

APRIL 9, 2019

# Overview of Adult Education

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PRESENTED TO: Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on  
Education Finance  
Hon. Kevin McCarty, Chair



LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

# Background

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## Adult Education Has Multiple Purposes

- Primary purpose is to provide adults with the precollegiate knowledge and skills needed to participate in civic life and the workforce.
- Main instructional areas include basic English and math, English as a second language, and career technical education (CTE).

## Multiple Providers Offer Adult Education in California

- Adult schools (operated by school districts) and California Community Colleges (CCC) have been main providers of adult education.
- Other providers include libraries and community-based organizations.

## State Restructured Adult Education System in 2013-14

- Intended to address longstanding concerns about lack of coordination among providers.
- Created 71 regional adult education consortia of adult schools and community colleges, in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- Provided funding to develop and implement regional adult education plans.
  - \$25 million in one-time planning grants for use in 2013-14 and 2014-15.
  - \$500 million in ongoing annual funding for Adult Education Block Grant—since renamed Adult Education Program (AEP)—beginning in 2015-16.
- Some providers continue to receive funding from other sources, including CCC apportionments, the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and the federal Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Perkins V) Act.



## Recent and Proposed Changes

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### **In 2018-19, State Provided Funding for Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) and Data Improvements**

- Provided \$22 million ongoing for 4.3 percent COLA for AEP. (Higher rate was intended to reflect that program had not received COLA since created in 2015-16.)
- Provided \$5 million ongoing to CCC Chancellor's Office for data projects, primarily related to tracking student outcomes across providers and into the workforce.
- Required adult schools to assign statewide student identifiers to adult students without social security numbers and to share identifiers with CCC so student outcomes could be better tracked.

### **Governor's Budget for 2019-20 Proposes \$18 Million for COLA**

- COLA estimated at 3.46 percent (same as for other Proposition 98 programs), bringing total proposed AEP funding to \$545 million.



# Unresolved Issues in Adult Education

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## State Lacks Consistent Approach to Funding

- The state does not have a designated funding rate per AEP student.
- Variation in per-student spending among providers likely results in differences in access, services, and quality across the state.

## Policies Not Aligned Between Adult Schools and CCC

- Course fees: Adult schools may charge fees for CTE courses, while CCC is prohibited from charging fees for noncredit adult education.
- Minimum instructor qualifications: Statute generally requires adult school instructors to have state-approved teaching credential, while CCC does not require teaching credential.

## To Date, Data and Accountability Have Been Insufficient to Track Results

- Since restructuring adult education, state has not had comprehensive data on student outcomes, such that its ability to evaluate performance has been very limited.
- Data improvements efforts are underway.

