

APRIL 11, 2019

Overview of Adult Education

PRESENTED TO: Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Subcommittee No. 1 on Education

Hon. Richard D. Roth, Chair



LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Background

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 21st Century (Perkins V) Act.



Recent and Proposed Changes

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

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.

