



California Adult Education

Research Brief No. 4 | Program Evaluation

May 2005

Labor Force Status	Morning		Afternoon		Evening	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employed	18,823	30.1	11,529	8.2	79,700	61.7
Unemployed	15,555	25.5	10,173	7.4	67,373	53.2
Retired	5,465	66.3	1,630	19.7	1,159	14.0
Total	131,350	44.5	36,024	12.9	123,454	42.6

Voices from the Field: WIA Title II Program Implementation

Fiscal year 2003-04 represents the fifth year of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II implementation. Each year California conducts a program evaluation of all WIA Title II adult education and literacy program providers. Chapter 4 of the California State Plan for WIA Title II describes how California evaluates the effectiveness of adult education and literacy activities based on the performance measures described in Section 212. It states that the California Department of Education (CDE) will review strategies, processes, and barriers to attaining the performance levels negotiated with the U. S. Department of Education and quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the progress and improvement of the local Section 225 and 231 grant programs. This research brief addresses and summarizes the results of WIA II implementation for 2003-04.

During the past five years, California has seen an increase in both the numbers of students served and agencies serving them. During the 2003-04 program year, 291 agencies served 842,464 students (See Table 1 and Table 2). The agencies reach a diverse adult population geographically located throughout the state representing a wide variety of ethnicities. The agencies vary from small CBOs, library literacy programs, and county offices of education to small, medium, and large adult schools, community colleges, state agencies, and jail programs. Their primary goal is to assist adults in acquiring the language and basic skills they need to enable them to become productive citizens of this country.

Measures of 2003-04 WIA Title II program success include the following:

- California met or exceeded 11 of 12 National Reporting System (NRS) core performance goals for literacy skill level completion with overall literacy performance exceeding the literacy goal.
- California met all four follow-up measures: get a job, keep a job, enter postsecondary, and get a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) based on a data match for obtaining a GED and based on survey data for the other measures.
- Of the 842,464 learners enrolled in WIA Title II programs, 70.2 percent met the NRS criteria: learners are 16 years or older, attended class 12 or more hours, are not concurrently enrolled in high school/K-12, and have a valid instructional level.
 - Of the number of NRS-eligible learners (591,574), 52.6 percent or 310,945, remained in their programs long enough to take both a pretest and a post-test.
 - Of the number of learners who took both a pretest and a post-test (221,177), 71.1 percent earned at least one benchmark. Benchmarks include a significant learning gain within an instructional level, level completion, or attainment of a high school diploma or GED.

- More than 76 percent of English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) learners demonstrated mastery of EL Civics objectives, based on local agency-developed performance assessments.
- Local EL Civics funded programs benefit their 171,273 students by involving them in curricula directly linked to their identified needs and involving them in civic participation activities, resulting in 37.3 percent completing a literacy level and 24.5 percent advancing one or more levels.

The majority of local providers report that they (1) recognize the necessity for and benefits of the WIA data collection and reporting requirements, (2) are continuing to improve their ability to collect and report complete and accurate data, and (3) are building the capacity to use their current data to analyze and leverage program strengths and identify strategies for continuous instructional and overall program improvement.

Table 1
2001-2004 WIA Title II Funded Agencies by Provider Type

Provider Type	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
	N	N	N
Adult Schools	150	163	174
Community-Based Organizations	26	43	54
Community College Districts	16	18	18
Library Literacy Programs	10	8	13
County Offices of Education	6	7	9
California Conservation Corps*	1	1	1
California State University**	0	1	0
Institutions (225 funded)***	16	17	22
Total	225	258	291

*For purposes of this report, this agency is classified in other tables as a state agency.
 **This agency did not respond to the survey and was not included in other tables in this report.
 ***Included in this provider type are agencies for institutionalized adults — California Department of Corrections, California Department of Developmental Services, and California Youth Authority — that are classified in other tables in this report as state agencies.
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Table 2
2001-04 WIA Title II Student Enrollment by Provider Type

