

# California Narrative Report 2015–16

The purpose of this report is to fulfill annual reporting requirements of the United States Department of Education (ED), Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). The requirements apply to all states and territories receiving federal funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

## Introduction

The California Department of Education (CDE) AEFLA funded program provides educational opportunities and support services to one-fifth of adults enrolled in AEFLA programs in the United States. These programs address the unique needs of individuals and communities by providing adults with the literacy skills and knowledge necessary to become positive contributors to their families and local economies. California adult education programs help learners (a) gain employment or better their current employment; (b) obtain a high school diploma (HSD) or high school equivalency (HSE) certificate; (c) attain skills necessary to enter postsecondary education and training; (d) exit public welfare and become self-sufficient; (e) learn to speak, read, and write the English language; (f) master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school; and (g) become U.S. citizens, exercise their civic responsibilities, and participate in a democratic society.

## Overview of California Literacy Needs

The lack of basic education and literacy skills continues to be an issue that affects millions of adults in California. A significant percentage of the population lacks English literacy skills and basic education to secure employment, obtain citizenship, pursue postsecondary or higher education, and participate in their children's education. The following section quantifies the literacy needs into four primary areas:

- **High School Diploma or Its Equivalent:** Approximately six million California adults do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent even as California's graduation rate continues to improve, which currently stands at 80.2 percent. Conversely, the dropout rate has fallen to 11.6 percent. Although graduation and dropout rates have improved, significant achievement gaps among student subgroups persist.
- **Labor Force:** Approximately three million California adults without high school credentials are unemployed or not in the labor force. The need for workplace readiness skills is significant. Many job candidates lack job-readiness skills required in the workplace, such as communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. California ranks forty-fifth with an unemployment rate of 7.3 percent according to the U.S. Department of Labor statistics published in September 2014.
- **English Speaking Ability:** More than 3.5 million California adults “do not speak English well or not at all.” More than one-fourth of the national non-English-speaking population resides in California, and more than 2.3 million of that group lack a high school credential.
- **Economic Impact:** A projection of California's economy shows a trajectory of steadily increasing demand for a highly educated workforce. However, with the recent recession and budget constraints, the state remains challenged in meeting this demand.

Source of statistics: U.S. Department of Education. 2013. *Tapping the Potential: Profile of Adult Education Target Population*. <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/state-profiles/california.pdf>.

## State Leadership Funds

The CDE Adult Education Office (AEO) contracts with three entities to provide state leadership activities: (1) California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO); (2) Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS); and (3) Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN). These contracts, funded through the leadership activities portion of the WIOA grant, provide a variety of services to support the AEFLA providers. The contracts are in the areas of: Professional Development (CALPRO), Assessment and Accountability (CASAS), and Technology and Distance Learning (OTAN).

This report also discusses three initiatives set forth in the California State Plan, namely, (a) establish and implement professional development (PD) programs to improve the quality of instructional programs; (b) provide technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities; and (c) provide assessments and accountability technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities. The goal of these collaborative efforts is to maximize resources and provide support to AEFLA-funded adult education providers. To that end, the CDE has provided numerous opportunities through a variety of platforms – via face-to-face regional workshops and networking meetings, Webcasts, conference presentations, video-based workshops and training sessions, online courses, and electronic downloads. Highlights of successful activities conducted in the 2015-16 program year include the following.

**CALPRO** (Professional Development) is responsible for designing, implementing, and operating a large-scale, statewide professional development project for all WIOA-funded agencies. CALPRO provided opportunities for California adult educators to interact regularly and learn collectively in a group setting about evidence-based instructional practice. This included:

- Thirty-six regionally based professional learning opportunities using a Community of Practice (CoP) model serving 629 participants on topics including evidence-based reading, writing, and math instructional strategies and best practices in English as a Second Language (ESL) instructional planning and College and Career Readiness (CCRS). Additionally, six regional workshops on learning goal setting and teaching critical thinking served 211 educators.
- Thirteen facilitated asynchronous courses serving 111 participants on topics that address integrated education and training, postsecondary transitions, lesson planning, learner persistence, optimizing ESL instructional planning, evidence-based writing instruction in the ESL and Adult Basic Education (ABE) classrooms managing the multilevel ESL class; and using questioning strategies to improve instruction.
- Eight self-directed online courses serving 129 participants were provided on topics including adult learning and development, goal setting, learner persistence, instructional strategies for math and writing, CCRS, and orientation for new ABE and ESL teachers.
- Seven facilitated synchronous workshops served 140 participants on topics of teaching critical thinking and also integrated and contextualized workforce skills in the ESL and the ABE/Adult Secondary Education (ASE) classrooms.

CALPRO provided technology-based PD delivery to more than 630 educators who attended sessions from the following webinar series: Administrators Forum, Instructors Forum, e-CoP Webinars, and Adult Education Research Webinars. Also, CALPRO served the field through other online resources, including its e-CoP, three companion Virtual Workrooms, online video library, and two competency-based self-assessments.

CALPRO provided several PD events to build the capacity of adult education program leaders and administrators. (1) The Administrators' Forum, a Web-based venue to engage critically with their peers on topics that affect the development, management, and sustainability of their adult education programs (serving 35 instructional leaders); (2) The AE Leadership Institute, a six-day face-to-face institute designed to build the leadership skills of new and aspiring administrators (serving 26 instructional leaders); and (3) The Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Institute a face-to-face and online institute that engages program teams of administrators and teachers in a six-month process of developing and refining instructional practice (serving 30 participants in 10 program teams).

**CASAS** (Assessment and Accountability) is responsible for providing a standardized assessment and accountability system for all levels of the ABE, ASE, and ELA programs and accountability data to the state. CASAS reading, listening and math assessments help place learners at appropriate levels of instruction, diagnose learner strengths and weaknesses, target instruction, and certify learner mastery at specific levels of instruction or readiness to exit adult education. CASAS provides additional special standardized assessments for EI Civics including Reading for Citizenship and the Government and History and Citizenship Interview Test for citizenship preparation. Also CASAS has worked with a field-based team to develop performance-based additional assessments that measure student attainment of civic objectives for Civic Participation. Many Civic Objective and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs) include integrated education and training (IET) models combining workforce preparation activities and occupational skills training with literacy activities.

In addition to paper-based assessments CASAS offers computer-based assessments (CASAS eTests®) that help place students into programs quickly and accurately, monitor progress, and generate student, class and program level reports to inform instruction and improve programs.

Statewide student and program accountability data is collected and reported using CASAS TOPSpro® Enterprise a learner management and accountability software. The software, available in both Web-based and desktop solution, collects student demographics and monitors and tracks student and program learning outcomes and goal attainment data.

CASAS provided timely training and targeted technical assistance (TTA) to all funded agencies to meet grant requirement and to improve programs, data quality, and student performance and persistence. The trainings covered the following main topic areas – California Assessment Policy and implementation, NRS data collection, policy guidelines, accountability, data validation, performance monitoring, and reporting. More than 3,000 participants registered online for 109 online training sessions and 46 statewide face-to-face trainings. In 2015-16 program year TTA was provided to 23 agencies to review specific data issues, compare and analyze performance data for program planning and create an action plan for continuing improvement. CASAS provided an online (<http://www2.casas.org/dataPortal/>) tool that presents California NRS adult learner data at the state and local agency levels. Agencies can compare local performance with state goals, other local agencies, and counties in AEFLA programs.

CASAS hosted more than 90 AEFLA regional network meetings statewide covering all 10 CDE regions. More than 1,200 participants attended these regional network meetings that addressed state and federal updates related to accountability, the use of data to inform instruction and improve programs, and PD opportunities. CASAS also facilitated 45 TOPSpro Enterprise network meetings to discuss software and data-related topics that served more than 500 participants.

**OTAN** (Technology and Distance Learning) is responsible for incorporating curriculum for distance learning and providing professional development to support the use of instructional technology to deliver curriculum. OTAN also manages California's distance learning infrastructure and assists in expanding the ability of adult education providers to (1) communicate with each other and their adult learners through multiple methods; (2) develop a teleconferencing capability; and (3) provide capacity building services to smaller agencies providing literacy services.

