCTION

Budget Act language for fiscal year 2003-2004 (Item 6110-156-0890 provision 3) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to report on the implementation of Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIA Title II) as follows:

“On or before March 1, 2004, the State Department of Education shall report to the appropriate subcommittees of the Assembly Budget Committee and the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee on the following aspects of Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act: (a) the makeup of those adult education providers that applied for competitive grants under Title II and those that obtained grants, by size, geographic location, and type (school district, community colleges, community-based organizations, other local entities); (b) the extent to which participating programs were able to meet planned performance targets; and (c) a breakdown of the types of courses (ESL, ESL citizenship, ABE, ASE) included in the performance targets of participating agencies. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Legislature and State Department of Education utilize the information provided pursuant to this provision to (a) evaluate whether any changes need to be made to improve the implementation of the accountability-based funding system under Title II and (b) evaluate the feasibility of any future expansion of the accountability-based funding system using state funds.”

Fiscal year 2002-2003 represents the fourth year of WIA Title II implementation. Two major implementation goals were: (1) Institute performance measures, and (2) Establish increased accountability requirements for all funded programs. WIA Title II multiyear grants are funded on a pay-for-performance basis. California’s federal supplemental funding allocation plan is based on documented student performance and goal attainment in educational programs. It requires all agencies to collect the following information on all students for whom they receive federal supplemental funding:

- Demographic and program information;
- Individual student progress and learning gains in the literacy skill levels of reading, writing, and speaking the English language; numeracy; problem solving; English language acquisition; and other literacy skills;
- Student outcomes, such as the completion of a GED, attainment of a high school diploma, and acquisition or retention of unsubsidized employment (see Appendix A for further information about data collection issues).

In 2002-2003, the state met or exceeded all of its performance goals. Supported by California’s comprehensive infrastructure for capacity building, adult education providers throughout the state continued to improve their ability to collect complete and accurate data in full alignment with the National Reporting System (NRS) reporting requirements and data quality standards. Local adult education providers now have the capacity to

use current data to analyze and leverage program strengths and to identify opportunities for program improvement, innovation, and reform.

This report is divided into two parts. Part I addresses the implementation of WIA Title II. Part II addresses legislative intent considerations with recommendations.

PART I — IMPLEMENTATION OF WIA TITLE II

a. The makeup of 2002-2003 adult education providers that applied for competitive grants under Title II and those that obtained grants, by size, geographic location, and type (school district, community colleges, community-based organizations, other local entities)

Funding and Applicants for Funding

Title II supports three general types of program funding:

1. Section 231 of Title II
 - ◆ Adult Basic Education (ABE) – Provides education that enables learners to gain the basic literacy skills, improve their employment opportunities, and work towards the attainment of a high school diploma
 - ◆ Adult Secondary Education (ASE) – Includes preparation for achieving a high school diploma or successfully passing the test for General Educational Development (GED)
 - ◆ English as a Second Language (ESL) – Assists learners in English language acquisition
 - ◆ ESL-Citizenship (ESL-Cit) – Assists learners in English language acquisition with special emphasis on preparing learners to achieve U.S. Citizenship
2. Section 225 of Title II
 - ◆ ABE, ASE, and ESL for institutionalized adults
3. English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) of the Federal Omnibus Budget Act
 - ◆ ESL in the context of citizenship preparation and civic participation

In 2002-2003, 280 agencies applied for federal funding under Section 225, Section 231, or EL Civics. Agencies serving students who were not institutionalized could apply for both Section 231 and EL Civics funds. Of the 280 agencies that applied for funding, 258 agencies received WIA Title II funding through Section 225, Section 231, or EL Civics and submitted complete year-end data (see Table 1).

Table 1

WIA Title II Applicants and Agencies Funded by Agency Type (PY 2002-2003)

Agency Type	Applied for Funding N	Received Funding N	Received Funding %
Adult Schools	170	163	95.9
Community-Based Organizations	56	43	76.8
Community College Districts	18	18	100.0
Library Literacy Programs	9	8	88.9
County Offices of Education	8	7	87.5
California Conservation Corps	1	1	100.0
California State Universities	1	1	100.0
225 Funded	17	17	100.0
Total	280	258	92.1

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In PY 2002-2003, CDE refined the delivery of technical assistance to local literacy applicants so that they could provide better information in the application process. This resulted in an increase in the number of funded applications submitted.

Number of Agencies by Provider Type Receiving WIA Title II Funds (2000-2003)

Adult schools comprised the majority of WIA Title II funded agencies. Other adult education providers include community-based organizations (CBOs), community colleges, library literacy programs, county offices of education (COE), California Conservation Corps (CCC), California State University, and Section 225 funded agencies, which include jail education programs and state agencies serving institutionalized adults.

After the enactment of the WIA Title II, California initially experienced a substantial drop in provider agencies. This drop arguably resulted from the transition of funding only student attendance (seat-time based) to results-driven funding where agencies received funding only when students met or exceeded specific achievement gains. The decrease in CBOs, in particular, may have been a result of the new accountability requirements. At that time, federal agencies were conducting an intense investigation into the operations of CBOs as providers of seat-time based adult education. In 2000-2001, there were 13 CBOs that received WIA Title II funding. Since then the number has more than tripled. Table 2 shows the number of agencies by provider type that received WIA Title II funding since 2000.

Table 2
Number of Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding by Provider Type
(PY 2000-2001 to PY 2002-2003)

Agency Type	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Adult Schools	143	73.2	150	67.2	163	63.1
Community-Based Organizations	13	6.7	24	10.8	43	16.7
Community College Districts	12	6.2	16	7.2	18	7
Library Literacy Programs	8	4.1	10	4.5	8	3.1
County Offices of Education	5	2.6	6	2.7	7	2.7
California Conservation Corps	1	0.5	1	0.4	1	0.4
California State Universities	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4
225 Funded	13	6.7	16	7.2	17	6.6
Total	195	100.0	223	100.0	258	100.0

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The total number of funded agencies has steadily increased to 258 in 2002-2003, (a 32 percent gain in the number of providers). Most provider types showed increases in the number of agencies funded over the last two program years. For the second consecutive program year, there was an increase in the number of CBOs (the number almost doubling each year from 13 to 24 to 43). Of the 17 agencies receiving Section 225 funding, 14 were jail programs and the remaining three were state agencies: California Department of Corrections (CDC), Department of Developmental Services (DDS), and California Youth Authority (CYA). The goal continues to be one of increasing the number of providers to build capacity in reaching and serving low literacy learners.

Geographic Region by Provider Type

For reporting purposes, California is categorized into seven regions: five separate geographical regions; a Balance of State Region, which includes the more remote geographical areas of the state not included in the initial five regions; and a seventh category that includes funded State Agencies providing services throughout the state. Table 3a reports agencies that applied for WIA Title II funding and those that received WIA Title II funding by geographic region for 2002-2003.

