



May 1, 2015

Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy
c/o Mr. Abdi Soltani, Workgroup Facilitator
1102 Q Street, Suite 4554
Sacramento, CA 95811

Dear Taskforce Workgroup Members,

Thank you for your dedicated service on the Board of Governors Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy. The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce has long shared and supported the goal of increasing individual and regional economic competitiveness by providing California's workforce with relevant skills and quality credentials that match employer needs and fuel a strong economy.

As you consider strategies, policies, and practices to ensure students are prepared for high-value jobs and to position California's regions to attract high-value jobs in key industry sectors, we urge the workgroup and Task Force to endorse competency-based education as a strategy to ensure those goals are met.

We would like to inform you of our local efforts to advance higher education transformation in Los Angeles through the adoption of competency-based education and credit for prior learning. The L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation has partnered with Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC) to serve as a proof point for innovative reform leading to scalable improvements in California community college student access and success. LA Trade Tech is in the process of implementing a new student learning framework designed to increase career and transfer success among underrepresented student populations. The "Pathways to Academic, Career and Transfer Success" (PACTS) Framework is designed to provide individuals with the competencies they need to successfully access and complete a postsecondary program of study, and obtain a career that pays family-supporting wages and offers opportunities for advancement and growth. In order to expand and scale the proposed model, LATTC is interested in implementing credit for prior learning as a first step toward the implementation of a competency-based learning model.

Through generous funding from the Ford Foundation, the partners are currently engaged in a research project with The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group), the Council for Adult Experiential Learning (CAEL), and Moran Technology Consulting to investigate how existing local, state, and federal policies, statutes, regulations, formal and informal structures, and cultural norms would foster or interfere with the implementation of competency-based learning. Results for this project are expected in June 2015, and the partners expect to develop a robust policy agenda to address some of the barriers to implementation.

We believe credit for prior learning and competency-based education strategies have the potential to dramatically increase student engagement, persistence, and completion, while simultaneously creating opportunities for collaboration and alignment between faculty and

industry - ultimately better-preparing students to enter the workforce. By transitioning away from granting credit for “seat time,” to granting credit for industry-aligned and validated *competencies*, and allowing students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of content (regardless of time), these strategies are having success in providing students with personalized learning, and accelerating progress toward degree or credential.

Please feel free to call upon us for any additional information, or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Gary Toebben
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce



Laurence B. Frank
President
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College

cc. Bill Scroggins, Mount San Antonio College, President & CEO
Cathy Martin, California Hospital Association, Vice President of Workforce
Lynell Wiggins, Pasadena City College, Counselor
Kuldeep Kaur, Yuba Community College District, Chief Business Officer