 Adult Education Advisory Council

February 21, 2023

# Call to order

The Adult Education Advisory Council (AEAC) held their Winter Meeting virtually February 21, 2023. [Meeting Materials on SBCTC – AEAC website](https://www.sbctc.edu/about/task-forces-work-groups/aeac/meeting-materials.aspx)

# Attendees

Babette Roberts-Chair, Kristen Morgan-Vice-Chair, Ricardo Chavez, Amy Diehr, Paul Francis, Kelli Graham, Courtney Jacobsen, Diane Klontz, Marina Parr for Eleni Papadakis, Aaron Parrott, Lucretia Robertson, Kenny Ryan, Heidi Summers, and Lin Zhou

SBCTC Staff: Will Durden, MarcusAntonio, Troy Goracke, and Christy Lowder

# Members not in attendance

Anne Goranson, Katrina Klepper, and Mandy Paradise

# Business meeting

Approval of Meeting Minutes – October meeting minutes – Babs asked if there are any changes that anyone would like to make before the motion. No, comments. *MOTION made to approve minutes as submitted, seconded, and approved, no abstentions.*

# New business

## BEdA Update

* Federal Advocacy
  + Reauthorizing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) – this is our chance to influence what might be changed in the act.
    - Testing mandate requires a pre-test and post-test for our students.

During the pandemic, our providers had to rely on other methods of assessment(s), they used local measures, rubrics that are tied to the College and Career Readiness Standards, and career pathway assessments that are tests related to/contextualized to the student’s college and career interests.

Our argument to the gov’t is that we developed some great practices that are ways to place and assess students – our ask is that we’d like to be authorized to use those in lieu of testing.

One way to approach this is to have the reauthorization of WIOA authorize research pilots so they can come to our state and help us design ways to prove or demonstrate that our in-class assessments and our program-based assessments have as much validity as the standardized tests for accountability, transparency, performance as well as accurately assessing and advancing students.

* + Federal Priorities and National Legislative Summit
  + Senate Caucus and Adult Literacy

The **Adult Literacy and Learning Impact Network** (ALL IN) and **Engage** celebrated the launch of a new U.S. Senate Caucus on Adult Literacy. The Adult Literacy and Learning Impact Network is a collective action initiative that has convened thought leaders from the adult literacy field and beyond to carry out the National Action Plan for Adult Literacy. ALL IN’s efforts are driven by its vision: a country where every adult can easily access high quality, effective support to improve their reading, writing, digital and numeracy skills – regardless of who or where they are.

* Marketing Strategy towards Faculty Recruitment (Goal 1)
  + Teacher Shortages in English language classes – especially in areas where we’re receiving folks who are arriving from Afghanistan and Ukraine. The original estimate believed we’d see about 3,000 individuals, what we found is it’s closer to 15,000. We secured nearly 1.8 million from the state legislature to support those classes and that money has all been distributed.
  + Influx of new arrivals
  + Switch from student to teacher recruitment? *We’d like the council to think about what statewide marketing would be like for teacher recruitment. The time is now, so we’d like the council’s thoughts on this.*
    - *Recruit out of college graduates.*
    - *Consideration of how to accept teaching credentials from other countries.*
    - *Maybe CTC staff and faculty make presentations at four-year ESOL programs – go to career fairs.*
    - *CTC could work with their local WFB’s to help recruit.*
    - *Recruit at teaching colleges, like Western WA University.*
* Digital Literacy/Digital Equity Project (Goal 2) *(Digital Equity Act handout)*
  + Infrastructure Bill/Digital Equity Act – has $2.75B dollars to enact this program.
  + State Planning Process – we are in the middle of this process right now and we are trying to get our providers connected to the regional planning partners to define what digital equity will look like in Washington State. We want to be at the table there to represent the needs of our system, and to make sure that there's a strong voice for instruction in digital literacy and instruction in digital skill building. This is key for our students as well as our faculty and staff.

## CBS Update

Heidi Summers shared her update provided to the Instruction Commission:

* Alternatives to standardized testing. Exploring the idea of college individual accreditation in lieu of standardized testing.
* Our BEdA program sees many highly educated students from other countries. Can we look at scaling Highline’s Welcome Back Center across the state?
* Working on a system-level to have trustees waive the first six credits to ease transition from HS+ Completion to College.
* Scaling Ability to Benefit statewide.
* The $25 fee – should the state look at getting rid of it? What is the cost of collecting it?

There is also a CBS team going to COABE in April to present on Alternative Testing to CASAS.

Heidi also shared the CBS 2022-23 Work Plan

The Council for Basic Skills (CBS) has identified the following strategies to reach our overall goal of an equitable education system in alignment with the SBCTC vision of leading with racial equity. CBS strives to increase access and achievement, integrate advocacy, retention, and completion, evidence of success, professional development, and equity between colleges and community-based programs into their work.

Strategy 1) Eliminate Standardized Testing as a method to collect Measurable Skills Gains.

Strategy 2) Provide multiple modality EDI professional development opportunities driven by the needs of the providers.

Strategy 3) Create a funding model for pathway transitions.

* First six credits of ATB
* Dual Credit for BEdA students

Strategy 4) Reduce technology barriers and inequitable impacts to BEdA students as a result of ctcLink and other systems.

* Create a memo to move forward to IC.
* Further refine BEdA Grading basis to fix unintended repercussions of the solution.

Strategy 5) Determine the benefits and repercussions of eliminating the $25 Basic Skills Tuition.