Table 3a
WIA Title II Applicants and Agencies Funded by
Geographic Region (PY 2002-2003)

Geographic Region	Applied for Funding N	Received Funding N	Percentage Receiving Funding %
Bay Area Region	54	50	92.6
Central Valley Region	25	25	100.0
Los Angeles Perimeter Region	44	38	86.4
Los Angeles County Region	55	53	96.4
San Diego Region	14	13	92.9
State Agencies	4	4	100.0
Balance of State	84	75	89.3
Total	280	258	92.1

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Table 3b reports the number and percentage of agencies that received WIA Title II funding by geographic region and provider type, and the number and percentage of learners enrolled in each geographic region category.

The geographic region with the greatest percentage of agencies was the Balance of State Region that encompasses mostly rural areas falling outside the main urban centers. Although 29.1 percent of agencies were in the Balance of State Region, they account for only 11.9 percent of total student enrollment.

Excluding the Balance of State Region, Los Angeles County, its perimeter counties, and the Bay Area dominate the California system in the number of agencies and the number of students enrolled. Los Angeles County and its perimeter counties account for 35.2 percent of all agencies and 56.1 percent of student enrollment; these numbers are influenced by the Los Angeles Unified School District – the largest adult education provider in the state (22.2 percent of the total state enrollment) with the largest concentration of non-English speakers (25.9 percent of the total learners that identified a primary language other than English). The Bay Area Region comprises 19.4 percent of all agencies and 17.4 percent of student enrollment.

Table 3b
Geographic Region by Provider Type –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding (PY 2002-2003)

Geographic Region	Adult Schools		CBO		Community Colleges		Library Literacy		COE	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bay Area	31	19.0	15	34.8	1	5.6	0	0.0	1	14.3
Central Valley	20	12.3	3	7.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Los Angeles Perimeter	26	16.0	2	4.7	5	27.8	2	25.0	0	0.0
Los Angeles County	32	19.6	12	27.9	6	33.3	2	25.0	0	0.0
San Diego	7	4.3	2	4.7	2	11.1	1	12.5	0	0.0
State Agencies	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Balance of State	47	28.8	9	20.9	4	22.2	3	37.5	6	85.7
	163	100.0	43	100.0	18	100.0	8	100.0	7	100.0

Geographic Region	CCC		CSU		225 Funded		Total Agencies		Total Enrollment	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bay Area	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.8	50	19.4	142,009	17.4
Central Valley	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	11.8	25	9.7	38,009	4.7
Los Angeles Perimeter	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	17.6	38	14.7	112,931	13.9
Los Angeles County	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	53	20.5	345,086	42.2
San Diego	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	13	5.0	45,762	5.6
State Agencies	1	100.0	0	0.0	3	17.6	4	1.6	34,849	4.3
Balance of State	0	0.0	1	100.0	5	29.4	75	29.1	96,664	11.9
	1	100.0	1	100.0	17	100.0	258	100.0	815,310	100.0

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*Note: The state agencies classification is included for footing purposes and includes CCC, DDS, CDC, and CYA.

The majority of the funded CBOs are in the Bay Area Region (34.8 percent) or Los Angeles County Region (27.9 percent), while the highest percentage of community colleges is in the Los Angeles County Region and its perimeter counties (61.1 percent).

Agency Size by Provider Type

Following the convention used for the last four years, agency size falls into three broad-based categories: small (500 annual enrollments or less), medium (501 to 8,000 enrollments), and large (greater than 8,000 enrollments). Overall, the highest proportion of agencies fell within the medium category (57.7 percent), followed by small (35.7 percent), and large (6.6 percent). In terms of student enrollment, 50.1 percent of students enrolled in medium-sized agencies, 47.8 percent in large agencies, and 2.1 percent in small agencies.

Provider types followed expected size patterns. Large agencies included only adult schools, community colleges, and one Section 225 funded agency (CDC). CBOs and library literacy programs were almost exclusively small agencies, as were the majority of COE programs. The majority of adult schools, community colleges, and Section 225 funded agencies were medium-sized (see Table 4a).

Table 4a
Agency Size by Provider Type –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding (PY 2002-2003)

Size	Adult Schools		CBO		Community		Library		COE	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	29	17.8	40	93.0	4	22.2	8	100.0	4	57.1
Medium	121	74.2	3	7.0	11	61.1	0	0.0	3	42.9
Large	13	8.0	0	0.0	3	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	163	100.0	43	100.0	18	100.0	8	100.0	7	100.0

Size	CCC		CSU		225 Funded		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	0	0.0	1	100.0	6	35.3	92	35.7
Medium	1	100.0	0	0.0	10	58.8	149	57.7
Large	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	5.9	17	6.6
Total	1	100.0	1	100.0	17	100.0	258	100.0

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Agency Size by Geographic Region

As shown in Table 4b, a large proportion (40.3 percent) of the 92 small agencies are located in the Balance of State Region consisting of rural areas outside the major cities. Medium and large agencies are more commonly found in close proximity to large metropolitan areas, concentrated especially in the Los Angeles and Bay Area regions. The Los Angeles County and Bay Area Regions have 58.7 percent of the large agencies and 42.9 percent of the medium agencies. Smaller agencies in rural areas serve the needs of smaller more rural populations that require access to instruction in remote areas; whereas, medium and large agencies are providing service predominantly to urban area and suburban populations.

Table 4b
Agency Size by Geographic Region –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding (PY 2002-2003)

Geographic Region	Small		Medium		Large	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bay Area	15	16.3	31	20.8	4	23.5
Central Valley	13	14.1	11	7.4	1	5.9
Los Angeles Perimeter	8	8.7	28	18.8	2	11.8
Los Angeles County	14	15.2	33	22.1	6	35.2
San Diego County	5	5.4	6	4.0	2	11.8
State Agencies	0	0.0	3	2.0	1	5.9
Balance of State	37	40.3	37	24.9	1	5.9
Total	92	100.0	149	100.0	17	100.0

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The following Tables: 4b1; 4b2; 4b3; display trend data of agencies receiving WIA Title II funds over the last three program years, (PY 2000-2001 through PY 2002-2003) for the three sizes of agencies. Over this period, there were 76 newly funded agencies added to the WIA Title II provider system. The addition of 42 newly funded small

agencies accounted for over half of this growth. As shown in Table 4b1, the number of small agencies funded with WIA Title II, resources nearly doubled over the three-year period (50 agencies in PY 2000-2001 to 92 in PY 2002-2003). Over seventy-five percent of this gain was made almost equally among the Bay Area, LA County, and Balance of the State Regions.

