

# Challenges, Promising Programs, and Effective Practices in Adult and Developmental Education



**With applications to Tulsa, Oklahoma**

**February 2011**



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**With applications to Tulsa, Oklahoma**

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## FOREWORD

This paper is one in a series that addresses key issue areas of the *CareerAdvance* demonstration by The Community Action Project (CAP) of Tulsa County, Oklahoma.

### **THE COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT OF TULSA COUNTY (CAP)**

As a comprehensive anti-poverty agency, CAP addresses the multiple needs of low-income Tulsa families by providing programs in early education, housing, and financial and tax assistance. CAP has a history of partnering with social service organizations and schools in the Tulsa area, including Family & Children's Services, local school districts, Tulsa Community College and the Tulsa Technology Center.

The agency is an innovator in early childhood education and has recently created a system of eight large comprehensive, high-quality learning centers, in addition to seven smaller centers, which together serve more than 2,000 Tulsa children. Several CAP early childhood centers have been purposefully located adjacent to elementary school campuses in the Tulsa and Union public school districts in order to provide children and their families a smoother transition from pre-kindergarten to elementary school. This co-location also opens possibilities to serve families over expanded time frames.

CAP has a demonstrated track record of successfully implementing innovative programs, testing their effectiveness, and building them to scale. In its early childhood work, CAP increased the number of children enrolled in its program by 51% over three years, growing from 1,320 to 2,000 children served. To reach this level, CAP developed strong and effective working partnerships with three local public school districts and built five new state-of-the-art facilities. CAP also made remarkable strides in providing free tax preparation services to low- and moderate-income Tulsa families. CAP began preparing tax returns with the objective of ensuring that eligible families would receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other child-related tax credits to which they are entitled. A third program that CAP piloted and then took to scale was the Individual Development Account (IDA) program, which encouraged household savings by providing matching funds. In 1997, CAP was selected as one of 13 organizations to participate in a national demonstration project sponsored by the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) and designed to test the efficacy of IDAs as an anti-poverty strategy.

## **CAREERADVANCE**

In 2009, CAP launched the *CareerAdvance* project, working with researchers at the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources at The University of Texas at Austin and Harvard University's Graduate School of Education. The project has led CAP to develop new partnerships and partner in new ways with local school districts' adult education programs as well as local postsecondary training providers. *CareerAdvance* offers a multi-faceted approach to job development and economic security based on an emerging model of workforce development that is sector-driven, provides comprehensive training (including occupational skills, work readiness skills, and contextualized adult basic education), offers intensive individualized services, features supportive peer communities, and builds employer relationships through industry intermediaries.

*CareerAdvance* has extended and modified these key elements to best serve the needs of young parents. While their children thrive and develop in early learning centers, parents are provided comprehensive and individualized career and education support. In its initial pilot phase, mothers with children in two of CAP's early learning centers enrolled together as a peer cohort in a healthcare career pathway. The pathway begins with the Geriatric Technician / Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program, advances to Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN), and culminates with a college degree in Registered Nursing (RN). For participants to be successful in this program, they must have the skills to succeed in college-level curriculum. The career path also requires participants to perform well on standardized tests for program entry as well as for licensure or certification at each career step.

The experiences of the first cohort highlighted a need for a more effective approach to adult education and development for college-level coursework. Participants demonstrated knowledge and skills deficits in mathematics, writing, reading and/or English that limited their options for progressing through the career pathway. Modifications to the training design in response to these barriers included group and computer-based tutoring, renewed efforts to contextualize instruction, and additional hours/weeks of instruction. At the end of the CNA program, the results of the modifications were discouraging, with few participants testing eligible to participate in the next Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) cohort.

## **PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER**

The parents' experiences in the adult education system in Tulsa prompted this review of the literature on promising practices. Effective adult education will be critical to the success of *CareerAdvance* participants, as well as the larger pool of low-skilled workers in Tulsa and beyond. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of the current state of adult education in Tulsa, as well as the United States as a whole, and to highlight successful programs in three important areas:

- GED/Adult Basic Education
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Education
- Developmental Education

The paper discusses the challenges in each of these areas and also identifies best practices that span across the adult education spectrum. The paper also provides recommendations for further consideration and exploration by adult education stakeholders in the Tulsa community.



## INTRODUCTION

Approximately 40 million adults lack a high school diploma or GED (American Council on Education, 2009, p. 10), and millions of adults are “unprepared to meet the requirements of the new economy” (Kirsh et al., 2007, p. 24). To regain the United States’ economic competitiveness, President Obama refers to education as “the economic issue of our time,” and has called for eight million more college graduates by 2020 (Office of the Press Secretary, 2010). According to the National Commission on Adult Literacy (NCAL), “To find and hold jobs that will pay a family-sustaining wage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, adults must have at least some postsecondary education or occupational training” (2008, p. 1). However, increasing the skills of adult learners has historically proven very challenging.

In 2009, the Community Action Project of Tulsa County (CAP) launched an education and training initiative, *CareerAdvance*, for parents of children in several Head Start/Early Head Start centers. The initiative is based on prior research which connected parents’ economic stability with improved child outcomes (Yoshikawa et al., 2006). The parents’ experiences in Tulsa’s adult education system spurred this review of the literature to better understand the challenges facing adult learners and identify best practices in the field. This paper reflects the findings to date and recommends changes for Tulsa’s adult education community.

### ADULT EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Adult-oriented education in the U.S. encompasses the wide range of skill levels of adult learners, including pre-secondary, secondary, and post-secondary education. Adult education is officially classified into three categories:

- General Education Development / Adult Basic Education (ABE): to increase skills of students without a high school diploma so they can pass the General Education Development (GED) test. GED /ABE can include adult pre-secondary (sixth grade and below) and secondary (seventh grade and beyond) education.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) / English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): to increase the English literacy skills of foreign-born adults, including legal and illegal immigrants and refugees. Literacy

generally is understood to encompass proficiency across the four domains of communication: speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

- Developmental Education / College Readiness: to develop pre-collegiate skills in students who already possess a high school diploma or GED, but are otherwise academically unprepared for college-level course work.

Under Title II of the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) provides federal funding to state adult education agencies, which then make money available to local adult education providers with or without additional state-allocated funds. Title II funds adult basic education, including ESL/ESOL programs, at Adult Learning Centers or community colleges, as well as through community-based organizations and others. The law requires states to establish performance goals, collect student data, and report annually through the U.S. Department of Education's National Reporting System (NRS) on the following: "education gains (basic literacy skills and English language acquisition), high school completion [GED attainment], entered postsecondary education or training, entered employment, and retained employment" (Duke and Ganzglass, 2007, p. 3). Currently, there are three commonly used assessment tests for adult education:

- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)
- COMPASS® Test
- ACCUPLACER ® Test

These tests can be used to assess the current skills of students, or as pre- and post-test assessments. An overview of the three tests can be found in Table 1.

Nationwide, in 2007 more than one million of the 2.3 million students (46%) in adult basic education were enrolled in ESL programs, while approximately 940,000 were in ABE (41%), and almost 300,000 were in adult secondary education (13%). In Oklahoma that year, state-administered programs served approximately 18,000 adults; sixty-nine percent of whom were in ABE, twelve percent in adult secondary education, and twenty percent in ESL programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009, Table 369).

**Table 1. Overview of Common Assessments in Adult Education**

	<b>Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)</b>	<b>ACCUPLACER ® Exam</b>	<b>COMPASS® Exam</b>
<b>Structure/Format</b>	Timed multiple-choice exam, either paper/pencil or via computer/online  Locator test determines appropriate test level (out of five) for either the Survey Test or the Complete Battery	Untimed multiple-choice exam, computer-adaptive (difficulty is shaped by student responses) or paper/pencil  Customizable placement and diagnostic exams	Untimed multiple-choice exam, computer-adaptive  Customizable placement and diagnostic exams
<b>Subjects Tested</b>	Reading, Mathematics, Language Mechanics, Vocabulary, Spelling, Writing, Science, and Social Studies	Reading Comprehension, Sentence Skills, Mathematics, English as a Second Language, and Essay Writing (not multiple-choice)	Reading, Mathematics, Writing Skills, English as a Second Language, and Essay Writing (not multiple-choice)
<b>Scale and Cut-Off Scores</b>	National Reporting System for Adult Ed recommends: <b>Beginning ABE Literacy</b> Grade Levels 0-1.9 Reading: ≤ 367 Total Math: ≤ 313 Language: ≤ 389 <b>Beginning Basic Education</b> Grade Levels 2-3.9 Reading: 368 - 460 Total Math: 314 - 441 Language: 390 - 490 <b>Low Intermediate</b> Grade Levels 4-5.9 Reading: 461-517 Total Math: 442-505 Language: 491-523 <b>High Intermediate</b> Grade Levels 6-8.9 Reading: 518 - 566 Total Math: 506 - 565 Language: 524 - 559 <b>Low Secondary</b> Grade Levels 9-10.9 Reading: 567-595 Total Math: 566-594 Language: 560-585 <b>High Secondary Education</b> Grade Levels 11-12 Reading: 596 and above Total Math: 595 and above Language: 586 and above	Cut-off scores are set by individual institutions.  Scale 0-120	Programs/institutions can set cut-off scores or use the guidelines suggested by ACT: <b>Reading</b> 0-60 Reading Development 1 61-80 Reading Development 2 81-100 No Reading Dev. Needed <b>Writing Skills</b> 0-37 Dev. English 1 38-69 Dev. English 2 70-100 Freshman English <b>Essay Writing (8 point scale)</b> 2-4 Dev. English 1 5 Dev. English 2 6-8 Freshman English <b>Pre-Algebra</b> 0-43 Arithmetic Review Experiences 44-100 Elementary Algebra <b>Algebra</b> 0-45 Elementary Algebra 46-65 Intermediate Algebra 66-100 College Algebra <b>College Algebra</b> 0-45 College Algebra 46-100 Trig./Business Calculus <b>Trigonometry</b> 0-45 Trigonometry/Business 46-100 Calculus I

Sources (full details in References):

Accuplacer; COMPASS: College Placement Tests; TABE 9&10 Product QuickFacts; and The National Reporting System for Adult Education, "Exhibit 2.1 Functioning Level Table," *Implementation Guidelines*.