## Council Members Advocacy Work Share-out

* DSHS
  + Interim reimbursement agreements for aging blind adults.
  + Housing essential needs program.
  + Strengthening family legislation, which is making significant changes to the TANF program. It would allow current TANF recipients to stay on TANF longer, we have data in our system that demonstrates that black and native American families are disproportionately denied exemption to that 60-month time limit we know that there is racism and other isms stuck in that policy, and we need to change that policy at a federal level.

So essentially saying that we're imposing a 60 month time limit on a family in which the parents have not been able to document citizenship, and therefore probably likely not moving up the economic mobility ladder we're trying to reverse that policy so that that child is still able to get those grants for longer than 5-years.

* + Changes proposed to the Grant Standard. We're proposing, or that Bill would propose to set that needs standard at 15%, or the grand standard of 15% of the need standard.
* WFB – Title I
  + New dislocated worker bill called Quest, being implemented State-wide. This grant has wider eligibility requirements, so folks who may have never held a steady job or have only had intermittent employment would be eligible for this grant. These grants can be used for vocational education, for on-the-job training or depending on what local programs have set aside for them.
  + We have Federal and State forms of The Economic Security for All Funding, and these are targeted at adults with significant barriers to participation in the workforce. And we look at justice involved. We look at substance involved. We look at other significant barriers that have perpetually kept people out of the workforce and out of workforce training.
  + Currently to receive Title I funding, you must CASAS test and be deemed basic skills deficient. So Aaron will be tracking SBCTC’s progress on alternative assessments, to help keep/get Title I aligned with Title II.
  + They are getting a new data system, which will give Aaron access to statewide data systems for Title I. So if AEAC would like information about where those populations and our Adult ED participants overlap and the sort of things that we could see in commonality, I'd invite conversation along.
* Hopelink
  + Kelli shared a human example – they CASAS tested an Afghanistan refugee, she tested out at ABE Level 3, however, she was able to successfully serve as the Executive Administrator for Hopelink’s CEO. So the testing obviously did not accurately express her level of intelligence/education.
* Commerce
  + Affordable Housing – continuing to work on more affordable housing state-wide.
  + Rapid Rehousing, which is an opportunity for folks in the community to apply for grants to be able to purchase apartment complexes, hotels, and motels oftentimes those have to be rehabbed a bit to be able to move folks in, but really continue that strong, focused approach of trying to bring on any and all kind of affordable housing.
  + Working on the right of ways, so that's on the side of the freeways and highways in Washington and trying to move folks inside.
  + Continuing the work on stipends for lived experience and work that supports the poverty, reduction work group.
  + Small businesses our community reinvestment to help support our BYPOC organizations that provide tremendous amount of services to folks across the State.

## Committee Updates

The group broke out into their Goal teams to finalize the Goal language and work on developing strategies to accomplish that goal. We came back together and finalized our 2022-25 AEAC work plan.

* Goal #1 - Work with system partners to ensure equitable student access, retention, and completion in order to close the education gap for students of color and low-income students.

*Team: Babs, Diane, Kristen, Aaron, Kenny and Christy*

1. We want to gather more information about that gap we're gathering data.
2. We're also going to organize panels with students and professionals who support adult education and our hope is to have the first of those panels in March. But that will allow us to start gathering both quantitative and qualitative data on what we can do to address these gaps and what they get are then We put together some questions for students, some questions for faculty support, staff.

Part 2 is, we will from those stories, figure out, have a subcommittee meeting potentially, if necessary, where we look at what we're learning and starting to lock in on what are the ideas we really like? And how do we calculate what this will cost to implement what the ROI would be?

1. Then the third strategy is about advocacy, and we discuss how we would work with Troy as our man who knows the game to help us get in there and advocate properly for anything that merges.
2. Each of us has a goal. Find one article about something another State's doing for adult education, and bring that back to the subcommittee, and that will be another source. So, we're looking internally and externally to bring ideas to the floor.

* Goal 2: Advocate for innovative education and career pathways that advance current and graduates of Basic Education for Adults students into living wages and to achieve their career goals.

*Team: Ricardo, Anne, Courtney, Katrina, Paul, Eleni,* Lucretia *and MarcusAntonio*

1. Need to make sure students entering BEdA understand their career goals and what they're trying to achieve.
2. Connecting with employers and industries to ensure skills gaps are covered and they know how/why to hire BEdA participants; employers know how to accommodate/adjust scheduling for BEdA; show that it's in the employer’s long term interest - Benefits to employers that graduating students have all the paperwork needed to onboard quickly.
3. Potential to listen in on student stories and experiences; maybe attend classes or get hands-on data about the gaps and areas of opportunities/challenges (Kristi can give context if we've done this before) - Think about those students that don't have access to the internet.

* Goal 3: Promote training and information sharing on college and career pathways for faculty and staff statewide to support and advance the Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP) and Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) plans.

*Team: Amy, Lin, Nancy, Heidi and Will*

Objectives and Strategies for Goal #3

1. Getting access to faculty and staff to the shells that are in canvas, there's a lot of good work in there, but it becomes a repository for so much work and it's a little bit overwhelming.
2. We are going to meet in before the next meeting and we're going to do some homework to try to find out 2 or 3 really good resources for 5 to 7 topics, having 2 or 3 resources for each will be helpful for not just faculty, but also staff at committee colleges and CBO’s to better help clients, maneuver the system, and to communicate between other agencies, cause there's a lot of work being done, duplicate work.
3. Maybe we'll create some sort of Tik Toky short video.

## Action Items

1. The teams will meet in-between now and our April meeting to work on some of these tasks.