Table 4b1
Small Sized Agencies by Geographic Region –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding

Geographic Region	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Bay Area	5	10.0	12	16.9	15	16.3
Central Valley	9	18.0	9	12.7	13	14.1
Los Angeles Perimeter	6	12.0	10	14.1	8	8.7
Los Angeles County	3	6.0	7	9.9	14	15.2
San Diego County	1	2.0	1	1.4	5	5.4
State Agencies	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Balance of State	26	52.0	32	45.0	37	40.3
Total	50	100.0	71	100.0	92	100.0

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Table 4b2
Medium Sized Agencies by Geographic Region –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding

Geographic Region	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Bay Area	28	23.7	29	21.5	31	20.8
Central Valley	9	7.6	12	8.9	11	7.4
Los Angeles Perimeter	23	19.5	25	18.5	28	18.8
Los Angeles County	29	24.6	32	23.8	33	22.1
San Diego County	5	4.2	6	4.4	6	4.0
State Agencies	1	0.8	3	2.2	3	2.0
Balance of State	23	19.6	28	20.7	37	24.9
Total	118	100.0	135	100.0	149	100.0

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Table 4b3
Large Sized Agencies by Geographic Region –
Agencies Receiving WIA Title II Funding

Geographic Region	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Bay Area	3	21.4	4	23.5	4	23.5
Central Valley	1	7.1	1	5.9	1	5.9
Los Angeles Perimeter	2	14.3	2	11.8	2	11.8
Los Angeles County	5	35.7	6	35.2	6	35.2
San Diego County	2	14.3	2	11.8	2	11.8
State Agencies	0	0.0	1	5.9	1	5.9
Balance of State	1	7.2	1	5.9	1	5.9
Total	14	100.0	17	100.0	17	100.0

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Table 4b2 displays the additions and changes in the funding of medium sized agencies. Overall their growth was about a quarter (26.2 percent) higher in 2002-2003 than in 2000-2001. The small changes that took place during the same period for large agencies are shown in Table 4b3. There are no large eligible agencies in California that are not currently funded with WIA Title II funds.

As noted previously, over the past three years, there was a substantial increase in the number of WIA Title II funded agencies with a greater inclusion of small providers statewide, and increases in small and medium sized providers in the more rural and remote geographical regions of the state. However, the growth in the number of providers added to the delivery system (41.8 percent increase), did not proportionately increase the capacity to serve more students, rather it provided greater access to literacy and educational programs for students who might not otherwise be served. There were two major increases in costs associated with growth: (1) greater amounts of local assistance funds for local administration were expended so that these smaller agencies could participate in WIA Title II funding; and, (2) capped state leadership resources were further diluted and strained in providing these agencies with greater amounts of technical assistance than typically was needed by ongoing agencies having more staff and experience in delivering adult education and literacy services.

Enrollment by Provider Type

Table 5 reports the number of student enrollments by provider type. In PY 2002-2003, there were 258 WIA Title II agencies enrolling 815,310 students with adult schools serving the vast majority (82.6 percent) of the learners. The percentages of students enrolled by provider type are consistent with the percentages from prior years. One noticeable provider type trend was the increased enrollment in CBOs over the three-year period.

In 2002-2003, agencies enrolled an additional 43,405 students over the previous year, an increase of 5.6 percent. Agencies experiencing the largest increases in enrollment

were CBOs (83.8 percent), Section 225 funded agencies (9.3 percent), and adult schools (5.3 percent). Adult schools accounted for the majority (77.5 percent) of the 43,405 increase in student enrollment. The CCC showed a decrease in enrollment in 2002-2003 compared to 2001-2002 (16.7 percent).

Table 5
Enrollment Reported by Provider Type –
WIA Title II Funded Agencies (PY 2000-2001 to PY 2002-2003)

Provider Type	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Adult Schools	529,920	82.3	640,182	82.9	673,836	82.6
Community-Based Organizations	2,272	0.4	4,255	0.6	7,821	1.0
Community College Districts	68,881	10.7	77,277	10.0	80,014	9.8
County Offices of Education	5,228	0.8	5,593	0.7	5,608	0.7
Library Literacy Programs	933	0.1	1,330	0.2	1,358	0.2
California Conservation Corps	1,751	0.3	2,700	0.3	2,250	0.3
California State Universities	0	0.0	0	0.0	100	0.0
225 Funded	35,077	5.4	40,568	5.3	44,323	5.4
Total	644,062	100.0	771,905	100.0	815,310	100.0

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Over the three-year period shown on Table 5, annual enrollments increased by 171,248, (26.6 percent). The most dramatic enrollment percent increase was made by the CBOs with a 244.2 percent increase over their 2000-2001 enrollment followed by Library Literacy Programs at 45.6 percent. Community Colleges and County Offices of Education made lesser enrollment percent gains at 16.2 and 7.3 percent, respectively. Other provider types reflected an average gain of 26 to 28 percent.

b. The results on the extent to which participating programs were able to meet planned performance targets

Participating programs set their expected performance goals in their 2002-2003 WIA Title II federal funding application. These goals focused on student learning measured on standardized and validated test instruments developed by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS).

California measures and pays local providers for their students' accomplishment of specific learning gains and high school diploma or General Education Development Certificate (GED) attainment through "benchmarks." California uses three core indicators of performance for benchmarks: (1) significant gains in CASAS test scores,¹ (2) completion of two instructional levels, and (3) completion of the GED or attainment of a high school diploma. See Table 6 for aggregated benchmark attainment reported

¹ Significant gains are a 5-point gain or greater from CASAS pretest scores for learners pre-tested at the 210 level or below, or a 3-point gain or greater from pretest scores for learners pre-tested at the 211 level or above.

by program type. Benchmarks are reported to CDE and help determine future levels of federal local assistance funding to local agencies.

Table 6
Benchmarks By Program Type –
WIA Title II Funded Agencies (PY 2000-2001 to PY 2002-2003)

Program Type	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
ABE	10,114	5.6	22,515	9.5	22,795	8.5
ESL	141,374	78.0	183,081	76.9	194,988	72.8
ESL-Citizenship	4,100	2.3	4,015	1.7	4,967	1.9
ASE	25,767	14.2	28,539	12.0	45,011	16.8
Total	181,355	100.0	238,150	100.0	267,761	100.0

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Benchmark Performance Highlights for Title II Funded Agencies

Table 7 outlines the student records included in the original federal database and the subsequent criteria that are followed to conform to the NRS for Adult Education. The NRS requires that the student data reported by the states to the United States Department of Education (USDE) are restricted to only those learners who met this criterion. Applying this criterion reduces the number of student records reported to USDE from 815,310 enrolled to 565,311 reported to the NRS. The primary focus of this report, however, is the entire student database of 815,310 Student Entry Records.