OTAN provided 161 workshops on technology topics and distance learning topics via online or face-to-face workshops across the state. OTAN staff also presented at local, state, and national adult education conferences and associations, delivering 56 presentation sessions.

OTAN facilitated the Online Teaching Academy (OTAC) to assist instructors in becoming competent online teachers and mentors for other teachers at their respective agencies. The ten competitively selected participants learned about Moodle (an open source course management system) and implemented a project in collaboration with their administrator and agency. OTAC participants each completed an online facilitator's course and received a nationally recognized certificate. OTAN continued to offer online courses for teachers to use with their adult learners. Courses include EL Civics courses, an advanced ESL writing course, and courses from the National Repository of Online Courses (NROC) project including developmental math and basic algebra courses. The last OTAC cohort was provided with content and curriculum for the next iteration moving to a two-year team support model that will focus on Digital Leadership.

OTAN hosted the Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC) training for participants for a year-long professional development project including several days of training in Sacramento. The purpose of the training was for participants to become mentors and increase the effective use of technology in classrooms at their respective sites. The last TIMAC cohort was provided with content and curriculum for the next iteration moving to a two-year team support model that will focus on Digital Leadership.

OTAN also hosted an annual Technology and Distance Learning Symposium (TDLS). The symposium rotates between north and south geographic locations in the state. In the 2015-16 year, 40 workshops were provided on topics ranging from how to organize online resources for professional development to how to close caption videos. The event was held at Fresno Adult School and received excellent reviews from attendees.

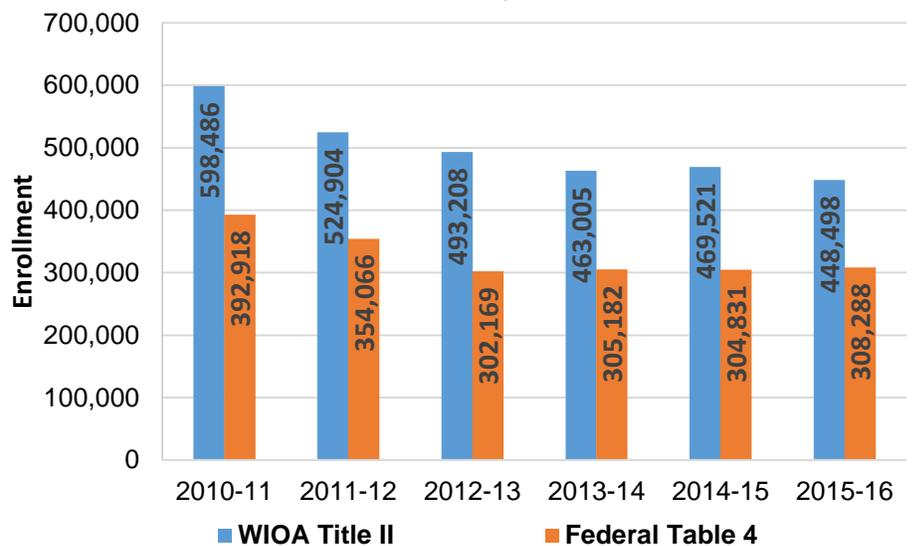
## Performance Data Analyses

California is the largest adult education provider in the United States. The state served nearly **one-fifth of the nation's adults** enrolled in AEFLA programs in the last six program years. Because the state is home to one-fourth of the national non-English-speaking population, the ESL program comprised 60 percent of the California's AEFLA program enrollment and 27 percent of the nation's ESL program enrollment. California also served more learners in ABE and ASE programs than any other state, comprising 13 percent of total learners enrolled in ABE and ASE nationwide.