## **ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA**

The Oklahoma State Department of Education's *Adult Education and Literacy Handbook* outlines the state's guiding principles, program action plan, services, and reporting requirements. The state's plan calls for students to set individual learning goals, instructors to take 15 hours of professional development annually, and state program staff to track and report student performance data on a monthly basis.

Oklahoma Adult Learning Centers offer four levels of noncredit ABE instruction: Beginning Literacy, Beginning, Low Intermediate, High Intermediate, as well as noncredit Adult Low-Secondary Education instruction. The centers also offer six levels of noncredit ESL instruction: Beginning Literacy, Low Beginning, High Beginning, Low Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced. The characteristics of students at each of these levels are detailed in Table 2. Assessments are given once a student has completed 60 to 100 hours of instruction. The state has also established a performance indicator that sixty percent or more of all fundable adult learners will be pre- and post-assessed during the fiscal year.



**Table 2. Student Characteristics for Each Adult Education Level**

Adult Basic Education	ESL / ESOL
<p><b>Beginning Literacy</b> No or minimal reading, writing, or math skills</p>	<p><b>Beginning Literacy</b> No or minimal reading or writing skills in any language</p>
<p><b>Beginning</b> <u>Literacy</u>: can read simple material on familiar subjects; can write simple sentences <u>Numeracy</u>: can count, add, and subtract; can perform simple multiplication and identify simple fractions</p>	<p><b>Low Beginning</b> <u>In English</u>: can read and write some familiar words and phrases; can complete simple forms with basic personal information; can understand simple greetings, phrases, commands and questions; speaks slowly with little control over grammar</p>
<p><b>Low Intermediate</b> <u>Literacy</u>: can read text on familiar subjects with a simple structure; can write simple paragraphs <u>Numeracy</u>: can add, subtract, multiple, and divide three-digit whole numbers</p>	<p><b>High Beginning</b> <u>In English</u>: can read many common words and simple sentences; can write simple sentences but with little control of grammar or spelling; can understand common words and simple phrases spoken slowly with some repetition; can speak common words and communicate basic needs</p>
<p><b>High Intermediate</b> <u>Literacy</u>: can read and write simple narratives and short essays on familiar topics; shows consistent use of basic grammar and punctuation <u>Numeracy</u>: can perform all basic math operations on whole numbers and fractions; can solve narrative problems; can convert between decimals and fractions</p>	<p><b>Low Intermediate</b> <u>In English</u>: can read simple material on familiar subjects; can write on familiar subjects and show control of basic grammar and punctuation; can participate in routine social conversations with some control of basic grammar</p>
<p><b>Low Secondary</b> <u>Literacy</u>: can comprehend expository writing and a variety of published materials; can compose multi-paragraph essays; writing is organized and cohesive with few mechanical errors <u>Numeracy</u>: can work accurately with whole numbers, decimals, and fractions; solve simple algebraic equations; develop and use tables and graphs; and use math in business transactions</p>	<p><b>High Intermediate</b> <u>In English</u>: can read and write on familiar subjects with simple paragraphs; shows consistent use of basic grammar and punctuation; can participate in social situations though with inconsistent control of more complex grammar</p>
<p><b>High Secondary</b> <u>Literacy</u>: can understand, discuss and analyze information from a variety of sources; writing is cohesive, clear, and supported by relevant detail <u>Numeracy</u>: can estimate time and space; can apply principles of geometry; can apply trigonometric functions</p>	<p><b>Advanced</b> <u>In English</u>: can read moderately complex text ; can write multi-paragraph text using some complex grammar; can understand and communicate in a variety of contexts; has some basic fluency of speech</p>

Source: Summarized from “Exhibit 2.1: Functioning Level Table.” *NRS Implementation Guidelines*. (2010). Pages 16-21.

Oklahoma’s *Adult Education Handbook* also reports on recent system performance and provides comparative information on national performance averages. As detailed in Table 3, Oklahoma’s performance has been mixed over the last three years for which data are available. In Fiscal Year 2009 (FY2009), Oklahoma met only one of its objectives – entered employment. However, because there are no consequences for low performance under WIA Title II, programs currently have no incentive to improve their service delivery or mode of instruction.

**Table 3. Oklahoma Adult Education and Literacy Indicators of Performance**

<b>Federal Core Indicator #1:</b> Demonstrated improvements in literacy skill levels in reading and writing the English language, numeracy, problem solving, English language acquisition, and other literacy skills									
Performance Measure	National Average FY2007	State Target %*FY2007	State Actual % FY2007	National Average FY2008	State Target %*FY2008	State Actual % FY2008	National Average FY2009	State Target %*FY2009	State Actual % FY2009
ABE Beginning Literacy	39	47	46	42	48	49	38	48	33
ABE Beginning	40	48	42	41	45	44	43	45	32
ABE Low Intermediate	40	47	43	40	45	45	43	45	31
ABE High Intermediate	35	41	34	36	41	34	38	41	23
Adult Secondary Low	37	43	26	38	41	28	38	38	21
ESL Beginning Literacy	38	39	28	39	36	23	43	36	25
ESL Low Beginning	40	34	43	50	37	45	41	45	30
ESL High Beginning	46	36	40	48	37	42	48	42	34
ESL Low Intermediate	42	43	44	44	46	40	44	46	33
ESL High Intermediate	40	44	36	40	40	31	40	40	31
ESL Advanced	22	31	24	30	32	21	24	32	23
<b>Federal Core Indicator #2:</b> Placement in, retention in, or completion of postsecondary education, training, unsubsidized employment, or career advancement.									
Performance Measure	National Average FY2007	State Target %*FY2007	State Actual % FY2007	National Average FY2008	State Target %*FY2008	State Actual % FY2008	National Average FY2008	State Target %*FY2008	State Actual % FY2008
Entered Employment	45	73	76	68	65	74	55	77	79
Retained Employment	55	80	80	54	75	62	65	81	74
Entered Postsecondary Educ./Training	43	16	11	62	18	10	58	18	15
<b>Federal Core Indicator #3:</b> Receipt of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.									
Performance Measure	National Average FY2007	State Target %*FY2007	State Actual % FY2007	National Average FY2008	State Target %*FY2008	State Actual % FY2008	National Average FY2008	State Target %*FY2008	State Actual % FY2008
Obtain GED	53	52	61	57	53	60	64	62	57
<b>State Indicator of Performance:</b> Sixty percent (60%) or more of all fundable adult learners will be pre- and post-assessed during the fiscal year.									
Performance Measure	National Average FY2007	State Target % FY2007	State Actual % FY2007	National Average FY2008	State Target % FY2008	State Actual % FY2008	National Average FY2008	State Target % FY2008	State Actual % FY2008
% pre- & post-assessed	N/A	60	56	N/A	60	55	N/A	60	39

Notes: Target Met Target Not Met

\* Oklahoma negotiates these target percentages with the Office of Vocational and Adult Education each fiscal year.  
 Source: *Adult Education and Literacy Handbook*. "Lifelong Learning Section; Fiscal Year 2011". Page 15. Available: <http://sde.state.ok.us/Programs/LifelongLearn/pdf/AEHandbook.pdf>

## ADULT EDUCATION RESOURCES IN TULSA

There are several resources for adult education in Tulsa; the main providers are Union Public Schools, Tulsa Public Schools, and the YWCA of Tulsa. Micah Kordsmeier, then with CAP, completed a memorandum titled *GED and ESL Services in Tulsa* in conjunction with CAP's CareerAdvance project (Appendix A). As noted in the memorandum, adult education programs are provided primarily through Adult Learning Centers funded by WIA Title II, although other organizations, such as churches or other charities, provide similar services as well.

All classes funded by the state are taught by certified teachers. Classes are offered in the morning, afternoon, and evening, but morning and evening classes are the most popular. The programs follow the academic calendar to a large degree; Union PS does not offer classes during the summer months, while TPS and YWCA offer a reduced schedule of classes during the summer. None of the programs offer participant incentives or career-based instruction (Kordsmeier, 2010a, p. 3). Table 4 provides an overview of the programs offered by Union public schools, Tulsa public schools, and the YWCA.