Provider Type	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
	N	N	N
Adult Schools	640,182	673,836	693,588
Community-Based Organizations	4,255	7,821	11,271
Community College Districts	77,277	80,014	76,647
Library Literacy Programs	1,330	1,358	2,865
County Offices of Education	5,593	5,608	5,740
State Agencies	32,897	34,849	37,426
California State University	0	100	0
Jail Programs*	10,371	11,724	14,927
Total	771,905	815,310	842,464

*Includes the 225 sections of Alameda County Library, Stanislaus Literacy Center, and Tri-Valley Regional Occupational Program.
 For historical (trend data) purposes, some state agencies and 225 funded agencies in this table are classified differently.
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Findings

California WIA Title II Program Implementation: Voices from the Field, 2003-04, highlights the following four sets of findings from local agency responses to the 2003-04 Survey of WIA Title II Programs in California.

1. Successful program strategies for 2003-04:

- Providing targeted training for all staff to improve the testing processes, data collection, data organization, and data reporting
- Providing professional development at the classroom and program management levels with a focus on using data to improve instruction
- Providing instruction that is targeted to student needs
- Initiating data quality control processes
- Collaborating with other agencies for program and instructional improvement
- Providing a coordinator in charge of assessment

2. Agency priorities for 2004-05:

- Initiating processes to improve student persistence, to include orientation and goal setting, targeting instruction to students' assessed needs and goals, and investigating the effectiveness of various managed enrollment options
- Developing and improving curriculum
- Improving data collection, quality, uses, and outcomes

3. Identified professional development needs for agencies for 2004-05:

- Improving the quality of student assessment data
- Using student assessment data to target instruction

4. Challenges for agencies for 2004-05:

- Tracking and increasing student persistence
- Increasing the percentage of students who remain in class long enough to complete both Entry and Update records and demonstrate progress based on pre- and post-test scores
- Increasing the use of distance learning in small agencies
- Increasing the use of student data to inform program improvement and instruction
- Meeting all quarterly reporting deadlines

The following recommendations to the California Department of Education reflect the analysis of survey and focus group data. As agencies demonstrate increased success, strategies found to be effective continue to inform that success and should continue to receive support.

Recommendations

► DATA QUALITY, SUBMISSION, AND USE

Accountability

Recommendation 1: Continue to provide technical support and resources to assist WIA Title II agencies as they continue to improve data quality and reporting accuracy.

Data Match

Recommendation 2: Provide authority and resources to implement a data match system for WIA Title II agencies to collect and report on core performance outcome measures more reliably.

► PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Professional Development

Recommendation 3: Continue to provide accessible quality professional development activities for all levels of program personnel (administrators, instructors, and other staff). Investigate alternative delivery modes such as teleconferencing, and reassess agency staff development needs throughout the program year.

► PROGRAM RESOURCES

State Leadership Projects

Recommendation 4: Continue the current level of support for the four State Leadership Projects.

Technology

Recommendation 5: Continue to provide resources and support for ongoing and new technology both at the program and classroom levels.

► RESEARCH AND DISSEMINATION

Evidenced-Based Research

Recommendation 6: Continue to support practitioner-based research studies related to adult literacy and the dissemination of current adult education research that provides interpretation and adaptation for practical use in the classroom.

Student Success

Recommendation 7: Identify and disseminate information at both the program and classroom levels related to strategies that promote student success. Provide professional development on the implementation of these strategies to administrators and instructors.

► COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

WIBs and One-Stops

Recommendation 8: Continue to provide resources and support for shared use to expand and strengthen collaboration with local Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and One-Stops.

Advisory Groups

Recommendation 9: Continue to support WIA Title II field-level advisory groups and regional focus groups, as specified in the California State Plan, as well as provide other structured opportunities for communication and feedback from the field.

A copy of the full report is available at www.casas.org

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