### Enrollment 2015-16

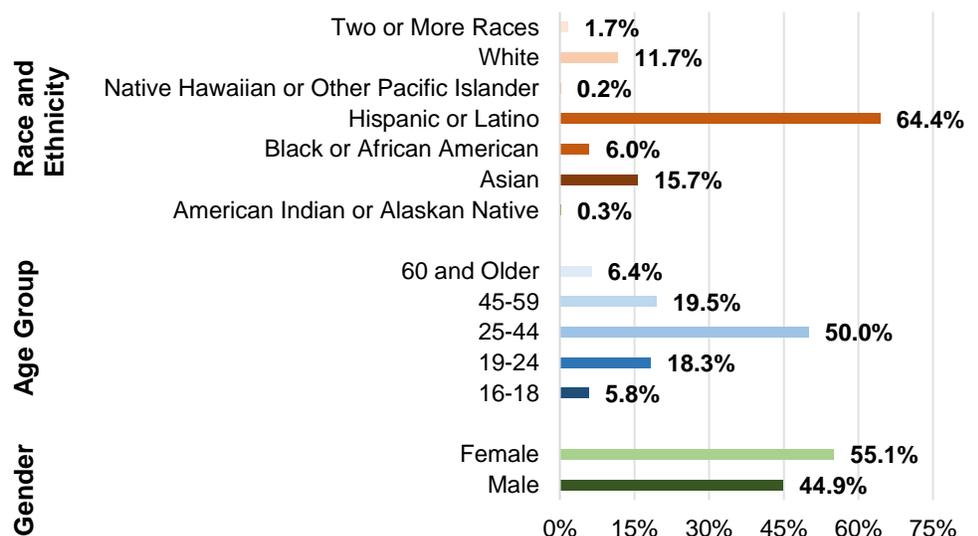
In 2015-16, 195 local agencies served 448,498 learners in the AEFLA programs. Of these learners 308,288 (69 percent) qualified for NRS federal reporting. The decrease in enrollment can be attributed to the California budget crisis that resulted in the significant reduction of the state's education funding and shifting of adult school funding decisions to local school districts. The budget crisis created unprecedented pressures on the adult school system and reduced the funding base from the state resulting in a significant decline in enrollment over the last several program years.

California WIOA, Title II Enrollment



Adult learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting reflect the diversity of the state. The largest ethnic groups of learners are Hispanic (64.4 percent) and Asian (15.7 percent). Adult learners are more likely to be female (55.1 percent), and adult learners between the ages of twenty-five and forty-four (50.0 percent) comprise the largest age group.

California WIOA, Title II Demographics

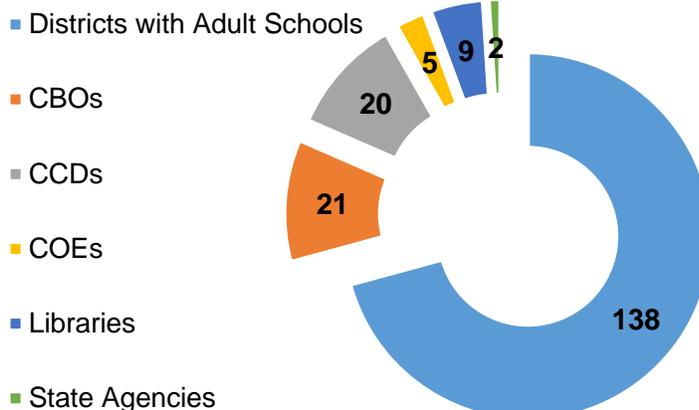


The current profile of California adult education providers includes 138 local school districts, 21 community-based organizations (CBOs), 20 community college districts (CCDs), 5 county offices of education (COE), 9 library literacy programs, and 2 state agencies.

There are 24 agencies serving institutionalized adults under Section 225 of AEFLA. These include 2 state agencies, 2 CBOs, 3 CCDs, 2 COEs and 15 jail programs provided by local school districts.

Local school districts with adult schools comprise the majority of AEFLA agencies and enroll 63.7 percent of total learners served by California. Adult schools and libraries saw a slight drop in enrollment. All other providers saw an increase in enrollment.

