In the summer of 2009, 80 teachers and nine administrators from Oakland Adult and Career Education (OACE) took on the challenge of an Integrated Programs (IP) Summer Planning Project. Over the course of seven weeks and 28 meetings, the group simultaneously developed an identity as a dynamic team and produced a set of recommended actions to guide the future of Oakland’s educational programming and service delivery. The project not only resulted in a road map for our immediate future, but also created a new, deep sense of professional community. The following information represents a sampling of basic information regarding the project.

**Why move toward integration of programs?**

The primary objective of integrating our instructional programs is to increase student goal attainment through strong, clear interdepartmental pathways. Now that California adult schools are operating under the new paradigm of being an optional district program rather than a semi-autonomous entity, Oakland has strategically decided to become a more outcomes-based program; our theory is that we will generate greater learning gains and more meaningful goal attainment for students, and thus give school staff the ability to articulate those concrete outcomes to the school board and the superintendent.

Another strategic decision was to provide educational services for older adults and for adults with disabilities within the programs traditionally considered more academic: English as a Second Language (ESL), Career Technical Education (CTE), and Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE).

Other major factors contributing to the decision to redesign the program included 1) key action steps from our recent Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Self-Study, 2) agency priorities emerging from OACE’s Strategic Planning process, 3) priorities for adult education as indicated by changes in the federal government, and particularly in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 4) information emerging from the California Department of Education State Plan/Strategic Planning Needs Assessment, and 5) the research on pathways, bridging programs, transitions, and effective job skill development that points to integration of curricula as necessary for quality instruction and successful learning.

OACE used a "From ... To" chart to attempt to articulate the vision and to get all participants on the same page. To increase student goal attainment through strong, clear, interdepartmental pathways implies these transitions:

*Continued on page 12*
Colleagues, we are pleased to bring you the spring 2010 edition of the CALPROgress newsletter. In this edition, articles explore the theme of innovative efforts at alignment. From a look at federal policies and initiatives that guide adult education service delivery system nationally, to cross-sector collaboration regionally, to curricular and instructional alignment efforts within an agency, the common threads are:

- A focus on creating seamless career and academic pathways for students
- Leveraging resources to improve services to learners
- Increased focus on learning outcomes and goal attainment

The articles are by state and national leaders in adult education, and cover a range of perspectives on policy, research, and practice. Article topics include federal policy and programming initiatives, articulation agreements to support regional Career and Technical Education efforts, understanding California's Community Colleges, interdepartmental instructional alignment, and the national policy forum to improve services for adult learners.

CALPRO continues to develop and offer professional development that addresses a number of the areas discussed in these articles. This year we have launched the Postsecondary Transition Webinar Series. Conducted in partnership with the National College Transition Network, this three-part series explores the areas of curriculum & instruction, guidance & counseling, and collaboration & partnerships to support adult learners' transition to postsecondary education. CALPRO is supporting workforce transitions through the development of professional development modules for the ABE and ESL classrooms on the topic of Contextualized Workforce Education and through the ongoing Administrators Forum (a joint effort between CALPRO, CASAS, and OTAN), which will have sessions this spring focused on integrated workforce program planning (see page 11).

The CALPRO Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Institute is under way, and the 11 participating agencies (more on this page) are focusing their efforts on student learning goals and continuous improvement efforts. For most of the participating agencies, developing a PLC represents an effort to align with their district's PLC initiative.

CALPRO has also made efforts to align its professional development delivery with the needs of the programs we serve. As travel has become more difficult for education program staff we have greatly increased the number of online, 24/7 professional development opportunities we offer (see page 15). We hope that the ideas and resources shared in this edition will support you in your efforts to serve California's adult learners.

Professional Learning Communities Institute

In December 2009, CALPRO convened 11 agencies for the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Institute. The goal of the three-day Institute was to provide agencies the framework and the training needed to develop and sustain a PLC process of school improvement focusing on student results through embedded professional staff development. Participating agencies sent their administrator and one lead teacher or coordinator to gain more knowledge about the goals of a PLC, become aware of the building blocks in PLC development, develop knowledge to use in training their agency in the PLC process, practice the processes used in building a PLC, apply the PLC processes they have learned to their agency, and gain an appreciation for embedded professional development that fosters the ongoing processes of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. The CALPRO PLC Task Force designed and led the sessions. The following is a list of the participating agencies:

- Bakersfield Adult School
- Beaumont Adult School
- Capistrano Adult & Community Education
- Conejo Valley Adult School
- Corona-Norco Adult School
- Long Beach School for Adults
- Placer School for Adults
- Roseville Adult School
- San Mateo Adult School
- Santa Barbara Continuing Education
- Sweetwater Union High School District

Agencies will meet again in May for a follow-up meeting to report their progress. Over the past five years, 42 agencies have participated in CALPRO's initiative to establish learning communities.
I recently returned from a state director’s meeting in Washington DC, where reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was the focus of presentations and conversations. During the week I had the opportunity to interact with senior administration leaders and Congressional staff on policy related to the reauthorization of WIA. And I networked with other state directors about the impact of reauthorization proposals on state programs.

The California adult education system is in the process of being redefined, repositioned, and rebuilt. I listened closely to the messages being spoken and was impressed with the parallels between the challenges and issues the nation is facing and those of California. The United States is experiencing a basic skills crisis. For the first time in its history the United States is the only highly developed democracy where the current generation of young adults is less likely to have completed high school than the previous generation. Over 1 million adults drop out of high school each year, and there are currently more than 12 million adults without a high school diploma in the workforce. In California there are more than 6 million adults without a high school diploma and one of every three students does not graduate from high school. The adult education system across the nation plays a critical role in helping these students succeed, attain their high school diplomas, and transition to further education and career opportunities.