**Table 4. Adult Education Programs in Tulsa**

Provider	Union Public Schools	Tulsa Public Schools	YWCA
<b>Utilization</b>	2,000 students/year	1,500 students/year	900 students/year
<b>Capacity</b>	No waiting	No waiting	No waiting
<b>Retention</b>		40-50%	~50%
<b>Child Care</b>	Yes	Newcomer only <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>Summer</b>	No	Reduced	Reduced
<b>Focus</b>	Depends on class interests	Careers and further education	Community and family
<b>Textbooks</b>	No	No	Sometimes
<b>Computer-based</b>	Available but not utilized	Not used	Available at YWCA and Martin Regional Library
<b>GED Testing</b>	1/month, 10 months	3-4 /month, 12 months	N/A

Source: Kordsmeier. (2010a). *GED and ESL Services in Tulsa*. Page 4.

<sup>1</sup>Since the release of this memo, TPS's Newcomer facility has become a CAP property and is no longer used for TPS's adult basic education programs.

The 2010 enrollment for adult education in Tulsa was approximately 4,400 students (Kordsmeier, 2010a, p. 2). Each program indicated that they had unlimited capacity and would serve everyone who is interested. The one-year retention rate in the programs was between 40 and 50 percent. Each program included a combination of classroom instruction and individual work. The programs at Union and Tulsa public schools were worksheet based, while the YWCA utilized textbooks and worksheets depending on the class.

In addition to the services provided by Union and Tulsa Public Schools and the YWCA, Tulsa Community College (TCC) offers developmental education courses in math, reading, writing, and academic strategies (TCC, 2010, p. 54). Students who “lack curricular requirements in basic skill courses” ( TCC, 2010, p. 14) must receive credit for the developmental education courses within the first 24 credit hours attempted, and before taking a collegiate-level course in that subject area. The developmental courses include both class work and individualized instruction.

## GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT (GED)

According to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, six percent of the state population has less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education, and twenty percent of the state population has less than a 12<sup>th</sup> grade education (Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office, 2010). Approximately 480,000 individuals in Oklahoma lack a high school diploma or GED (American Council on Education, 2009, p. 10). The share of low-income working families in Oklahoma with a parent with no high school diploma or GED is twenty-eight percent, ranking it 31<sup>st</sup> in the United States (Roberts and Povich, 2008, p. 6). Although there is a significant need for GED education services in Oklahoma, not everyone is eligible to obtain a GED. The Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) requires test-takers to be legal residents of the state; test takers must present a state-issued identification to verify legal residency. Individuals who lack appropriate immigration documents are not eligible to take the exam (OSDE, 2010).

According to the American Council on Education (ACE), Oklahoman's pass rate on the GED exam (73.3%) is about the same as the national average (73.1%). Most Oklahomans taking the exam (60.6%) are White and completed the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grades (30.6% and 31%, respectively) (ACE, 2009, Pgs. 10,54,56). Over half (52.4%) of Oklahoma test-takers reported "educational reasons" for taking the GED (ACE, 2009, p. 84), but only twenty-two percent of students who passed the GED subsequently enrolled in public postsecondary institutions (Mingle et al., 2005, p. 10).

Given that the number of these students who actually pursue postsecondary education is small, it is not altogether surprising that an even smaller subset actually graduate from a postsecondary institution. Although detailed statistics regarding student persistence and graduation rates are difficult to obtain, a 2003 nationwide study of a cohort of GED test-takers by ACE, showed that about forty-three percent of individuals who passed the GED enrolled in postsecondary education (Patterson et al., 2010, p. 10). However, approximately one-third of the cohort dropped out after the first semester, and the 6-year graduation rate among the subset that enrolled was just under twelve percent. The most popular reported major among the GED students who enrolled in postsecondary education was nursing (9.7% of students).

The challenges to obtaining a GED are numerous. Students often have been away from the academic environment for several years and may need substantial remedial education before they are fully prepared to take the exam. The average number of

years that test-takers had been away from school was 7.3 years (ACE, 2009, p. 58). Oklahoma has Adult Learning Centers that offer class-based GED tutoring, however individual tutoring is not widely available. Parents of young children face additional challenges which can prevent them from obtaining their GED. The lack of availability of GED classes offered when children are in school/child care is a major challenge. Some GED classes are only offered in the evening, which is ideal for working students, but also a challenging time for parents to arrange childcare. Student-parents often have financial challenges and must balance work and family demands, which can lower the priority of studying for the GED. Few GED programs provide wrap-around support services that could increase persistence and progress towards college and job training (NCAL, 2008, p. 12). Students can also “struggle to make the connection between obtaining a GED and gaining employment” (King et al., 2010, p. 24). Even when students are presented with evidence that the majority of job openings require a high school diploma or GED, many do not see the need for either credential.

Finally, it is important to note that the GED test will be updated soon to focus more on college readiness. The upcoming changes in the GED could make the test more difficult to pass, thereby increasing the need for high-quality adult basic education. According to adult educators interviewed for this paper, the new GED test is expected to begin in 2014. Although little information has been formally released about the new GED exam to date, adult educators surveyed expect the test to be more rigorous, criterion-based, and focused on college-readiness. According to the GED Testing Service (2009), the new exam will be aligned with the Common Core State Standards. The Common Core State Standards Initiative is an effort by the National Governors Association and Council of Chief State School Officers to “provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare [students] for college and the workforce.” The standards identify the knowledge and skills, students need, particularly in language arts and math, to be able to succeed in “entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs” (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010, n.p.).

### **SUCCESSFUL GED INITIATIVES**

A scan of the research literature identified several GED programs that have been particularly successful at preparing students for the exam, as well as postsecondary education and careers. Successful transition from GED preparation to post-secondary education is a crucial step in the adult education sequence. Two widely regarded programs are highlighted below.

***GED Bridge to College and Careers Programs  
LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York, NYC***

The ***Bridge to College and Careers Program*** provides contextualized adult basic education to prepare students for the GED exam and careers in business or healthcare. The program combines GED coursework in reading, writing, and math, with a focus on postsecondary education. The components of the program include classroom instruction, career planning, college readiness skills, and support services. Although adult education instructors teach the courses, the course materials are developed in conjunction with community college faculty and business professionals. The contextualized classroom instruction uses career-oriented materials to teach basic reading, writing, and math skills, and to prepare them for the GED exam. The GED program is a cohort-based, managed-enrollment program, which means students cannot “come and go” as is typical in many adult education programs. The calendar for GED classes mirrors the college calendar. When students complete the program and pass the GED, they can proceed directly to college classes (Dalsimer, 2010).

The GED classes meet 9 hours a week, in either the morning or evening, for 14 weeks. Entering students are required to have a minimum 7<sup>th</sup> grade reading level to participate. *Career Pathways Planning*, which is an integral part of the program, includes skills inventory and career research into the local labor market. Students must “develop a strategy for educational and professional growth beyond earning the GED” (LaGuardia Community College, 2010, p. 1-2). Students attend individual career counseling sessions, create a resume, and apply for internships. Students can also participate in college readiness activities, such as “College Student for a Day” and other introductory workshops. The program provides case management and monitors program participation to identify barriers to success early on.

Since 2006, over 400 students have participated in the program, which boasts a 70% GED pass rate. The average pass rate for New York City is 40% (Dalsimer, 2010). In addition, “57% of GED earners moved into college or career certification programs. Bridge students are transitioning to postsecondary education at more than twice the national average of 27%” (LaGuardia, 2010, p. 2). The cost to LaGuardia Community College is approximately \$2,000 per student. The school receives a combination of public and private funding (Dalsimer, 2010). The program was cited repeatedly by developmental education researchers and practitioners contacted for this study as an excellent example of quality GED education.

**Gateway Adult Education Partnership/Advanced Adult Education Program  
New Haven Public Schools and Gateway Community College, New Haven, CT**

The **Gateway Adult Education Partnership/Advanced Adult Education Program** (GAP/AAEP) is a partnership offered through the New Haven Public Schools Adult & Continuing Education Department and Gateway Community College. The program is designed for students who are close to passing the GED. Students are enrolled in both New Haven Adult Education and Gateway Community College, and take both GED preparation classes and developmental education classes. Regular Gateway Community College faculty teach the developmental education courses, but the classes are held at the Adult Education Center at no cost to the students. Students earn institutional credit for developmental education courses and attain their GED through the program (Zafft et al., 2006, p. 19-20). The program also offers case management services to maintain student retention. These services include “goal setting, academic advising, ACCUPLACER® testing, course registration, admissions counseling, financial aid advising and developmental counseling.” (*Program Profiles*, 2010, p. 1; Gateway Community College, n.d.). Once the students are admitted to Gateway Community College, the college provides students with transition services, such as academic planning and career development, through its Counseling Center.



## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs include a range of courses, such as general ESL for daily life, family literacy, combination English literacy and American civics classes, and vocational ESL. Students in these programs often bring a different approach to their education than adults in other basic education programs. As noted by researchers with the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NLCE), “adult English language learners possess life experience, maturity, and motivation, which facilitate their learning” (2003, p. 9). Individuals at all levels of native-language literacy seek out programs to build English proficiency and better succeed in the workplace, in the community, and in further education and training. While many recent immigrants do not have significant experience in formal education—Wrigley et al. (2003) found that more than one-third of foreign-born adults did not have a high school education—another quarter are highly-educated. Matthews-Aydinli (2008) cited research on the English-speaking proficiency of foreign-born adults finding that almost three-fourths (73%) of Hispanic and 40% of Asian foreign-born adults spoke English ‘less than very well.’

It is generally accepted that it takes five to seven years for an individual with no prior English language skills to fully master English communication across all its forms (Lewis, 2009, p. 172). The Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) project found that an adult who is literate in his/her native language but who has no English knowledge would require 500 to 1,000 hours of ESL/ESOL instruction to attain a proficiency that would enable the individual to function minimally well in the community and workplace (NCLC, 2003, p. 17). Researchers in the field have estimated anywhere between 60 and 150 instructional hours are needed to advance a single National Reporting System level, but note that the time needed varies on both the level (advancement in lower-level literacy classes takes longer to attain) and the circumstances of the individual student, as well as programmatic factors (e.g., Duke and Ganzglass, 2007; Chisman, 2008).

Individuals with low educational attainment and limited English skills have limited employment options, often working at minimum wage jobs with few benefits and little security. Crandall and Burt cite a growing body of research that indicates ESL student-parents play an important role for their children: parental literacy and educational attainment are associated with improved academic achievement by the children.

“Increased literacy, English proficiency, and education all contribute to the greater likelihood of both the social and economic well-being of families” (Crandall & Burt, p. 7).

### **CURRENT PERFORMANCE OF ESL SYSTEM**

The Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) engaged in a multi-year research project examining ESL programs in community colleges. The findings of this body of work were summarized by Chisman (2008, p. 2):

Regardless of the level (of noncredit ESL) at which they first enroll, only a small percentage of students persist in their studies for more than one or two years, and only a small percentage improve their English abilities by more than one or two levels of proficiency. Only about 8 percent of ESL students ever make the transition to postsecondary education of any kind—whether postsecondary studies take the form of credit ESL programs, academic studies, or customized vocational programs.

Chisman notes that ESL students most likely to transition are those who begin a program with at least an intermediate level of English proficiency.

In a longitudinal study of programs in Washington State’s community and technical colleges, Prince and Jenkins (2005) found that about 13% of all ESL students went on to earn college credits within the next five years. Those with at least a year of college credits earned on average \$7,000 more per year than those who did not make a successful college transition. For students who start in the lowest-level beginning ESL literacy classes, fewer than 1% go on to earn a GED. The *Promising Practices* study (2009) noted that nationally 48% of all National Reporting System 2005-2006 ESL students were at the lowest two levels of literacy, though the actual number of ESL students in those levels was likely higher given that many programs do not assess every student (Center for Student Success, 2009, p. 38-39).

### ***Challenges and Issues for ESL Students in Nursing Programs***

The literature documents the consensus around a number of challenges and issues facing adult ESL programs and students. These include low funding and limited service availability; validity and use of assessments; teacher preparation and support; limited connections and articulations with other ABE, workforce, or postsecondary academic programs; and the mismatch between the goals of the students and the programs’ definitions of success.

Students with limited English skills face a particularly difficult task in becoming proficient enough for employment in the healthcare field (the industry sector for which participants in *CareerAdvance* have been training). The Oklahoma Board of Nursing (2003) identified ESL status as a factor associated with lower scores on the NCLEX-RN licensing exam. In a study of English language learners in nursing programs, Mulready-Shick (2009) found that, “limited English language proficiency has been associated with higher attrition, lower nursing program completion rates, and lower scores on the national nursing licensure exam, thus impacting graduation and career attainment” (p. 40). Because nursing and other allied health professionals are involved in communications with individuals across a gamut of literacy levels and formats while interacting with doctors, nursing assistants, patients and their families, English language learners are likely to face additional challenges in clinical assignments.

Mulready-Shick also found that many nursing faculty do not recognize or know how to address the challenges faced by English-language learners. Often the students and instructors come from different cultural backgrounds and lack understanding about educational structures, terminology, and expectations that can ultimately limit student progress. For example, many nursing courses are traditional, lecture-based classes that provide few opportunities for questions, review, or reinforcement. Nursing programs also rely heavily on standardized tests which have recognized barriers for non-native English speakers and other disadvantaged populations. The lack of multi-modal teaching and assessment strategies negatively affects students’ engagement in the learning process, limiting their ability to demonstrate mastery and build the self-confidence they need to persist in academic studies.

## **NOTED ESL/ESOL PROGRAMS**

### ***ABE Career Connections Montgomery College, Maryland***

The United States Department of Education’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) sponsored a three-year project in 2006 to connect ABE and support services with career training needed in the local economy. The ABE Career Connections demonstration was carried out in five community colleges. Montgomery College in Maryland, one of the grantees, developed three contextualized English for Speakers of Other Languages classes: *ESOL for Healthcare*, *ESOL for Building Trades*, and *ESOL for Customer Service Training*. In addition to building English language skills, students also

learn vocabulary appropriate for the chosen field and practice using it in a variety of related contexts. The college also offers general ESOL and citizenship preparation courses.

Montgomery College's vocational courses in construction trades and healthcare help prepare advanced ESL students for the transition to noncredit workforce training and employment in the targeted industry. Noncredit courses allow students to 1) receive content instruction in the industry area, 2) proceed more quickly to entry-level employment and 3) prepare for further education and career advancement. Instruction covers four areas: content knowledge; English language skills; career awareness; and American workplace behaviors (OVAE, 2009).

***English for Academic Purposes  
College of Lake County, Illinois***

The College of Lake County offers multiple ESL program tracks. The college's noncredit *English for Academic Purposes* is a high intensity program for intermediate and advanced ESL students that has demonstrated success in transitioning students into postsecondary education and training programs. The college also offers a transition course specifically for ESL students interested in working as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). Courses are contextualized so that students can build their knowledge of medical vocabulary, develop measurement and conversion skills, and prepare to enter the college's CNA program. "It also has a noncredit ESL support course, offered concurrently with a content CNA course that provides instruction in vocabulary building, study/test-taking skills, and listening and speaking skills" (Center for Student Success, 2009, p. 35).

***Transition Program  
Rio Salado College, Maricopa Community College District, Arizona***

The *Transition Program* at Rio Salado College in the Maricopa Community College District (Tempe, AZ), which began in 1998 with funding from the state legislature, has been highlighted by researchers for its innovations. The program targets advanced ESOL students, offering information about college programs, available support services, facts about the experiences of nontraditional students on campus, and timelines. The program requires participants to score at or above the 8th grade level on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), and includes "a systematic assessment of students' readiness for college classes and English language skills, in particular writing and

grammar” (Lombardo, 2004, p. 4). Transition courses include preparation for the college’s English language placement test and connections with intensive writing workshops offered by the college several times throughout the year. “Anecdotal evidence and feedback suggest that the program is placing better prepared students into college classes” (Lombardo, 2004, p. 6) and there was a dramatic decline in the number of ESOL transition students dropping/withdrawing from classes, from more than thirty percent to less than five percent.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION AND COLLEGE READINESS**

Developmental education is intended for students who already possess a GED or high school diploma, but lack the skills necessary to be successful in college-level classes. Developmental education is usually offered at community colleges, or as a collaboration between a public school district and a community college. There is a great need nationally for developmental education. Nearly two-thirds of all community college students nationwide are referred to developmental education, and more than half of all community college students take at least one developmental course during their enrollment (Bailey et al., 2010, p. 267). Only 33 to 46 percent of students referred to developmental education complete the required developmental courses (Bailey et al., 2010, p. 260). Developmental education is crucial to improving progression and graduation rates for students in 2-year and 4-year colleges. In 2007, the graduation rate (within 6 years) for four-year public institutions in Oklahoma was 47%. For two-year colleges in Oklahoma, the graduation rate (within 3 years) was just 18% (Marks and Diaz, 2009, p. 106-107).

### **CHALLENGES TO DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION**

Many students who possess a high school diploma or GED may be substantially unprepared for the rigors of college coursework. Although the purpose of developmental education is to prepare students to succeed in college-level classes, many students (approximately 80 percent of math students and 43 percent of reading students) fail to obtain college-credits for those courses in relevant subject areas (Bailey et al., 2010, p. 256). Students who have been out of high school for several years may have forgotten important concepts, especially in math and science. Their high school graduation requirements may not have stipulated that they take any college-preparatory subjects, and their study skills may be lacking. Additionally, there is a stigma associated with being referred to developmental education. Students, the majority of whom are high-school graduates, are surprised and discouraged to realize they cannot begin for-credit college coursework as expected (Bailey et al., 2010, p. 257). Some students prefer to drop out or skip directly to the college-level course against the advice of their admissions counselor, rather than enroll in developmental education classes. Many students referred to developmental education “fail to complete a college course because they never even enroll in their first remedial course” (Bailey et al., 2010, p. 260).