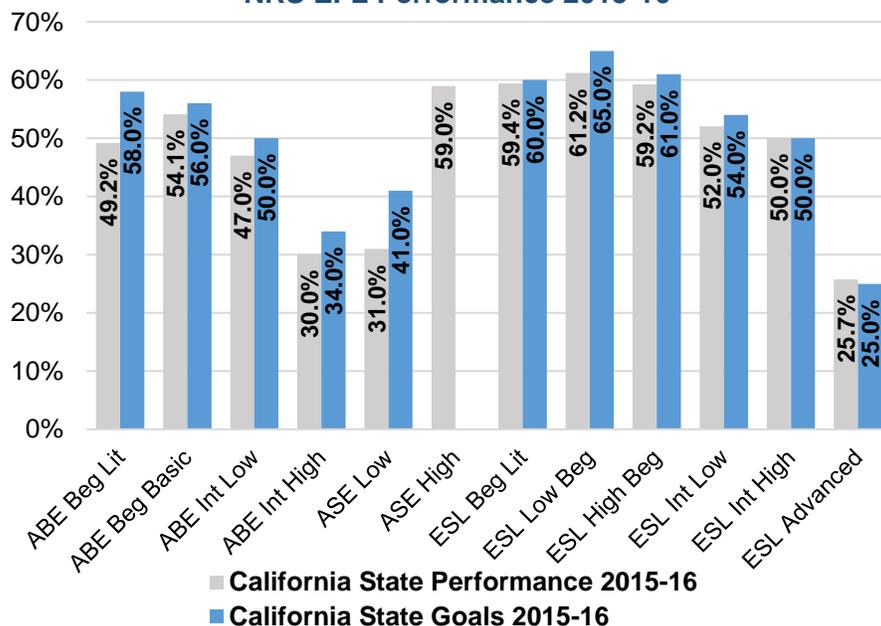
### WIOA, Title II Enrollment by Provider Type



### NRS Performance

The NRS data document California's continued success in addressing the state's basic skills needs by improving student persistence and learning outcomes. California had steadily improved its performance from 2006 through 2012 on persistence, EFL completion, and advancing one or more levels. In the last three program years overall performance in persistence, EFL completion, and advancing one or more levels remained steady. California has equaled or exceeded the overall national performance in the past six program years.

### NRS EFL Performance 2015-16



In 2015-16, California met or exceeded state goals in ESL Intermediate High and ESL Advanced. Of the 308,288 learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting, 140,391 (45.5 percent) completed an EFL, and 95,355 (30.9 percent) advanced one or more EFLs. The total persistence rate achieved in 2015-16 was 71.0 percent, exceeding the California state goal of 50 percent. More than 60 percent of the learners who persisted completed an EFL.

The 308,288 learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting averaged 158 hours of instruction. The 218,940 learners who persisted in the program and took pre- and post-tests reported more than 197 hours of instruction.

The CDE disburses AEFLA funds through a pay-for-performance system. Agency performance on NRS core measures determine how much funding a local provider will receive. The CDE uses learning gains, attainment of an HSD or HSE certificate and transition to postsecondary or training benchmarks as a basis for federal grant funding. Agencies can earn the following benchmark payments per student for student achievement within the program year: (1) completes an NRS EFL; (2) advances one or more EFLs; (3) attains a high school diploma or HSE certificate; and (4) attains outcomes in EL Civics Citizenship Preparation and Civic Participation. Agencies are also rewarded when students participating in the random sample surveys attain benchmarks related to core performance follow-up measures.

California showed a steady increase in the number of learners who obtained a secondary school diploma or HSE certificate from 2006–07 to 2009–10. In the past several years, programs showed mixed results in HSD and HSE certificate recipients. The decreases may be attributed to a significant overall decrease in student enrollment. In 2015-16, 13,600 learners obtained a secondary school diploma or an HSE certificate compared to 9,480 in PY 2014-15.

California implemented random sample survey methodology starting program year 2012–13 for employment and postsecondary education or training core follow-up outcome measures. The survey response rate has improved in 2015-16 compared to previous years for employment and postsecondary education and training although the response rate is below the NRS requirement of 70 percent. The Student Follow-Up sample survey for Entered Employment indicates that 57 percent found employment; for Retained Employment the survey indicates that 90 percent stayed employed; and for Postsecondary Education or Training 45 percent of learners entered postsecondary education or training.