Table 7
WIA Title II Database with NRS Restrictions (PY 2002-2003)

Category	<u>N</u>
Total WIA Title II Learners with Entry Records	815,310
NRS Criteria	→
Learners with fewer than 12 hours of instruction	191,349
Learners < 16 years old	3,944
Learners concurrently enrolled in HS/K-12	31,245
Learners without a valid instructional level	23,461
Learners included in NRS Federal Tables	565,311

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- Of the 815,310 learners, 69.2 percent met the NRS criteria.
- Of the total number of benchmark-eligible learners, 46.2 percent remained in their programs long enough to take both a pretest and a post-test. Paired test data were a prerequisite for determining if learners achieved positive results from any of two types of benchmarks: significant gains and two instructional level gains.
- The majority (68.1 percent) of benchmarks earned involved a significant gain while 19.6 percent achieved a two-level gain within a program. The remaining benchmarks

were for attaining a high school diploma (6.4 percent) or a GED Certificate (5.8 percent).

Level Completion Highlights for NRS Eligible Learners in WIA Title II Funded Agencies

In reports submitted to the NRS, student performance is measured through completion of federally defined instructional levels. See Table 8 for performance goals and achievement at each NRS educational functioning level. The corresponding CASAS test scores are listed to assist in interpreting each educational functioning level (see Appendix C for the CASAS Skill Level Descriptors for ABE and CASAS Skill Level Descriptors for ESL).

As shown on Table 8, almost one-third (32.6 percent) of learners completed at least one educational functioning level. California exceeded the federally approved performance goals at each instructional level.

Table 8
Level Completion for NRS Eligible Learners (PY 2002-2003)

NRS Educational Functioning Level	CASAS Test Score Equivalent	Performance Goal	% Completed Level	Difference
ABE Beginning Literacy	≤ 200	20.0	21.2	1.2
ABE Beginning Basic	201-210	26.0	36.4	10.4
ABE Intermediate Low	211-220	26.0	38.1	12.1
ABE Intermediate High	221-235	22.0	29.6	7.6
ASE Low	236-245	7.0	24.6	17.6
ASE High	246+	11.0	30.5	19.5
ESL Beginning Literacy	≤ 180	24.0	33.6	9.6
ESL Beginning	181-200	24.0	30.2	6.2
ESL Intermediate Low	201-210	28.0	40.6	12.6
ESL Intermediate High	211-220	28.0	42.8	14.8
ESL Low Advanced	221-235	22.0	22.6	0.6
ESL High Advanced	236-245	NA	18.8	NA
Total		NA	32.6	NA

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Note: The level completion results in this table are based on learners qualifying for the NRS Federal Tables (see Table 7).

The NRS requires core follow-up outcome measures of student performance as shown in table 9. These outcomes are reported for those learners who had one of the following four goals and left their instructional program to (1) enter employment, (2) retain employment, (3) enter postsecondary education or training, or (4) attain a diploma of high school graduation or GED certificate.

- The Student Follow-Up Survey provides results for those who entered employment, retained employment, and entered postsecondary education or training. Response rates ranged between 17.1 percent and 19.0 percent. These rates, although representing a relatively small proportion of those learners who were surveyed, were

an improvement from the rates achieved in 2001-2002, which ranged from 9.4 to 10.3 percent.

- Results for students attaining a GED certificate were obtained using a data match. Data match results revealed that almost one-third (27.6 percent) of these learners achieved their goal.

Table 9
Core Follow-Up Outcome Achievement (PY 2002-2003)

Core Follow-up Outcome Measures	Participants with Main or Secondary Goal	Participants Included in Survey or Data Match	Participants Responding to Survey or Data Match	Response or Data Match Rate	Participants Achieving Outcome	Weighted Percent Achieving Outcome
	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Entered Employment	15,633	14,082	2,412	17.1	1,254	54.4
Retained Employment	6,808	6,049	1036	17.1	852	81.9
Obtained a GED or Secondary School Diploma	48,496	N/A	43,229	89.1	12,364	27.6
Entered Postsecondary Education or Training	14,523	13,132	2,499	19.0	1,209	53.5

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c. A breakdown of the types of courses (ESL, ESL Citizenship, ABE, ASE) included in the performance targets of participating agencies

When applying for WIA Title II funds, adult education providers must assess learner needs to determine what programs are needed in their respective service areas. They have the option of implementing programs in ABE, ESL (which includes learners enrolled in EL Civics programs), ESL-Citizenship, or ASE. California’s State Plan for adult education limits ASE funding to ten percent of the overall federal allotment for local assistance because of the great number of low-literacy learners in need of basic literacy instruction. These low-level learners, upon program entry, perform (on tests) at or below what educators typically expect of eighth grade students in the K-12 system.

Enrollment by Instructional Programs

ESL programs served the vast majority (65.3 percent) of adult learners in California for 2002-2003. ASE programs comprised the next highest student enrollment (20.8 percent), followed by ABE (12.1 percent), and ESL-Citizenship (1.8 percent). Table 10 shows that this distribution is consistent with that of 2001-2002, although ABE and ASE programs served a slightly higher proportion of the total learners, and ESL programs served a slightly lower proportion (65.3 percent in 2002-2003 compared to 67.5 percent in 2001-2002).

All four instructional programs showed increases in student enrollment with ABE and ASE showing similar increases (13.9 percent and 12.9 percent, respectively). The ASE program accounted for the largest proportion of the total increase in student enrollment

(44.7 percent), followed by ABE (27.9 percent) and ESL (24.1 percent). ESL-Citizenship enrollment increased 10.5 percent. Overall percentage representation among California learners in this program remained at 1.8 percent. Possible explanations for this low representation are the completion of the naturalization process for those who qualified and were seeking legal residency under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), a decrease in demand for the citizenship programs as more learners switched to basic ESL programs to meet their immediate language literacy needs, and changes in the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) regulations that make it more difficult for those seeking citizenship. Additionally, some agencies have switched from using the Section 231 funds for citizenship activities to the English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) grant, which started in February 2001.

Table 10
Enrollment Reported by Instructional Program –
WIA Title II Funded Agencies (PY 2000-2001 to PY 2002-2003)

Instructional Program	PY 2000-2001		PY 2001-2002		PY 2002-2003	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
ABE	70,063	10.9	86,895	11.3	98,995	12.1
ESL	436,810	67.8	521,170	67.5	531,649	65.2
ESL-Citizenship	13,060	2.0	13,537	1.8	14,965	1.8
ASE	124,104	19.3	150,303	19.5	169,701	20.8
Total	644,037	100.0	771,905	100.0	815,310	100.0

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Note: * 105,754 learners who were enrolled in ESL and ESL-Citizenship also enrolled in EL Civics.

** Total differs from that in Table 5 because of 25 learners without an identified instructional program.

Table 11 presents information about the instructional levels of those learners enrolled in ABE, ESL, ESL-Citizenship, and ASE programs.

- The majority (59.7 percent) of Adult Basic Education (ABE) learners who were eligible to earn benchmarks entered programs at the intermediate instructional levels (CASAS scores from 211 through 235). In addition, 32.0 percent of learners entered at beginning instructional levels (CASAS scores 210 or less).
- The highest percentage of English as a Second Language (ESL) and ESL-Citizenship learners (60.4 and 59.7 percent, respectively) entered programs at the ESL beginning and low intermediate instructional levels (CASAS scores from 181 through 210).
- The majority (66.8 percent) of Adult Secondary Education (ASE) learners entered programs predominantly at the advanced instructional levels (CASAS scores 236 and higher).

