

### Workforce Data and Outcomes

Today's students and incumbent workers rely on a community college education to obtain the skills needed to be competitive and keep pace with a rapidly changing workplace. Because many employers require job applicants to demonstrate workplace readiness skills (sometimes called "soft skills") and competencies in specific skill-sets, there is increased demand for short-term training programs in addition to traditional associate degree and certificate pathways.

Short-term training options are often aligned with a third-party credential, such as a state license or an industry certification. Short-term training options can also be linked together to form "stackable certificates," thus enabling students to continue to work while pursuing a degree. Some students (called "skill-builders") elect to take one or two community college courses that help them solidify or gain skills required for ongoing employment and career advancement, without completing a program of study.

Colleges rely on access to robust metrics and outcome data (such as degrees, completions, certificates, employment) in order to continuously improve pathways within career technical education, identify which programs employers' value, and align their program and course offerings to local and regional labor market needs. Faculty and administrators also use students' employment outcome information for continuous program improvement.

In recent years there has been an increased focus on measuring student success in both state and federally funded workforce programs. California community colleges have made progress in measuring critical momentum points and student outcomes. The Student Success Scorecard reports attainment of degrees, certificates and transfer to four-year institutions. A set of common metrics has been adopted to track student progress and outcomes in CTE grants funded by the Chancellor's Office. The Chancellor's Office's Salary Surfer reports average earnings and wage increases by program of study for students who complete a certificate or degree. Also in development is a new tool, called the LaunchBoard, which provides program-level information to community college faculty and administrators on student course-taking, completion, employment, and labor market information.

While these tools now make some CTE outcome information more accessible to faculty, students and policymakers, the following data challenges remain:

- Metrics and metric definitions vary by individual programs and funding sources.
- Many certificates offered by the community colleges are in low-unit degrees (fewer than 12 units) and are therefore not counted as success in statewide accountability metrics.
- There is no statewide data system that tracks students from high school through the higher education segments and no formal data exchange that allows community colleges and workforce investment boards to share student program and outcome information.

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- Third-party credential data from outside entities (like licensing boards and industry certifications) are frequently required reporting metrics, but difficult to obtain because of actual and perceived legal hurdles.
- Information on student employment data and labor market information often requires analytical skills to interpret and apply to college decision-making.

For a more in-depth discussion of this issue refer to the Task Force background paper entitled, *Moving the Needle: Data, Success, and Accountability for Workforce Programs*.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create common workforce metrics for CTE programs.
  - a. Develop, streamline, and align common outcome metrics for all state-funded CTE programs and ensure, to the extent possible, that they are compatible with federal reporting requirements.
  - b. Expand the definition of student success to better address workforce training outcomes for both “completers” (students who attain certificates including low-unit certificates, degrees, transfer-readiness, or enrollment in 4-year institutions) and “skill builders” (students who take only a few courses to advance in their career).
  - c. Report outcomes by student demographic characteristics.
  - d. Establish a student identifier for high school students and older to enable California to track workforce progress and outcomes for students across institutions and programs.
2. Increase the ability of governmental entities to share employment, licensing, certification, and wage outcome information.
  - a. Require the sharing of employment/wage outcomes and third party licenses/certification data across governmental entities.
  - b. Explore barriers, both real and perceived, and create new incentives for the timely sharing of data.
  - c. Ensure data sharing activities are for the purpose of continuous program improvement, while also protecting student, college and employer privacy rights.
3. Improve the quality, accessibility, and utility of student outcome and labor market data to support students, educators, colleges, regions, employers, local workforce investment boards, and the state in CTE program development and improvement efforts.
  - a. Provide labor market, workforce outcome, and student demographic data/information that are easily accessible and usable.
  - b. Ensure that industry partners validate labor market supply and demand information.
  - c. Provide technical assistance along with data visualization and analysis tools to colleges on the use of labor market and student outcome data.
  - d. Develop the state’s capacity to capture changes and gaps in workforce supply and demand and to assess each region’s educational capacity to address workforce gaps.

## Curriculum

The framework for the community college curriculum development and approval is provided in the California Education Code and Title 5 regulations. Myriad curriculum standards and processes exist requiring a mix of local, regional, and state level review as well as approval depending upon whether the course is for non-credit or credit. Local faculty has primary responsibility for curriculum development and delivery and for ensuring that instruction meets various compliance and accreditation standards. Processes may differ from campus to campus, but the CTE curriculum development, revision and approval at any college is generally the same as for other course or programs.