The CDE continues to provide online and regional training as well as individualized targeted technical assistance to increase the local agencies' understanding of accountability requirements and to improve data collection. Local agencies submit data to CDE on a quarterly basis, permitting continual analysis and early identification of incomplete or inaccurate data. At the end of the program year, the statewide NRS EFL goals and performance are compared with agency-level performance. The longitudinal data are analyzed to track improvement in persistence and performance. The CDE provide targeted technical assistance to low performing agencies and agencies with newly appointed program administration teams.

## **Integration with One-stop Programs**

CDE, CCCCCO, the State Board, and Operators have agreed to work together to ensure that adult education providers coordinate with other workforce and education programs to transition individuals with barriers to employment into the labor force. To this end, the State Board, CDE, and CCCCCO have agreed to foster better articulation between the larger workforce and education system in the following ways:

- Jointly communicating baseline federal rules for Title II mandatory partnership at One-Stops to Title II providers and Local Boards through policy directives distributed by CDE, CCCCCO, and the State Board. The main priority is at present is to ensure access by the adult education system to the *America's Job Center of California*<sup>SM</sup> (AJCCs).
- Jointly formulating policy to meet regulatory requirements pertaining to mandatory One-Stop partnerships. This policy will ensure that Title II providers and Local Boards are in compliance with federal rules requiring mandatory participation in AJCCs by all core programs.

- The State Board and CDE award process for State Title II grants and any Request for Applications (RFAs) or Request for Proposals (RFPs) issued to prospective grantees require that applicants comply with federal rules pertaining to mandatory One-Stop partnerships.
- Consistent with WIOA Section 107(d)(11)(B), and Section 232, the CDE and the State Board require Local Boards to make Local Plans available to Title II grant applicants. CDE is requiring that state-issued RFAs for Title II applicants demonstrate program and services alignment with WIOA Local Board plans.

Additionally, CDE, CCCCCO, and the State Board are working jointly to identify and recommend best practices and model partnerships that encourage program alignment, coordination, integration of services, and braiding of resources beyond the minimum levels required as part of mandatory One-Stop partnership.

### **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program**

In 2015–16, the CDE EL Civics program awarded funds to 162 agencies to provide EL Civics educational services to more than 160,000 adult learners. There were 21,507 learners enrolled in Citizenship Preparation and 156,571 in Civic Participation. For the grant year of 2017–18, a new competitive application process through an official Request for Application (RFA) will be executed adhering to the thirteen considerations specified in the WIOA, Title II AEFLA. The CDE RFA for the AEFLA grant is soliciting agencies to offer IELCE as defined in WIOA Section 243

As a condition of being awarded start-up funds, recipients will be required to submit an Integrated Education and Training Plan that outlines their progress in developing and implementing service approaches that provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. The goal of an Integrated EL Civics program is to:

- Prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.
- Integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program.

IELCE is an important offering to California adult immigrant learners. California provides IELCE in three program focus areas: Citizenship Preparation, Civic Participation, and IET. Both the Citizenship Preparation and Civic Participation focus areas document learning gains using academic pretests and post-tests along with performance-based additional assessments. The Civic Participation Program has a primary focus on civic involvement. Agencies conduct community and student assessments and teach the language and literacy objectives that (1) best match their students' identified needs, and (2) will assist them in attaining mastery of a specific civic objective.

Civic objectives used must meet the following criteria:

- Integrate English language and literacy instruction into civics education.
- Focus on helping students understand the government and history of the United States; learn the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and participate effectively in the education, employment, and civic opportunities this country has to offer.
- Integrate active participation of the learners in community activities.