In the *Breaking Through: Better Together* report, the community colleges profiled have “found it necessary to address the stigma of adult education” for their students in developmental education, in order to improve retention rates (2008, p.6). Students with very low skill levels who enroll in developmental education courses may languish for several semesters and make little progress. Bailey et al. found that while students are enrolled in developmental education, they “accumulate debt, spend time and money, and bear the opportunity cost for lost earnings. In some states, they deplete their eligibility for financial aid” (2010, p. 257). Finally, while developmental education courses are the gateway to college-level courses, limited class availability (due to high demand, scheduling conflicts, and/or other factors) may cause a student to wait until a space opens before pursuing their education. The waiting period reduces the likelihood that a student will ever enroll.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES**

### ***Educational Enrichment Services Program Jefferson Community and Technical College and Jefferson County Public Schools Adult & Continuing Education, Jefferson County, Kentucky***

This joint program in Kentucky between the Jefferson Community and Technical College (JCTC) and the Jefferson County school district’s Adult and Continuing Education Department aligns adult basic education and developmental education to improve retention and completion outcomes for low-level students. The *Educational Enrichment Services* (EES) program combines cohort-based classroom learning with individualized instruction via computer lab. Students can be dually enrolled in developmental education courses and for-credit courses at JCTC, which allows them to make incremental progress towards their degree, while obtaining the assistance they need.

Students are assigned to adult basic education and developmental education courses based on their COMPASS® scores. To improve the alignment between adult and developmental education, the faculty co-teach several developmental classes. The faculty also shares access to students’ TABE assessments to improve their understanding of learning needs. Classes are integrated into the collegiate community to reduce the stigma associated with developmental education. “Significant efforts are made to integrate the EES classes into the student’s overall college experience – through scheduling, design and curricula, and other college perks” (Mwase, 2008, p.

13). For students who have completed their GED, JCTC offers a “free, one-credit college and career exploration course, General Education 100” (Mwase, 2008, p. 14). The course connects students with the resources they need to be successful at JCTC.

The EES program has had positive results. “Over 80 percent of 1,000 lower-skilled adult learners in the program skipped one or more developmental courses, and over 70 percent of these students were retained” (Mwase, 2008, p. 14-15). Of the 262 original EES students, approximately 37% were still enrolled at JCTC three years later, as compared to just 11.25% of all first time students at JCTC (Newberry and Scoskie, n.d., p. 23). Participants in the program have earned 66 credentials to date: 8 associate’s degrees, 9 diplomas, and 49 certificates (Scoskie and Griffith, n.d., p. 23).

### ***Integrated Bridge to Licensed Practical Nursing Program LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York, NYC***

Another adult education initiative from La Guardia Community College, City University of New York is the *Integrated Bridge to Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN)* program. Unlike the EES program described above which, focuses on aligning adult basic and developmental education with college-level classes, this program provides contextualized developmental education for students in its Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program. The bridge program, which began as a pilot funded by New York City Department of Small Business Services in 2007, is designed for non-traditional students with economic and educational challenges. It is modeled after the I-BEST program from Washington State (*Integrated Bridge*, 2010).

The cohort-based LPN preparatory program is an 8-week pre-clinical program that includes “developmental content courses, an academic support class, and mandatory study halls.” The developmental content courses are taught by the Allied Health faculty at La Guardia Community College, and meet nine hours per week. The courses include: English Composition, Fundamentals of Human Biology I and II, General Psychology, and Mathematics of Medical Dosage (*LPN Bridge*, n.d., p. 1). The course material is contextualized to the medical profession.

In addition to the content courses, the students also attend an eight-hour-per-week academic support class to review and reinforce the material learned in the content course. This class is taught by an adult education instructor who collaborates with the Allied Health faculty to help ensure seamless presentation of the material. The adult education instructor attends the content courses to observe the students and develop



appropriate support curriculum. The students are also required to participate in a six-hour-per-week study hall on campus. The support for students in the program, including an educational case manager, continues into the clinical phase of the LPN program with weekly academic development and career exploration meetings (*Integrated Bridge*, 2010, p. 1-2). Preliminary results indicate that students who participate in the pre-clinical program have a 90-95% persistence in subsequent gateway LPN courses (Dalsimer, 2010).

***Capital IDEA  
Austin, Texas***

Capital IDEA, a nationally-recognized workforce intermediary, in conjunction with Austin Community College (ACC), runs a developmental education program called the College Prep Academy™. The academy was developed for Capital IDEA participants who lack the skills to enroll in for-credit courses at ACC. The 300-hour program is 12-weeks long and meets from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students are enrolled in Level 1 or Level 2 classes, depending on their performance on the TABE (Capital IDEA, 2010, p. 1-2). The academy covers basic math, reading, and writing skills; approximately 50% of the class time is spent on math. The remaining time is devoted to reading, writing, and a life skills and career class. Students are prepared to take the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) test, which evaluates skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Applicants to colleges in Texas must pass all components of the THEA test (or have sufficient scores on an ACT or SAT exam) to enroll in classes. Sixty-eight percent of academy participants pass the THEA on the first attempt (Capital IDEA, n.d.).

## BEST PRACTICES FOR ADULT EDUCATION

A 2009 literature review for California’s community college practitioners by the Center for Student Success identified seventeen promising practices across organizational, administrative, and instructional areas; program components; and staff development to support adult students transitioning into further education and training. A summary of these findings is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education<sup>1</sup>**

<p><b>Organizational and Administrative Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving transition of students from adult education to postsecondary education is an institutional priority for community college and adult education programs.</li> <li>• Faculty and staff of transition programs are resourceful, experienced, and committed to serving adult students.</li> <li>• Strong collaborative partnerships exist among college programs, adult education programs, business/industry, and community-based organizations.</li> <li>• Institutions have innovative and flexible admissions and enrollment policies that facilitate transitions.</li> <li>• To evaluate the effectiveness of courses and programs, student data systems track transitions and outcomes across programs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Component Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs inform adult education students about the opportunities in and benefits of higher education.</li> <li>• Programs provide adult education students with assistance in meeting the financial demands of college.</li> <li>• Personalized support, such as peer mentoring, tutoring, or case management, is provided before, during, and after transitioning.</li> <li>• Programs provide effective matriculation services, including assessment that is aligned between adult education and postsecondary programs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff Development Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutions provide staff development opportunities to adult education faculty.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Instructional Practices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult education and postsecondary curriculum are aligned, sequential, and progressive to provide a seamless pathway for transition students</li> <li>• Instruction is contextualized so that transition students see the connection between basic skills education and academic or vocational content</li> <li>• Programs include career planning as part of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Curriculum and scheduling are designed to be flexible, chunked, and modularized with multiple entry and exit points.</li> <li>• Sufficient language instruction is provided for English-as-a-second-language learners.</li> <li>• Instruction and curriculum are designed and delivered in a way that integrates a variety of instructional methodologies.</li> <li>• Institutions provide accelerated courses/programs that give students the opportunity to quickly meet their goals.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education: A Review of the Literature with Implications for California Community College Practitioners*. Center for Student Success of the Research and Planning Group of the California Community Colleges. January 2009. Pages 5-6.

Beyond that summary, research in the field has also documented specific program- and instruction-related best practices that may be of particular relevance to Tulsa. These are detailed further below.

### **BEST PROGRAM-RELATED PRACTICES**

Researchers have identified a range of program practices associated with improved adult education outcomes. Among these, ABE and developmental programs that are contextualized with either an academic or workforce focus are noted as particularly effective. Strong adult education programs also provide more intensive, cohort-based classes than are traditionally found. Finally, effective programs provide professional development opportunities for instructors and ensure all instructors are aware of the program's strategic vision, sequence of classes, student performance goals, and resources for student and staff support.

#### ***Best Practice: ABE Program Delivered within the Context of Vocational or Academic Sequence***

Contextualized instruction that connects ABE content with students' academic or vocational goals is consistently noted as a best practice in the research literature. The *Reach Higher, AMERICA* report recommends the development of dual-credit programs that "shorten the time needed to earn a credential, achieve multiple learning outcomes, and increase the number of earned credentials, certificates, and degrees" (NCAL, 2008, p. 20). Most of the programs profiled in this paper provide contextualized education, making a direct connection between the ABE materials and the job for which the student is training. A study conducted by Columbia University's Community College Research Center utilized contextualized curriculum for a developmental reading course. The students using the contextualized curriculum showed statistically significant improvement in several reading comprehension measures, while the students taught with the standard (non-contextualized) curriculum had no significant results (Perin and Hare, 2010).

Between 2004 and 2008, CAAL published a series of research reports on effective ESL programs in community colleges. CAAL's research noted that vocational ESL programs appeared to be an effective strategy for helping students transition to other education and training or into the workforce. "Students can enter and succeed in VESL [Vocational ESL] classes at a lower level of English proficiency than is required for entry into credit ESL or academic programs" (Chisman, 2008, p. 7). Chisman concludes that

the move toward VESL and related workforce development services is one that has not been a traditional focus for many community colleges. VESL requires new program components, and funding, that might be delivered by other college departments or through partnerships with workforce development services providers or community-based organizations.