Table 11

Entry Instructional Level for Benchmark Eligible Learners – WIA Title II Funded Agencies (PY 2002-2003)*

Instructional Level	ABE		ESL		ESL-Citizenship		ASE	
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%
Beginning Literacy	8,600	15.5	24,414	6.3	846	8.4	1129	1.3
ABE Beg Basic/ESL Beg	9,142	16.5	118,980	30.5	3,148	31.5	2,614	3.0
Intermediate Low	10,843	19.6	116,778	29.9	2,828	28.2	5,971	6.8
Intermediate High	22,231	40.1	61,928	15.9	1,741	17.4	19,331	22.1
ASE Low/ESL Adv Low	3,617	6.5	66,137	16.9	1,393	13.9	43,155	49.2
ASE High/ESL Adv High	993	1.8	2,093	0.5	56	0.6	15,465	17.6
Total	55,426	100.0	390,330	100.0	10,012	100.0	87,665	100.0

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*Note: Table 11 includes those learners with an instructional level based on pretest scores and reported instructor evaluation. Learners not having a valid instructional level are not included.

PART II — LEGISLATIVE INTENT CONSIDERATIONS

Background and Integrity of Current System

California has adopted an accountability-based system to allocate and manage funds for the delivery of quality adult education and literacy programs. This system requires the use of a secured standardized assessment system that reliably measures relevant skills and knowledge that adults need to work and actively participate in California’s socio-economic mainstream.

California complies and aligns with the NRS by attaining a rating of superior on the federal Data Quality Standards Checklist (DQSC). The DQSC provides criteria to judge the integrity and voracity of state and local implementation of the NRS. The NRS is the nationwide accountability system of the USDE to evaluate and report the results of its adult education program federally funded through the WIA. The NRS identifies acceptable student measures that allow assessment of the impact of adult education instruction; methodologies to use for collecting the measures; forms and procedures to use in the collecting and reporting of student performance; and provides training and technical assistance to assist states in collecting the measures. California chose CASAS because it is the only testing system approved by the NRS for adult education accountability that provides standardized assessments for the ESL, ABE, High School/GED programs and reports learning gain results on a common standardized scale for all instructional levels.

CASAS meets all the specifications needed for a model accountability system. It centers on a reliable assessment system that uses standardized, performance-based, adult-normed assessments, and other assessment instruments directly related to adult learning goals and expected outcomes. It includes appraisal tests that correctly place students and identify their learning level. CASAS includes achievement tests to monitor student progress in adult literacy programs and certification tests to establish learners’ exit proficiency levels. It links to competencies and instructional materials that focus on learners’ goals and meets the following four primary instructional accountability goals:

1. Help learners determine their progress toward goals (verify goal attainment)
2. Help instructors determine appropriate placement and plan instruction
3. Help program administrators evaluate the outcomes of instruction, plan staff development, and allocate resources
4. Help funding sources establish program accountability and identify effective practices

CASAS provides a range of standardized tests and resources including appraisals, achievement tests, certification tests, and student follow-up surveys to meet the NRS reporting requirements. In addition to state standardized tests, local programs also use additional assessment tools, such as locally developed tests, including performance based assessment tools, informal interviews, checklists, vocational aptitude batteries, job-related skill demonstrations, or industry certification.

Accountability systems used for high-stakes purposes, such as determining the program funds an agency will receive, must address several issues simultaneously:

1. Appropriate student placements
2. Appropriate standardized tests to measure student learning that accommodate the open entry-open exit format of adult education programs
3. Proper test administration and security procedures
4. Adequate teacher preparation and training
5. Sound instructional practices
6. Appropriate program guidelines and standards for instruction
7. Extensive professional development
8. Adequate funding
9. Technology support

Recommendations for Improving Implementation of an Accountability-Based Funding System

(a) Evaluate whether any changes need to be made to improve the implementation of the accountability-based funding system under Title II

The following recommendations for improving implementation of an accountability-based funding system are derived from field-based surveys, regional focus groups, data review groups, and a field evaluation team. These recommendations are for the administration of the federal local assistance funds and allocation of tasks and fiscal resources for federal state leadership responsibilities.

Recommendation 1: Accountability

Provide technical assistance and resources to assist local agencies to use agency data to:

- understand and implement accountability requirements
- assign dedicated staff at the local level to assessment, data collection, and data analysis (quality assurance specialist)
- provide adequate resources to ensure the collection of accurate data to comply with new federal quality standards and certification requirements
- use local data to inform instruction and improve student learning gains and outcomes
- use local data to facilitate continuous program improvement

Recommendation 2: Small Agencies

Continue to provide resources and support to assist small agencies in building capacity to:

- develop local systems and infrastructures to meet accountability requirements
- promote interagency informal networks and formal consortiums to leverage experience and resources
- facilitate continuous program improvement

Recommendation 3: Data Match

Provide authority and resources to implement a data match system for adult education programs in California to capture core performance outcome measures (entered employment, retained employment, entered postsecondary education or training) and thereby provide reliable, current, and comprehensive information that:

- accurately reflects program successes and challenges
- meaningfully demonstrates return on investment
- enables targeted program improvement for outcomes directly related to employment
- supports effective state level policy decisions

Recommendation 4: Evidence-Based Research

Provide support and resources to ensure that evidence-based adult learning strategies inform instruction:

- evaluate the feasibility of adapting K-12 research study findings for use in adult education programs
- identify additional sources of funding for implementing practitioner-based research studies related to adult literacy
- identify and disseminate effective programs and practices

Recommendation 5: Assessment for Adults with Disabilities

Continue to refine and expand appropriate assessment system(s) for adults with disabilities, (POWER), that provide a continuum of assessments with a long-term outcome of employability, supporting the re-setting of outcome measures for Department of Mental Health and Department of Developmental Services clients, to ensure the future eligibility of this population for adult education services.

Recommendation 6: Collaboration with Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and One Stops

Provide resources and support to increase and strengthen the collaborations of local literacy providers and employment-related agencies:

- provide basic skills and literacy instruction in combination with job training to adults most in need (both employed and unemployed)
- identify and sharing information related to effective programs and program practices
- identify models of effective collaboration
- provide incentives for strengthening local collaborations

Recommendation 7: Expansion of Instructional Delivery Options

Provide incentives to serve unserved, under-served, and “hard to reach” adults, including institutionalized adults, as follows:

- increase learning options and alternatives to the traditional classroom setting
- identify effective methods for reaching the “hard to reach” including the effective use of technology and innovative program grants
- support the identification of promising practices and programs of excellence

Recommendation 8: Professional Development

Increase opportunities and delivery options for professional staff development to:

- understand and implement data collection and accountability requirements
- implement effective staff development mentoring to support the instruction delivery options
- use data/assessment results to facilitate lesson planning and target instruction to learners’ identified needs and goals
- implement California Programs of Excellence and Model Programs Standards criteria

Recommendation 9: Advisory Groups

Continue to support WIA Title II field level advisory groups and regional focus groups, as specified in the California State Plan, and other structured opportunities for communication and feedback from the field.