Per WIOA Section 243 the CDE has an added dimension that language and literacy objectives must be provided as a program in combination with integrated education and training (IET). The IET model combines workforce preparation activities and occupational skills training with literacy activities to increase a participant's educational and career advancement. The IET service delivery may incorporate one of the following teaching models:

- a. **Co-Teaching:** The co-teaching model involves skills instruction in a CTE program along with basic language instruction, delivered in an integrated fashion. In this model, both an ELA teacher and a CTE teacher are teaching in the same classroom; and students are enrolled in both of the ELA and CTE courses.
- b. **Alternating Teaching:** In alternating teaching, students are enrolled in two different, but coordinated courses. In this model, an ELA teacher and a CTE teacher are teaching in two different classrooms; students attend the two courses at different times.
- c. **Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) and Vocational Adult Basic Education (VABE):** VESL and VABE classes are intended to teach the English language through the context of a specific occupational skill.
- d. **Cluster Vocational English as a Second Language/Vocational Adult Basic Education Class:** In a cluster VESL/VABE course, students enrolled in different career fields study together in a single VESL or VABE class.

For agencies to receive funds under WIOA Section 243, students are required to be enrolled in both an ELA program and a career program.

Civic Participation programs assess students through use of performance-based additional assessments that measure student attainment of civic objectives that are categorized under competency areas such as consumer economics, community resources, health, employment, and government and law or may develop their own. Civic Objective and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs) that meet the requirements of workforce preparation activities are now classified as WIOA Section 243 COAAPs. In 2016, 5 new COAAPs were developed focusing on integration into workforce preparation activities and 17 of the 48 original COAAPs that already included workforce preparation activities were classified as 243 COAAPs.

In 2015–16, adult learners enrolled in Citizenship Preparation took the CASAS Government and History for Citizenship test and the oral Citizenship Interview Test to be more comfortable and better able to respond to questions. More than 14,000 learners passed the CASAS Government and History for Citizenship test, and 3,600 passed the oral CASAS Citizenship Interview Test. More than 100,000 students throughout the state took Civic Participation performance-based additional assessments, and more than 90 percent passed one or more of them.

## **Adoption of Adult Education Standards**

The CDE, through the State Board of Education, adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010. In March 2013, the CDE adopted the CCRS. In March 2014, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction announced the Standards for Career Ready Practice (SCRIP). These standards describe the fundamental knowledge and skills that students need to prepare for transition to postsecondary education, career training, or the workforce. The SCRIP are taught and reinforced in all career exploration and preparation programs or integrated into core curriculum, with increasingly higher levels of complexity and expectation as a student advances through a program of study.

The CDE adult education office has aligned its content standards to the state-adopted challenging academics of CCSS and CCRS. The California adult education high school diploma meets the same standards as required for the K–12 high school diploma. The CDE has developed and implemented curriculum and assessment standards within ABE and ESL to meet the EFLs established by the NRS and to achieve the K–8 academic literacy objectives established by the state’s standards and frameworks.

Since 2014, the CDE has provided numerous professional development opportunities about the CCSS and CCRS to Title II local providers. Thus, local adult education programs are aligned to CCSS and CCRS, providing standards–based contextualized curriculum, evidence-based instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully within American society as citizens, workers, and family members.

## **Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals**

According to the 2015 *Outcome Evaluation Report – An Examination of Offenders Released in Fiscal Year 2010-11*, published by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), Office of Research, 44.6 percent of the 95,960 felons released to parole in California from July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011, (Fiscal Year 2010-11) returned to prison within 3 years.

The CDCR uses supplemental measures (new arrests, returns to custody, criminal filings, or supervision violations) and the three-year return-to-prison rate as its primary measure of recidivism. The three-year return-to-prison rate is defined as follows: “An individual convicted of a felony and incarcerated in a CDCR adult institution who was released to parole, discharged after being paroled, or directly discharged during Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11 and subsequently returned to State prison within three years of their release date.” The return-to-prison rate is calculated using the ratio of the number of offenders in the release cohort who returned to prison during the follow-up period to the total number of offenders in the release cohort, multiplied by 100. The release cohort includes (1) Offenders who were directly discharged from CDCR; (2) Offenders who were released to parole for the first time on their current term; and (3) Offenders who were released to parole on their current term prior to FY 2010-11, returned to prison on this term, and were then re-released during FY 2010-11.