The CTE curriculum development process does differ in two respects:

1. CTE faculty work with advisory committees composed of local community, business and industry leaders in industry sectors that are related to their programs to help ensure that programs are responsive to labor market needs and that students who complete the programs will have the required skills and knowledge to obtain employment.
2. CTE program proposals must also be reviewed by the regional consortium prior to submission to the Chancellor's Office. The regional consortia help validate the need for a new program or avoid unnecessary duplication of programs that may oversupply regional labor markets.

A rapidly changing labor market and diverse student body present a series of challenges for career technical education. Although lengthy local and statewide processes can slow curriculum development and revision, faculty strives to keep courses and programs current. The current approval processes have valuable aspects that allow colleges to serve their particular communities, however various elements of these process could be streamlined and/or clarified for greater efficiencies.

For a more in-depth discussion of this issue refer to the Task Force background paper entitled, *Essential Elements for Strong Programs: Curriculum Development and Instructors*.

### Recommendations:

1. Evaluate, strengthen, and revise, as appropriate, the curriculum development process to ensure alignment from education to employment.
  - a. Create mechanisms for improved engagement of business and industry in the curriculum development process.
  - b. Provide state level coordination in developing 1) model curriculum that can be adopted and customized by colleges, and 2) needs assessments in emerging priority areas to help manage and incentivize the risk associated with new program start-up.
  - c. Create a process for the development of collaborative programs between colleges.
  - d. Develop and expand the use of contract training to meet the education and training needs of business and industry.

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2. Improve the program review, evaluation, and revision processes to ensure program relevancy to both students and the labor market.
  - a. Ensure engagement of business, labor, and other workforce professionals in the program development and review process.
  - b. Provide ongoing program improvement and, as appropriate, program discontinuance based upon labor market data, student outcomes and input from students, college staff, employers, and workforce partners.
3. Evaluate and revise the local, regional, and statewide CTE curriculum approval process, as appropriate, to ensure timely, responsive, and streamlined curriculum approval.
  - a. Provide state level coordination to develop a streamlined curriculum approval process.
  - b. Provide sufficient staffing and resources in the Chancellor's Office to speed up the state-level curriculum approval process.
  - c. Identify best practices in local curriculum adoption processes and provide technical assistance to colleges in ways to improve their local adoption processes.
  - d. Streamline the approval process for revision of existing curriculum.
4. Facilitate student portability across institutions.
  - a. Scale up and resource the “C-ID” (course identifier) system for CTE courses, certificates and degrees to enable articulation across institutions and statewide.
  - b. Recognize prior learning and work experience and award credits or advanced placement toward CTE pathways.
5. Create CTE effective practices.
  - a. Develop a website repository of CTE curriculum models that faculty/colleges can select and adapt to their own needs.
  - b. Develop an interactive system where industry stakeholders can provide feedback to both validate and rate CTE curriculum program quality.
6. Improve CTE student progress and outcomes.
  - a. Enable student advancement based upon mastery of competencies for specified occupations as appropriate through mechanisms such as authentic, performance-based assessments.
  - b. Support cross-disciplinary implementation of contextualized basic skills and work readiness skills into CTE and career-related content into general education using evidence-based practices.
7. Clarify practices and/or address issues of course repetition for CTE courses when course content evolves to meet changes in skill requirements.
  - a. Clarify interpretation of course repetition regulations to assist colleges in implementing policies and practices.
  - b. Identify and disseminate best practices in using noncredit to provide opportunities for CTE students to build skills and knowledge.
  - c. Revise state-required audit fee so that colleges may offer auditing as an option for students to refresh their skills and knowledge.

## Instructors

Assembly Bill 1725 (Vasconcellos) created the current system of minimum qualifications for hiring community college faculty. Minimum qualifications are established by the Board of Governors, based on recommendations by Academic Senate of the California Community College (ASCCC), and are used to determine a candidate's eligibility for faculty positions in the community college system. Some claim that the minimum qualification process, in conjunction with salary differentials in high-paid fields may limit a college's ability to employ a qualified pool of faculty for CTE courses and program.

The minimum qualification for most CTE faculty is a bachelor's degree in any major and two years of professional experience, or any associate degree and six years of professional experience. However, a number of technical disciplines, such as engineering, home economics, nursing, dietetics, accounting, and business management require the minimum qualifications require a masters' degree in the discipline of the assignment or a bachelor's degree in the discipline of the assignment and a master's degree in a reasonably related discipline.

While specific hiring processes vary from district to district, all faculty hired must meet minimum qualifications or equivalency criteria for their disciplines. The local equivalency process is governed by Title 5 regulations and varies by college district. Each community college governing board and its academic senate develops its own process, criteria, and standards to assess equivalencies. Regulations require that both minimum qualifications and equivalency procedures be established by the college. Granting of equivalency allows a faculty member to teach all courses within the appropriate discipline; equivalency for individual courses (single course equivalency) is not allowed.