(b) Evaluate the feasibility of any future expansion of the accountability-based funding system using state funds.

The statewide system of adult education financed with public funds, offered both through adult schools and some community colleges provides instruction in ten authorized areas. The pay-for-performance model in California’s adult education delivery system is currently used only for federal supplementary funded literacy-based programs, including ABE, ESL, ESL-Citizenship, and ASE (High School subjects, and GED preparation). There are a number of issues to consider before extending the pay-for-performance model to all state-funded programs that provide instruction in other, non-literacy based areas.

Need to Develop Standards and Assessments in Other Authorized Areas

Before extending the federal pay-for-performance model to state-funded adult education programs, CDE and the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges must develop, test, and validate content standards, performance standards, and assessments for *all* program areas.

Program content standards are being updated or developed for five of the ten state-authorized areas: ABE, ESL, ASE, Parent Education, and Older Adults programs. CDE and the Chancellor's Office have convened statewide advisory groups to review and refine these existing program standards for the inclusion of appropriate performance standards. Such program and performance standards provide the framework for standardized measurement of student progress. To extend the federal accountability system to the other five program areas, such frameworks must also be in place. The development and subsequent implementation of appropriate adult relevant and validated tests to assess learner achievement relies on the thoughtful development of these frameworks. CDE and the Chancellor's Office recognize the need to convene additional advisory groups to develop both program and performance standards for the other five authorized areas that align, where appropriate, to the standards adopted by the State Board of Education for students in Kindergarten through grade twelve.

Developing standardized assessments for the current federal program began approximately 20 years ago, and they are part of CASAS that is used to meet federal reporting requirements. Developing a similar set of standardized tests, normed on an adult population similar to that currently served by adult education programs, for the other state-funded program areas is only possible with sufficient funding. The literacy-based program areas of ABE, ESL, ESL-Citizenship, and ASE, currently included in the pay-for-performance model, lend themselves well to standardized assessments such as multiple-choice tests, writing assessments, and oral interview assessments. These assessment models, however, may not be as appropriate for the other state-authorized adult education program areas such as Vocational Education, Parent Education, Adults with Disabilities, Older Adults, Health and Safety, and Home Economics. Rather, these program areas would benefit from the use of portfolio or other performance-based assessments. While current standardized multiple-choice item measurement models have effective use at the classroom level to inform instruction and learning, there are few *standardized, adult-normed* models for interpreting, recording, and reporting portfolio or performance-based assessment data. It will take substantial resources, time, and field cooperation to develop, test, and validate such standardized measures, and to norm the assessments to appropriate adult populations.

Need to Provide Additional Funding and Technical Assistance to Support the Transition

The current programs of ABE, ESL, and ASE currently have an adequate infrastructure to address the issues associated with transition to state supported pay-for-performance funding structure, however, additional program areas will require additional funding and technical assistance to support the transition. The pay-for-performance system requires additional resources to support a technology and management infrastructure to meet data requirements, which include testing and tracking all students all year in all classes. In addition, adult education administrators and teachers in the other program areas will require training on the standards, standards-based instruction, and assessments.

These issues intensify in small adult education programs. During the last four years, larger local agencies have been able to respond to the new federal accountability-based funding system, but the smaller agencies, particularly those with 100 or fewer average daily attendance (a.d.a.), have had greater difficulty. These smaller agencies often do not have sufficient and trained personnel, adequate technology infrastructure, or the other resources to support the data requirements, which include testing and tracking student progress.

California's adult education community has responded to the challenge of educational reform, as evidenced by the successful implementation of the pay-for-performance model currently operating for federally supported literacy-based program areas. For these specific program areas, educational standards are set, assessments designed, staff trained, and programs federally funded based on student achievement. To transfer these reforms to all adult education program areas will require additional work, resources, and adequate development and transition time.

CDE is continuing in its commitment to maintain and develop educational systems that document the success of learners enrolled in all authorized program areas. This includes further investigating the feasibility of building on the successes of the current federal accountability-based supplemental funding system and applying it to the state-funded adult education program. However, this commitment rests on the premise that the implementation of the federal model is complete and a program is running smoothly before making assumptions regarding what works and what does not. In the past four years, CDE has made great progress to meet this goal. However, planning for expansion of the model should be thoughtful and strategic, with adequate funding to support product and staff development. Without this, agencies will be unable to meet the expanded accountability requirements and to earn the funding to support the education of those adults needing a variety of instructional services across the state.

**Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act
(WIA) Title II**

**2002-2003 End-of-Year
Progress Report to the Legislature**

APPENDICES

Data Collection Issues and Local Responses

In 2002-2003, the fourth year under WIA Title II performance-based accountability requirements, CDE and CASAS made further refinements to the year-end data collection. Procedures such as the benchmark verification process and data integrity checks were critical to achieve timely data collection and resulted in a more comprehensive data set for the State of California. In addition, agencies are now required to submit data on a quarterly basis. This allows a more comprehensive review of the data, using the “Data Standards Quality Checklist” prior to the final year-end submission, which results in greater data accuracy.

As mentioned in previous reports, even with the great progress in data collection, barriers still exist for the collection of accurate and complete data for all learners. These barriers include technology and infrastructure challenges, difficulty in providing necessary professional development to staff and administration, purported student reluctance to disclose demographic information, and institutional fear of unfavorable comparison to their peers.

Funded agencies have taken positive steps to address these concerns:

- Agencies are providing timelier student level feedback to instructors.
- Agencies have implemented changes to the testing process by testing more frequently, using designated testing centers, increasing the use of test information as an assessment tool to guide classroom activity, setting up testing and make-up testing schedules, and providing test results in a timelier manner.
- Agencies have increased adherence to the more stringent data collection system through strategies such as the addition or reassignment of staff to data collection and the appointment of data collection coordinators.
- Agencies are helping their staff to understand that having the most complete data possible is important not just for accountability reasons, but also for direct program improvement.
- Agencies have piloted strategies to improve student retention, implemented managed enrollment, and set short- and long-term goals.

Progress Measures

What metric measures success in federal adult education programs?

CASAS tests, used nationally, are the standard measures for determining student success. CASAS measures also connect with the current National Reporting System (NRS) that the USDE uses to report performance of adult education programs to Congress.

In the CASAS system, *raw* scores (the number of items correctly answered on a test) convert to *scale* scores using the CASAS scale score conversion chart provided for each test. The use of scaled scores enables comparison of scores on different tests and provides a common metric to relate CASAS test scores to basic skill level descriptions.