The CAAL findings on effective bridge programs, despite the specific focus on English language learners, are likely to be relevant to all adult education students. For those students with lower levels of literacy (reading at a 6th grade level or lower) and/or English proficiency, a bridge program might connect a basic/beginning literacy program with a GED program. For those with higher levels of literacy (reading at a 7th grade level or higher), a bridge program might connect GED students with a community college workforce or academic program.

Researchers with the New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC) identified prevalent pathway programs for nontraditional adult learners who do not have college-ready academic skills, including English language proficiency. Across 25 college transitions programs in the northeast U.S., there were five common program models: developmental/remedial courses; developmental courses combined with college survival skills courses; learning communities/cohorts; dual enrollment; and college transition/bridge initiatives (Spohn and Kallenbach, 2004). A summary table comparing key features of each of these models is included in Appendix C.

Finally, a survey of 515 bridge programs by Workforce Strategy Center presents a profile of the field. The survey revealed a wide variety of programs, each involving a diverse set of funders, providers, and stakeholders. The average bridge program responding to the survey was targeted at allied health, lasted approximately 20 weeks, and served a cohort of 10-19 students—most of whom had less than 10<sup>th</sup> grade skill levels. Programs reported promising outcomes, with participants earning college credit in 39% of programs and participants going on to additional education or training within six months at 67% of programs (Alssid et al., 2010, p. ii). The researchers conclude that “no community of practice exists to advance the field” (p. 13) and recommend additional research into participant outcomes, project innovation, scale and efficiency improvements, and other issues through a national demonstration. Given that 90% of surveyed programs wanted to know more about networking opportunities, there is clearly an interest in building knowledge in the field.

### ***Best Practice: Professional Development for ABE Instructors***

Successful adult basic education programs provide instructors with professional development opportunities, as well as opportunities for collaboration among faculty from adult education programs and college-level programs. Although adult education teachers are certified, “few states require that adult education teachers show mastery of the specialized knowledge and skills needed to teach adults” (NCAL, 2008, p. 13). The *Reach Higher, AMERICA* report recommends that states invest in the professional development, and elevate the quality and status of adult educators (p. 20).

The programs highlighted in earlier chapters each have a professional development component for their instructors. Opportunities for collaboration encourage instructors to set expectations for student performance at each level, identify areas for improvement, and maintain quality connections across program components. Collaboration can include team-teaching or parallel teaching of courses by community college faculty and adult educators. For example, a faculty member could teach a math course, and an adult educator could teach the math review/reinforcement class to further explain and clarify concepts covered in the content course.

Another successful example of team teaching can be found in the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training, or I-BEST, structure. “In the I-BEST model, a basic skills instructor and an occupational instructor team teach occupational courses with integrated basic skills content, and students receive college-level credit for the occupational coursework” (Zeidenberg et al., 2009, p. 1). The I-BEST model is regarded as an excellent example of advancing basic education and skills in adult learners.

### ***Best Practice: High Program Intensity and Other Characteristics***

Chisman (2008) summarized CAAL’s research findings, identifying key strategies to support ESL student persistence and success. Successful students participated in programs in which students were in class more often, typically 12-20 hours per week rather than the traditional 3-6 hours per week offered by many ESL programs. Other successful practices identified in effective ESL programs include providing guidance and counseling services to help students shape future goals and identify additional education and training opportunities, and helping students address non-academic issues that often derail adult learners (e.g., transportation, childcare, work schedules). These findings are likely to be applicable to the broader population of adult basic education students.

One promising practice for English language learners is a needs analysis, as suggested by Wrigley et al (2003). “Participants are well-served by programs that conduct a needs analysis with students to determine past experiences, present circumstances, and future goals – and then link this information with a job audit that outlines the language and literacy requirements of a particular job” ( p. 23), perhaps along a career pathway.

### ***Best Instruction-related Practices for Adult Education***

While promising instructional practices for adult basic education are evident in the literature, the research focus on these practices is much smaller than on program-related practices. An effective practice that was noted across a number of studies involves using purposeful assessments to guide instruction and measure outcomes. The *Reach Higher, AMERICA* report indicated that “there is little if any alignment between instructional content and assessments used in the adult education programs and between assessments and postsecondary standards required for enrollment and placement in credit-bearing courses” (NCAL, 2008, p. 12). A 2003 study by the National Council for ESL Literacy Education identified several key strategies related to assessments, such as assessing students at multiple points and with multiple types of assessments, knowing the purpose of the assessment in order to link it to learning goals, and using assessment results for planning and instruction.

The issue of establishing learning goals is particularly important with adult learners. Teachers and programs should be careful to not assume that students share their view on logical goals and measures of success. As noted earlier, many adult students do not consider the GED to be a necessary step in their education. In one promising practice, instructors solicit student input on class and individual goals, and then periodically check lesson plans and student progress against that list. This practice also provides an opportunity for teachers to explicitly connect instructional content with students’ daily life, immediate goals, and future academic/vocational opportunities.

Another promising practice is for instructors to thoughtfully connect technology-based instruction with class lectures, activities, and other assignments. The National Commission on Adult Literacy recommends using technology to create new models for teaching and learning (NCAL, 2008, p. 24). Students in adult basic education may not have a computer at home, and many have little or no experience with using computers in other settings. Specific instruction in basic computing skills may be necessary before an instructor can use technology to extend lessons and reinforce concepts.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

While the challenges related to adult education are significant, a review of recent research suggests that there are promising practices and opportunities to improve both the adult education system and student outcomes. The impetus for change, however, is unclear. Funding for adult education programs and community colleges is not tied to performance, and community dialogue often focuses almost exclusively on K-12 education and traditional-age college students rather than adult learners. There are gaps in the research literature that, if filled, might provide the foundation for systems change. Beyond that, there are specific recommendations for Tulsa that might improve outcomes in the *CareerAdvance* project and, potentially, the broader community.

### GAPS IN THE RESEARCH LITERATURE

More research is needed in the field of adult education for the system to meet the high demand for services and prepare students to be successful in future academic and vocational pursuits. A compelling body of research highlighting the potential for adult education to make a significant impact on families, communities, and economic development opportunities, would allow stakeholders to make the case for additional funding and resources. Among the gaps noted are:

- **Large-scale demonstration studies.** While innovative and notable programs have been highlighted in community colleges and adult learning centers around the country, there has been little effort to replicate and test innovative models through large-scale demonstration studies tied to rigorous evaluations. These demonstration projects are especially valuable in testing programs under different conditions and communities, in order to identify barriers and the essential components to success.
- **Teacher training and professional development.** The adult education classroom has been referenced as “the new one-room schoolhouse.” Given this environment, more research is needed on teacher preparation and ongoing professional development that will improve classroom instruction and student outcomes. More research is also needed on how to improve communication and connections between adult education instructors and community college faculty.

- **Engaging Employers** – While the research to date has highlighted the promise of contextualized instruction, there was little discussion of employer/industry involvement in shaping curricula delivered outside of the workplace. A better understanding of the challenges employers face with un- and under-skilled workers would allow adult education and community college developmental programs to develop interventions to address those issues and prepare students for the workforce.
- **Collaboration and Coordination** – Research is needed to identify critical partners in successful adult education systems. Adult education providers often work outside traditional postsecondary settings, missing opportunities to connect themselves and their students with resources and current practices. Research on partnership development, communication strategies, system alignment, and other collaborative practices would support students transitioning from one level to the next.
- **Funding for innovation and systems change** – More information is needed on how innovative programs are financed. Lack of funding is a common barrier to testing new ideas, bringing good ideas to scale, and infusing change throughout a system. Research on how to more efficiently use the scarce resources dedicated to adult learners would help policymakers and other stakeholders to identify priorities for moving forward.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION AND CONSIDERATION IN TULSA**

The data on educational attainment and adult education/postsecondary outcomes in Oklahoma clearly underscore the need for systems change. Using the *CareerAdvance* project as a pilot/demonstration effort, Tulsa partners have an opportunity to test new education- and service-delivery strategies to move the adult education system in a new direction. This will require, however, that the partners define collective and organization-specific goals, and develop a common understanding of the project’s purpose, target population, and mutual expectations. Specific recommendations suggested by the research review include:

- **Improving coordination between adult education providers, community colleges, and community-based organizations.** As the *CareerAdvance* program matures and grows, further coordination will be required to address the education needs of participants. Each partner must



feel it has a stake in student outcomes and understand the significance of its role in the collective process. To maintain continuity in the program, open, frequent, multi-directional communication with staff at all levels within and across partner organizations is essential.

- **Implementing a team-teaching environment.** Adult learners, particularly those with poor academic histories, need additional supports to succeed in postsecondary workforce and academic programs. Team-teaching, where an adult education instructor and community college faculty coordinate and reinforce key concepts, provides students with opportunities to review material, ask questions, and hone skills. For *CareerAdvance*, team-teaching could be implemented between GED and developmental courses, between GED and vocational courses, between developmental and vocational courses, and/or between developmental and academic courses.
- **Contextualizing instruction.** GED, ESL, and developmental courses that are contextualized to a career path have been shown to improve student outcomes by increasing the relevance of the material to students' lives. In Tulsa, more could be done to ensure that the materials and examples used in adult education and developmental courses are truly contextualized to the healthcare field, reinforcing the vocabulary and key knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the healthcare industry.
- **Developing wrap-around support services.** While the *CareerAdvance* participants are able to tap into services such as free or low-cost childcare and transportation assistance, the literature identified additional support services that could have a significant effect on participant retention and success. Educational advising, career counseling, tutoring, computer access, after-hours childcare, and structured study halls could all play an important role in keeping participants engaged through graduation.