For a more in-depth discussion of this issue refer to the Task Force background paper entitled, *Essential Elements for Strong Programs: Curriculum Development and Instructors*.

### Recommendations

1. Increase the pool of qualified CTE instructors by addressing CTE faculty hiring practices.
  - a. Identify and disseminate effective practices around recruitment, hiring, minimum qualifications, equivalencies, and providing education and training pathways for experts in CTE fields.
  - b. Create statewide models for colleges to recruit and mentor industry professionals to teach in community colleges.
  - c. Encourage business and industry professional organizations to develop teaching talent with the necessary qualifications to teach in the community colleges.
  - d. Clarify barriers and consider creative options for meeting minimum qualifications and single-subject equivalency processes to better integrate industry professions who possess significant experience into CTE instructional programs. \*

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\* Needs further input and guidance from legal counsel.

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2. Enhance professional development opportunities for faculty
  - a. Provide all faculty with training in teaching methods and strategies.
  - b. Create fiscal incentives for professional development to support externships and other methods of skill upgrades to ensure currency.
  - c. Provide professional development for counselors to support the use of educational planning tools common to secondary, adult education and community colleges..
3. Explore solutions to attracting faculty in high-salaried occupations.
  - a. Create and share models and best practices developed as part of local labor negotiations to address the salary differential needs in high paid fields.
  - b. Explore partnership with industry and the local community to support salary differential needs.

## Structured Career Pathways

The career pathway movement – both nationally and in California – is focused on providing a seamless sequence of academic and CTE coursework across K-12 and postsecondary education that provides a positive outcome for all students and leads to employment. Developed and implemented in partnership with workforce partners and industry intermediaries, career pathways is a strategy that works for both traditional high school students and adult learners. This strategy is especially effective for individuals with low education and skill levels. Well-designed pathways move students to successively higher levels of education and training while providing multiple entry and exit points, related work experience opportunities at each stage, and wrap-around support services.

Quality career pathways integrate and align academic and technical skills to move students through a progression of coursework. They provide multiple on-ramps and off-ramps with modularized curriculum that make it easy for students to move through a pathway, exit for personal reasons, and then re-enter to complete their career objectives. Smooth and well-articulated transitions between education and workforce systems help ensure that students move successfully from high to postsecondary or from adult education to postsecondary. Student support in areas such as basic skills and counseling is provided within the pathway setting to help with student success. Industry engagement in both program design and identification of work-based learning opportunities results in pathways with strong employment outcomes.

Career pathways are embedded in a number of current state, federal, and foundation-funded reform efforts, which raises concern about coordination of these initiatives both at the state and regional level. Strategies such as dual enrollment and model pathways can serve to align efforts among high school, adult education, and community college providers.

For a more in-depth discussion of this issue refer to the Task Force background paper entitled, *College-to-Career Pathways: Getting From Here to There on the Roadmap for a Stronger California Economy and Structured Career Pathways and Student Support*.

### Recommendations

1. Develop regionally-aligned strategies and structured industry-informed pathways, coordinated with other workforce partners and industry intermediaries, that seamlessly transition high school and adult students to community college CTE certificates, associate, and/or transfer degrees~~s~~-programs.
  - a. Identify and remove barriers to career pathway implementation.
  - b. Develop industry-driven, competency-based and portable pathways that include stackable components and modularized curricula, develop work-based learning opportunities, and link to other support services.
  - c. Contextualize Basic English and math, ESL, and workplace readiness skills into pathway curricula.
  - d. Develop applied English and math courses that meet both CTE and Associate Degree requirements.

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- e. Support the on-going development and implementation of current initiatives to develop programs of study tools to bridge high school and adult education preparation into community college CTE pathways to help community college students plan their CTE course taking.
  - f. Develop and implement effective career and educational planning tools for high school, adult education and community college counselors.
2. Develop CTE model curriculum
- a. Align model curriculum with high schools and adult education to enable articulation, dual enrollment and CTE pathways between high schools, adult education and community colleges.
  - b. Collaborate with high school, adult education and community college educators on the development of model curriculum.
3. Ensure career pathways meet the needs of non-traditional students – such as displaced workers, veterans, and other reentry adult populations.
- a. Design pathways with multiple entry and exit points that correspond to industry-recognized skills.
  - b. Adopt prior learning and competency assessments to support re-entry students.
  - c. Provide counseling, orientation, prior learning and competency assessments, and pro-active support systems - such as cohorts, wrap-around services and other internal and external supports.