CASAS has developed more than 180 assessment instruments that measure and document improvement in English literacy, reading, writing, listening, speaking, problem solving, and numeracy on a common national reporting scale. These instruments correlate to learner skill levels, measure learner improvement within each level, and document level completion.

CASAS Competencies

The CASAS Competencies include more than 300 competency statements that have been correlated to the SCANS Competencies identified by the U.S. Department of Labor. The competencies, updated and revalidated annually by the CASAS National Consortium, help instructors and learners apply teaching and learning in real-world contexts.

CASAS National Skills Level Descriptors

CASAS National Skill Level Descriptors identify skills for ABE and ESL learners from beginning literacy to advanced adult secondary levels. The five levels show a continuum of employability and life skills from A (Beginning Literacy) to E (Advanced Adult Secondary). Student Performance Level (SPL) designations correlate to ESL levels.

WIA Success Measures

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II, requires all eligible agencies to establish and meet performance measures that include core indicators of performance and additional, optional performance measures (Section 212). The *core indicators* must include:

- Demonstrated improvements in literacy skills in reading, writing and speaking the English language, numeracy, problem-solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills (Note: Section 203 defines “literacy” as an individual’s ability to read, write, and speak in English; to compute; and to solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.)

- Placement in, retention in, or completion of, postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement
- Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent

The California Adult Education State Plan (section 5.1) defines the usage of performance measures by eligible providers to meet the requirements in Section 212 of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA):

- Student goal attainment and demonstrated student improvements in literacy levels within a program area
- Student completion of a program level
- Student advancement to higher program levels

Other performance measures:

- Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent (GED)
- Placement in postsecondary education, training, or unsubsidized employment
- Career advancement

Section 5.3 of the state plan responds to the requirement in AEFLA to establish expected levels of performance for each of the core indicators. California currently use the following three core indicators of performance benchmarks:

1. Significant gains in CASAS scores
 - A 5-point gain or greater from pretest scores for persons at the 210 level or below
 - A 3-point gain or greater from pretest scores for persons at the 211 level or above
2. Completion of two instructional levels
3. Completion of the GED *or* completion of a high school diploma

Core Performance Measurement Information

Entering Educational Functional Level	PY 1999 - PY 2000			PY 2000 - PY 2001			PY 2001 - PY 2002			PY 2002 - PY 2003		
	Performance Goal	Performance (Against all Enrollees)	Performance (Against Enrollees with Pre- & Post Test Results)	Performance Goal	Performance (Against all Enrollees)	Performance (Against Enrollees with Pre- & Post Test Results)	Performance Goal	Performance (Against all Enrollees)	Performance (Against Enrollees with Pre- & Post Test Results)	Performance Goal	Performance (Against all Enrollees)	Performance (Against Enrollees with Pre- & Post Test Results)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
ABE Beginning Literacy	13.0	13.0	45.2	15.0	22.6	51.7	17.0	25.7	52.4	20.0	21.2	43.9
ABE Beginning Basic	20.0	17.7	57.5	22.0	33.2	71.3	24.0	36.4	74.0	26.0	36.4	75.9
ABE Intermediate Low	20.0	18.0	65.7	22.0	34.5	71.2	24.0	37.7	73.6	26.0	38.1	73.0
ABE Intermediate High	22.0	13.7	32.4	24.0	29.3	54.0	26.0	29.9	52.7	27.0	29.6	53.6
ASE Low	N/A	1.7	21.7	14.0	13.6	55.3	15.0	25.4	78.7	17.0	24.6	79.4
ASE High	7.0	18.5	14,399	8.0	26.9	66.8	9.0	28.3	68.0	11.0	30.5	69.6
ESL Beginning Literacy	18.0	14.1	71.6	20.0	30.6	88.1	22.0	32.2	88.0	24.0	33.6	87.3
ESL Beginning	20.0	12.5	58.0	22.0	26.7	65.9	24.0	28.4	67.2	24.0	30.2	66.7
ESL Intermediate Low	22.0	27.2	54.5	24.0	37.0	64.2	26.0	39.8	66.6	28.0	40.6	67.3
ESL Intermediate High	22.0	30.0	65.9	24.0	39.7	68.9	26.0	43.0	70.6	28.0	42.8	69.2
ESL Advanced Low	18.0	13.0	25.7	20.0	21.7	35.6	22.0	22.7	36.1	22.0	22.6	35.6
ESL Advanced High	N/A	18.1	35.8	N/A	17.7	36.8	N/A	19.3	38.0	N/A	18.8	36.4

Core Follow-Up Outcome Measures	PY 1999 - PY 2000			PY 2000 - PY 2001		PY 2001 - PY 2002		PY 2002 - PY 2003	
	Performance Goal	Performance (Students w/ Educational or Employment Goal)*	Performance (Total Students)	Performance Goal	Performance (Students w/ Educational or Employment Goal)*	Performance Goal	Performance (Students w/ Educational or Employment Goal)*	Performance Goal	Performance (Students w/ Educational or Employment Goal)*
GED/HS Completion	12,000		21,056	8%	27%	9%	23%	11%	28%
Entered Employment	10,000	11,068	33,599	9%	18%	10%	55%	11%	54%
Retained Employment	18,000	25,877	55,256	11%	34%	12%	86%	13%	82%
Entered Postsecondary Education	23,000	392	8,287	6%	12%	7%	60%	8%	54%

* Either the student or local educational official reported these numerical performance values.