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## APPENDIX A. MEMO ON GED AND ESL SERVICES IN TULSA

**March 8, 2010**

**To: Monica Barczak**

**From: Micah Kordsmeier**

**Subject: GED and ESL Services in Tulsa**

### ***Question Presented***

What adult education (GED and ESL) services are currently available in Tulsa and how do they currently operate?

### ***Short Answer***

- Union Public Schools, Tulsa Public Schools, and YWCA operate the primary providers of GED and ESL services in Tulsa. They are most heavily concentrated in East Tulsa (the area east of Memorial), with far fewer programs operating in other parts of the area. Classes are generally available throughout the week in the mornings and evenings, with fewer afternoon classes (a result of reduced demand).
- All programs operate classes that are comprised of a mixture of group lessons (15-30 minutes) and individual work (the balance of time).
- Teachers look for common themes, which may be career-oriented but are more often community and family-oriented.
- The programs generally avoid textbooks but will use content from text and workbooks when appropriate.
- The programs believe CAP could add value to current programming in the areas of child care, transportation assistance, incentives, books and supplies, and attendance tracking and follow up.

### **Adult Learning Centers**

The state Department of Education has created Adult Learning Center Districts that cover the entire state in order to provide federal- and state-funded adult basic education, including GED and ESL services. These districts do not coincide with independent school district boundaries. The city of Tulsa is covered by four different districts – Tulsa Public Schools (north and midtown Tulsa, west of Memorial), Union Public Schools (east of Memorial and extending into three other counties), Jenks Public Schools (southwest Tulsa), and Drumright Public Schools (some parts of West Tulsa and Sand Springs). The YWCA (along with UPS and TPS) also operates ESL programs in Tulsa using the same grant funding.

Adult Learning Centers are the primary providers of adult basic education in the state, although other organizations may provide similar services. Tulsa Community College, Tulsa Dream Center, and Neighbors Along the Line, for example, all provide GED services. CAP (at Brightwater) and Family & Children's Services (at CAP ECP sites) have delivered GED services in the past. Other ESL providers include Tulsa Technology Center (serves employers only), TCC, Catholic Charities, and some places of worship.

### ***Participation, Capacity & Utilization***

Anyone may participate in any program offered in an Adult Learning Center, regardless of the place of residence (i.e. one is not required to attend the ALC in the district in which they live). Youth under age 18 enrolling in GED classes must be referred by truancy officers or obtain parent permission.

Union, TPS, and the YWCA each report that their capacity is unlimited – they will and do serve every person that enrolls in their programs, they do not have waiting lists, and they will add classrooms in response to demand. None were willing to report a maximum total capacity, even when pressed.

- Union serves approximately 2000 students per year.
- TPS serves approximately 1500 students per year. Roughly 600 of these will attend regularly and for an extended period of time.
- YWCA serves approximately 900 students per year.

All adult education programs see problems with retention and attendance. 50 percent retention is not uncommon. YWCA does not currently keep retention data, although it is focusing now on measuring this. The program estimates retention of 50% after 6 months. TPS retains between 40 and 50 percent of enrolled students during the course of a year.

TPS recommends several years of consistency to build a program with good participation and retention. This means a new site should maintain consistent hours for at least two years.

### ***Instruction***

All state-funded adult education programs, including those offered by Union, TPS, and YWCA, are taught by state-certified K-12 teachers. The programs generally support this, although it causes problems with ESL programs, since language ability is more important than the skills used as a K-12 teacher. Substitutes are not required to be certified.

GED has 6 “levels of instruction.” A student begins at a level based on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and then takes a survey test to assess progress through these levels. ALC’s are reimbursed by the state partially upon a student’s enrollment and then receive full reimbursement once a student completes 60 hours and progresses at least one level in one area (e.g. math).

Union and TPS avoid textbooks and instead use individualized worksheets. They report that “some” programs use books, but it is unknown who does so. YWCA uses a variety of textbooks and workbooks depending on the class. All programs use some mix of group and individual work, with a daily group lesson followed by time to work individually. ESL programs tend to have more group work, since conversation is an important component of instruction. Union and YWCA both have access to online, computer-based resources, but self-directed and blended coursework are not major components of their programming. (TCC and Neighbors Along the Line utilize these to a greater extent.)



### ***Scheduling***

Union and TPS both report that afternoon classes are in low demand and see poor attendance. Mornings and evenings are the most popular. Economic conditions have increased demand for morning classes, since many unemployed persons are seeking adult education services.

Programs generally offer fewer classes during summer months. Union has no classes in June and July, TPS has reduced classes in July and August, and the YWCA reduces classes throughout the summer.

### ***Incentives***

No programs have grant-funded resources to provide incentives. Union operates a GED class for Workforce Oklahoma (at the One Stop Center) which does provide small incentives (e.g. food coupons and gift certificates) after completing a level of instruction. YWCA would like to offer academic-based incentives for performance and retention, such as providing a student their own textbook or a dictionary.

### ***Career Orientation***

Union and TPS host guest speakers intermittently from area training providers such as TCC and TTC. All three programs include goal-setting exercises, which may or may not be career and education-oriented. YWCA tends to refer students interested in higher education to Union for ESL services, since UPS offers a seamless transition from ESL to GED once a student is ready. YWCA and Union both offer custom content for contracted classes, and can utilize occupational curriculum in these classes. YWCA has ESL workbooks for healthcare, construction, food service, and tourism/hospitality. Union custom-develops its content based on the needs of the contractee.

### ***Value Added by CAP***

Tulsa Public Schools reported finding CAP's GED services largely duplicative and unnecessary. When asked what CAP could provide to add value to adult education instead of duplicating, TPS listed child care and transportation (e.g. bus passes) as the greatest unmet needs in their classes. TPS offers child care only at its Newcomer classes and only for children ages 3 to 5. YWCA does not offer child care. Union offers child care at all Green Country Event Center classes.

Union, TPS, and YWCA all have an interest in returning to "family literacy" programs, which have been suspended due to loss of grant funding. These programs place parents in adult education classes while their children attend school during 4 days per week, and on the fifth day the parent and child attend class together.

TPS and YWCA both mentioned that CAP could assist with attendance tracking and follow up to improve retention. Neither have the capacity to closely monitor a student's attendance and then follow up with absent students. YWCA mentioned several benefits CAP could add to its ESL programming:

- Providing refreshments and snacks during breaks, which they believe helps students stay engaged the whole length of the class
- Access to computers for blended classes with online components

- Incentives for regular attendees, such as a personal copy of the textbook or a dictionary

Finally, TPS and YWCA both mentioned wanting to operate adult education classes at CAP sites that are open to the community (i.e. ALC grant-funded) and both question why classes should be exclusive to ECP-enrolled families. YWCA is interested in operating at Skelly; TPS is interested in Skelly and McClure.

	<b>Union</b>	<b>TPS</b>	<b>YWCA</b>
<b>Utilization</b>	2000/year	1500/year	900/year
<b>Capacity</b>	No waiting	No waiting	No waiting
<b>Retention</b>		40-50%	~50%
<b>Child Care</b>	Yes	Newcomer only	No
<b>Summer</b>	No	Reduced	Reduced
<b>Focus</b>	Depends on class interests	Careers and further education	Community and family
<b>Textbooks</b>	No	No	Sometimes
<b>Computer-based</b>	Available but not utilized	Not used	Available at YWCA and Martin
<b>GED Testing</b>	1/month, 10 months	3-4 /month, 12 months	N/A

## **Location Profiles**

### ***Union Public Schools***

Union operates an adult learning center whose catchment area covers Tulsa County east of Memorial as well as three other counties. Most of its adult education programs are taught within this area, however it can operate outside the district (e.g. in Tulsa Public School’s catchment area) when requested by a third-party. Union is also the exclusive provider of adult education services for TANF recipients in Tulsa County.

### **Location**

Most Union classes are held at the Green Country Event Center, near 31<sup>st</sup> St & Garnett. Classes are also available in Broken Arrow, Owasso, Claremore, and further outlying areas. They are generally available Monday through Thursday during mornings or evenings. Green Country classes offer child care. See a map of all locations [here](#).<sup>2</sup>

To participate in Union’s ALC, a student enrolls with a simple application form, completes the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), sets personal goals and objectives, and begins attending classes. Although a student “enrolls” into one particular class, they can attend any of the classes.