CASAS SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ABE

Scale Score	CASAS Level	Descriptors
250	E	<p>Advanced Adult Secondary With some assistance, persons at this level are able to interpret technical information, more complex manuals, and material safety data sheets (MSDS). Can comprehend some college textbooks and apprenticeship manuals.</p>
245		<p>Adult Secondary Can read and follow multi-step directions; read and interpret common legal forms and manuals; use math in business, such as calculating discounts; create and use tables and graphs; communicate personal opinion in written form; write an accident or incident report. Can integrate information from multiple texts, charts, and graphs as well as evaluate and organize information. Can perform tasks that involve oral and written instructions in both familiar and unfamiliar situations.</p>
240	D	<p>Advanced Basic Skills Can handle most routine reading, writing, and computational tasks related to their life roles. Can interpret routine charts, graphs, and labels; read and interpret a simple handbook for employees; interpret a payroll stub; complete an order form and do calculations; compute tips; reconcile a bank statement; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can follow multi-step diagrams and written instructions; maintain a family budget; and write a simple accident or incident report. Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin GED preparation.</p>
235		<p>Intermediate Basic Skills Can handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles. Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a basic payroll stub; follow basic written instructions and diagrams. Can complete a simple order form and do calculations; fill out basic medical information forms and basic job applications; follow basic oral and written instructions and diagrams. Can handle jobs and/or job training that involve following basic oral or written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally.</p>
230		<p>Beginning Basic Skills Can fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write a simple list or telephone message, calculate a single simple operation when numbers are given, and make simple change. Can read and interpret simple sentences on familiar topics. Can read and interpret simple directions, signs, maps, and simple menus. Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple written communication.</p>
225	C	<p>Advanced Basic Skills Can handle most routine reading, writing, and computational tasks related to their life roles. Can interpret routine charts, graphs, and labels; read and interpret a simple handbook for employees; interpret a payroll stub; complete an order form and do calculations; compute tips; reconcile a bank statement; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can follow multi-step diagrams and written instructions; maintain a family budget; and write a simple accident or incident report. Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin GED preparation.</p>
220		<p>Intermediate Basic Skills Can handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles. Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a basic payroll stub; follow basic written instructions and diagrams. Can complete a simple order form and do calculations; fill out basic medical information forms and basic job applications; follow basic oral and written instructions and diagrams. Can handle jobs and/or job training that involve following basic oral or written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally.</p>
215	B	<p>Beginning Basic Skills Can fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write a simple list or telephone message, calculate a single simple operation when numbers are given, and make simple change. Can read and interpret simple sentences on familiar topics. Can read and interpret simple directions, signs, maps, and simple menus. Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple written communication.</p>
210		<p>Advanced Basic Skills Can handle most routine reading, writing, and computational tasks related to their life roles. Can interpret routine charts, graphs, and labels; read and interpret a simple handbook for employees; interpret a payroll stub; complete an order form and do calculations; compute tips; reconcile a bank statement; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can follow multi-step diagrams and written instructions; maintain a family budget; and write a simple accident or incident report. Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and diagrams. Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin GED preparation.</p>
205	A	<p>Beginning Basic Skills Can fill out simple forms requiring basic personal information, write a simple list or telephone message, calculate a single simple operation when numbers are given, and make simple change. Can read and interpret simple sentences on familiar topics. Can read and interpret simple directions, signs, maps, and simple menus. Can handle entry-level jobs that involve some simple written communication.</p>
200		<p>Intermediate Basic Skills Can handle basic reading, writing, and computational tasks related to life roles. Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a basic payroll stub; follow basic written instructions and diagrams. Can complete a simple order form and do calculations; fill out basic medical information forms and basic job applications; follow basic oral and written instructions and diagrams. Can handle jobs and/or job training that involve following basic oral or written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally.</p>
190		<p>Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning Very limited ability to read or write. Persons at the upper end of this score range can read and write numbers and letters and simple words and phrases related to immediate needs. Can provide very basic personal identification in written form such as on job applications. Can handle routine entry-level jobs that require only basic written communication.</p>
180	A	<p>Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning Very limited ability to read or write. Persons at the upper end of this score range can read and write numbers and letters and simple words and phrases related to immediate needs. Can provide very basic personal identification in written form such as on job applications. Can handle routine entry-level jobs that require only basic written communication.</p>
150		<p>Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning Very limited ability to read or write. Persons at the upper end of this score range can read and write numbers and letters and simple words and phrases related to immediate needs. Can provide very basic personal identification in written form such as on job applications. Can handle routine entry-level jobs that require only basic written communication.</p>

Note: This chart provides general skill descriptors by level. Level descriptors for reading, math and listening correspond to scale scores on tests in those specific skill areas.

CASAS SKILL LEVEL DESCRIPTORS FOR ESL

Scale Score	CASAS Level	Descriptors
250	E	<p>Proficient Skills SPL 8 Listening/Speaking: Can participate effectively in social and familiar work situations; can understand and participate in practical and social conversations and in technical discussions in own field. Reading/Writing: Can handle most reading and writing tasks related to life roles; can read and interpret most non-simplified materials; can interpret routine charts, graphs, and labels; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Employability: Can meet work demands with confidence, interact with the public, and follow written instructions in work manuals.</p>
245		
240	D	<p>Adult Secondary SPL 7 Listening/Speaking: Can function independently in survival and social and work situations; can clarify general meaning and communicate on the telephone on familiar topics. Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret non-simplified materials on everyday subjects; can interpret routine charts, graphs, and labels; fill out medical information forms and job applications; and write an accident or incident report. Employability: Understands routine work-related conversations. Can handle work that involves following oral and simple written instructions and interact with the public. Can perform reading and writing tasks, such as most logs, reports, and forms, with reasonable accuracy to meet work needs.</p>
235		
230	C	<p>Advanced ESL SPL 6 Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy most survival needs and social demands. Has some ability to understand and communicate on the telephone on familiar topics. Can participate in conversations on a variety of topics. Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simplified and some non-simplified materials on familiar topics. Can interpret simple charts, graphs, and labels; interpret a payroll stub; and complete a simple order form; fill out medical information forms and job applications. Can write short personal notes and letters and make simple log entries. Employability: Can handle jobs and job training situations that involve following oral and simple written instructions and multi-step diagrams and limited public contact. Can read a simple employee handbook. Persons at the upper end of this score range are able to begin GED preparation.</p>
225		
220		
215	B	<p>High Intermediate ESL SPL 5 Listening/Speaking: Can satisfy basic survival needs and limited social demands; can follow oral directions in familiar contexts. Has limited ability to understand on the telephone. Understands learned phrases easily and new phrases containing familiar vocabulary. Reading/Writing: Can read and interpret simplified and some authentic material on familiar subjects. Can write messages or notes related to basic needs. Can fill out basic medical forms and job applications. Employability: Can handle jobs and/or training that involve following basic oral and written instructions and diagrams if they can be clarified orally.</p>
210		
205		
200		
190	A	<p>High Beginning ESL SPL 3 Listening/Speaking: Functions with some difficulty in situations related to immediate needs; may have some simple oral communication abilities using basic learned phrases and sentences. Reading/Writing: Reads and writes letters and numbers and a limited number of basic sight words and simple phrases related to immediate needs. Can write basic personal information on simplified forms. Employability: Can handle routine entry-level jobs that involve only the most basic oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks can be demonstrated.</p>
180		
180		<p>Low Beginning ESL SPL 2 Listening/Speaking: Functions in a very limited way in situations related to immediate needs; asks and responds to basic learned phrases spoken slowly and repeated often. Reading/Writing: Recognizes and writes letters and numbers and reads and understands common sight words. Can write own name and address. Employability: Can handle only routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks are easily demonstrated.</p>
150		
150		<p>Beginning Literacy/Pre-Beginning ESL SPL 0-1 Listening/Speaking: Functions minimally, if at all, in English. Communicates only through gestures and a few isolated words. Reading/Writing: May not be literate in any language. Employability: Can handle very routine entry-level jobs that do not require oral or written communication in English and in which all tasks are easily demonstrated. Employment choices would be extremely limited.</p>

Note: This chart provides general skill descriptors by level. Level descriptors for reading, math and listening correspond to scale scores on tests in those specific skill areas.