### **Instruction - GED**

- Each class session has a group learning component as well as individualized work.
  - Group lesson is generally 15 to 30 minutes but goes longer if students are particularly engaged and interested in the topic, or if it takes longer to cover
  - Afterward, branch off into individual work

<sup>2</sup>

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105726852836499033035.0004814fcee06f6763f90&z=11>

- Although all teachers can teach all subject areas, certain classrooms have teachers whose specialty is math while others are stronger in language. Students can move between these rooms as needed.
- Curriculum is customized to each student's needs
- Teachers identify one common area of interest or concern for the whole class, and deliver group lessons based on this common theme
  - Can be an academic need, workplace related, household and family related (finances, parenting), civics and current events, or simply a common interest
- Philosophically opposed to textbooks – “students failed the traditional K-12 system for a reason, and putting a big book in them is just more of the same”
- Assess learning styles in the classroom and adjust approach accordingly

### **Retention**

In both its GED and ESL classes, Union promotes community and togetherness as the key to its retention strategy. In addition to the “common interest” used by teachers in the classroom, ESL classes serve coffee before class in order to provide opportunity for social interaction and informal conversation.

Union also operates an ESL program under the same grant funding and guidelines from the Department of Education. Utilization is very high but there is no unmet need (no waiting lists or persons turned away).

### **Instruction – ESL**

- Enrollment
- Assessment – BEST Plus
- Three levels – low, medium, high
- Classes consist largely of conversation and worksheets that practice life skills (e.g. home finances, parenting)
- Does not use a textbook

### ***Tulsa Public Schools***

TPS operates its Adult Learning Center primarily in midtown and North Tulsa (in general, all areas west of Memorial except Southwestern and far West Tulsa). Its program director reports a preference for consistency in locations and times, and so does not frequently add classes in new locations or in response to requests. Instead, Union typically fills these special requests.

### **Location**

TPS sites are selected based on where there is unmet need and where there is space available at no cost. They have no funding to rent space. GED and ESL classes are concentrated in the 31<sup>st</sup> & Memorial area, with other classes available in North Tulsa (at the adult learning center and a North Sheridan location), Kendall-Whittier, West Tulsa, and at Memorial High School (near 61<sup>st</sup> & Yale). See a map of all locations [here](http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105726852836499033035.0004814fcee06f6763f90&z=11).<sup>3</sup>

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<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105726852836499033035.0004814fcee06f6763f90&z=11>

There is unmet need in the area near McClure Elementary, though TPS has not run an adult program there in several years. The elementary school was not a suitable partner and utilization did not meet expectations.

Students may enroll on Tuesday and Thursday mornings at the ALC (48<sup>th</sup> St N and N Lewis) or at a site location during the first week of each month. At that time, the student will take the TABE (for GED) or BEST Plus (ESL) and then begin classes.

### **Instruction**

- Emphasis on classroom teaching, especially in basic math and essay writing
- Prefers not to use computer-based lessons
- Generally, the first half hour is individual work while students settle in, followed by a group lesson, and then concluding with more individual work
- No textbooks – use packets and folders of materials individualized for the students' needs

### **Retention**

Classrooms average roughly 22 students per month, with a limit of 40/month. These include one-time attendees. In any given class, 7 to 10 comprise the regular, core group of committed students. This core group maintains discipline in the classroom, as they are serious and do not tolerate disruption and distractions. Unserious students quickly drop out as a result and TPS rarely must discipline or expel a student. (Students sign a one page code of conduct as well.)

TPS is the state's largest GED testing center and offers 3 to 4 tests each month during all 12 months of the year.

### ***YWCA***

YWCA operates ESL programs in Tulsa County through the same federal and state funding as Union and TPS Adult Learning Centers. Classes are conducted at four levels of English ability – introduction (I), beginning (II), intermediate (III), and advanced (IV). Someone completing the advanced level should be capable of attending GED classes and nearing ability to pass the TOEFL examination required for college entrance.

### **Locations**

Classes are held at five locations, three in East Tulsa, one on North Sheridan, and one in the Kendall-Whittier neighborhood. Most classes are held in the evening, although classes are held every day at Martin Regional Library in the mornings. See a map of all locations [here](#).<sup>4</sup>

Students can enroll once a month by attending an orientation, completing the BEST Plus placement assessment, and getting assigned to a class. 75 to 100 students attend orientations each month.

### **Instruction**

- Most ESL classes focus on life skills and household literacy
- Uses a variety of occupational ESL curricula for specialized classes

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<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=105726852836499033035.0004814fcee06f6763f90&z=11>

- Curriculum called Workplace Plus along with workbooks specific to an occupation (healthcare, construction, food service, and tourism/hospitality)
- Promotores ESL program uses healthcare curriculum
- Classes are a combination of individual and group work in the following areas:
  - Listening
  - Writing
  - Grammar
  - Conversation
- Some computer-based resources offered at Martin and YWCA Multicultural Center
- Each level is taught in separate classrooms

### **Retention**

YWCA plans to begin tracking retention in the coming months, in response to state Department of Education recommendations. Retention is estimated at 50% over a 6 month period, with some variation depending on the ethnic group. Hispanics, which make up 85-90% of participants, show lower retention compared with other groups because they are already active and engaged in the community (and are thus busier).

Public grant funding cannot be used for incentives, and there is insufficient funding to provide a personal textbook and workbook to each student that enrolls in the class. Students are asked to purchase their own workbook (\$13) but if they cannot do so the teacher will make copies of the materials for them. YWCA would like to provide regular attendees their own textbook or a dictionary as an incentive, but cannot currently do so.

The focus of YWCA ESL programs is helping a person become functional in their community and with their children. Those with more educational or career-oriented objectives are typically referred to Union (and occasionally TCC), as there is a more seamless transition at Union from ESL to GED and further education.



## APPENDIX B. PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE FOR ACADEMICALLY UNDER-PREPARED STUDENTS<sup>5</sup>

	Developmental/ Remedial Courses	Developmental Courses and College Survival Skills	Learning Communities/ Cohort Model	Dual Enrollment	College Transition	Other
<b>Description</b>	<p>Traditional and most prevalent method</p> <p>Used by community colleges</p> <p>For students assessed as under-prepared to enter into college level courses</p> <p>Courses consist of academic reading, writing, math, and several levels of English for non-native speakers</p> <p>Specific entrance requirements may vary</p> <p>Begin at pre-GED skill level in both math and reading</p> <p>Institutions vary as to what they consider college level reading, writing, and math</p>	<p>Used by community colleges</p> <p>For students assessed as under-prepared to enter into college level courses</p> <p>Courses include academic reading, writing, math, and several levels of English for non-native speakers</p> <p>College Survival Skills cover note taking, test taking, time and stress mgmt, and other skills to manage college</p>	<p>Based on academic readiness</p> <p>Students placed into developmental and college level courses as a cohort</p> <p>Students kept together in classes as much as possible</p> <p>College Survival Skills cover note taking, test taking, time and stress mgmt, and other skills to manage college</p>	<p>Students completing a GED or Adult Diploma Program (ADP)</p> <p>Dually enrolled in developmental courses</p>	<p>Bridges academic gaps between the GED, ADP, ESOL, and college level courses</p> <p>Provides courses in college reading and writing, and in pre-algebra, and basic computer skills</p> <p>Courses aligned with the academic benchmarks of the collaborating college</p> <p>College Survival Skills course</p> <p>Collaborates with one or more colleges</p> <p>Level and intensity of collaboration varies greatly; some have articulation agreements</p>	<p>Help non-traditional adult learners enter into four-year colleges</p> <p>More academically rigorous and cover a broader range of academic topics, often including, for example, biology and chemistry</p>

<sup>5</sup> Source: Spohn, Jessica and Silja Kallenbach. "Pathways to College for Academically Under-prepared Students." *Focus on Basics*, February 2004. Pages 28-29.

	<b>Developmental/ Remedial Courses</b>	<b>Developmental Courses and College Survival Skills</b>	<b>Learning Communities/ Cohort Model</b>	<b>Dual Enrollment</b>	<b>College Transition</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Length</b>	Several years in developmental courses or as little as one college semester before entering college level courses	Several years in developmental courses or as little as one college semester before entering college level courses	Several years in developmental courses or as little as one college semester before entering college level courses	Dependent on a student passing the GED and how many developmental courses student must complete before entering college level courses	14-52 weeks	Two or more years
<b>Location</b>	Community colleges	Community colleges	Community colleges  Adult learning centers	Adult learning centers or community colleges	Adult learning centers or community colleges	Adult learning centers
<b>Credit</b>	No credit towards a degree  Many colleges grant "institutional credit"	No credit towards a degree  Many colleges grant "institutional credit"	Credit towards a degree  "Institutional credit" for developmental courses	"Institutional credit"	No credit towards a degree  Some have arrangements with collaborating college so students can take a course for credit	No credit towards a degree
<b>Students</b>	Student pays for courses or uses federal Pell grants  Student may be eligible for federal grants and loans	Student pays for courses or uses federal Pell grants  Student may be eligible for federal grants and loans	Funding arrangements vary from free to partial tuition to full tuition	Typically free of charge, but some tuition may apply	Typically free of charge	Typically, minimal tuition is charged
<b>Other Support</b>	Many colleges offer additional academic support through Learning Resource Centers, including assisted models, e.g. Plato, Destinations			Support in applying to college and completing financial aid forms  Sometimes additional academic support after entering college	Some Programs offer courses in additional content areas e.g. biology	Support in applying to college and completing financial aid forms  Sometimes additional academic support after entering college