Conversations about reauthorization centered on the workforce and postsecondary education. Literacy and basic skills were paired with economic development and workplace education. I attended several presentations on integrated delivery models. Federal initiatives focus on creating models of service delivery to help adults across the nation access education, training, and information resources they need to be college and career ready.

California was recently selected to participate in the Policy to Performance (P2P) grant that aims to assist states with effective policy development that will support college and career readiness for low-skilled adults and adult learners. The P2P seeks to advance state efforts to successfully transition this demographic to adult education, postsecondary education, and employment opportunities. For the next 24 months, as part of the P2P, California will develop, implement, and evaluate policies designed to connect adults to learning and training opportunities to meet the demands of a 21st century workforce. I am optimistic that this grant will drive policy at the state level that will support local efforts to transition students to the workforce and to postsecondary training opportunities.

The world of adult education has become a strange and puzzling place where we cannot rely on what we knew, and we do not yet feel secured by new sources of confidence. It makes things more interesting, expecting there to be new ways of working without yet being able to discern them clearly. I am aware of how difficult it is to not be certain. I have encountered in myself and others a desire for these new understandings to translate quickly into reliable and trusted tools and strategies. We are not comfortable with chaos, even in our thoughts, and we want to move out of confusion as quickly as possible.

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote about life as an ongoing encounter with the unknown, and created this image: "We wake and find ourselves on a stair; there are stairs below us which we seem to have ascended, there are stairs above us...which go out of sight." These stairs of understanding we are now climbing feel different. They are less secure, harder to see, and much more challenging. They require very different things from us. We are on a journey of mutual and simultaneous exploration.

We are not alone on our journey to transform adult education in California. It is a path shared with states across the nation and with the federal government. And there is new leadership in Washington DC. It was evident that President Obama’s commitment to education will be our leverage in California. There is renewed energy at the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), and people are passionate about the future of adult education. Reforming the adult education system in California is challenging but necessary. If we are to continue to meet the needs of our students, we do not have a choice but to face the task with knowledge and commitment, and strategically move forward. I look forward to being able to look back and say, we did it, we made it!
The California Adult Literacy Professional Development Project (CALPRO), in conjunction with the California Department of Education (CDE), conducted the California College Transition Institute and Summit Meeting on October 28-30, 2009. At this professional development event, California’s adult education administrators and leaders were introduced to the policy, research, and program practice associated with transitioning adult learners to college.

The Summit Meeting on October 29th featured presentations by national and state adult education leaders, including U.S. Assistant Secretary of Education Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier. In addition, Dr. Dann-Messier held an evening WIA Community Conversation with California’s adult educators. This was the first in a series of conversations taking place across the nation. During her Summit Meeting presentation Dr. Dann-Messier provided updates on federal policy priorities and initiatives. Following are highlights of her presentation and of the initiatives she focused on, as well as more information about the WIA Community Conversation.

Dr. Dann-Messier focused on the importance of President Obama’s efforts to increase the number of adult education students transitioning from basic skills and English language programs to community colleges. She noted the unique opportunity before the adult education community in this administration’s commitment to promote a better quality of living through expanded educational opportunities.

“We will provide the support necessary for you to complete college and meet a new goal: by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.” - President Barack Obama, February 24, 2009

As noted by many of the Summit Meeting presenters, success in the contemporary economic environment and job market requires education and training beyond a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED). Dr. Dann-Messier discussed several U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) initiatives as well as the President's American Graduation Initiative and the potential significance they may have on improving college transitions for adult learners.

First mentioned was the OVAE Ready for College Initiative, which includes these elements:
- In September 2007, the awarding of over $2.8 million for OVAE's Ready for College program
- Two-year grants in four states (Colorado, Kansas, North Carolina, and New Jersey)
- A focus on preparing out-of-school youth for college success
- Developing “bridge” courses, mentoring services, curriculum enhancement, and teacher training

Next discussed was OVAE’s Adult Basic Education Career Connection project which is geared toward occupational post-secondary transitions. Dr. Dann-Messier shared these facts about the initiative:
- Supports the connection between adult education and industry-specific occupational education programs
- Being undertaken by five local Adult Basic Education (ABE) Programs (California, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, and Wisconsin)
- Designed to document ABE programs’ efforts to improve connections to existing local career pathways

Dr. Dann-Messier also spoke about the President’s American Graduation Initiative. This initiative will:
- Commit over $10 billion to community colleges
- Finance an innovation-driven, competitive-based program focused on degree attainment and college success
- Provide funding for an online skills laboratory
She also emphasized the important role that the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) will have in the future of adult education and in providing services aligned with the needs of students in the 21st century. She noted that some trends in current thinking across the field on WIA reauthorization include:

- Requiring State content standards that are aligned with college and career readiness
- Better alignment between WIA Title I and Title II
- Creating multiple pathways to high school completion
- Expanding use of career pathway models
- Using innovative educational technologies

In an evening session following the Summit Meeting, Dr. Dann-Messier held the WIA Community Conversation, which provided a venue for California's adult educators to voice their recommendations on reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act. She led this session by posing the following questions to the assembled group.

- What are the successful ingredients needed to prepare adult learners for success in college? What are the challenges?
- What have been the greatest successes your systems have experienced in putting adult learners on a path to jobs in high-growth sectors? How can WIA reauthorization promote better alignment between adult education and workforce development?

Transcripts of the responses to these questions at the California Community Conversation and other community conversations from around the country, as well as further information about WIA reauthorization, are available through the USDOE’s ED.gov blog (www.ed.gov/blogs/2009/11/workforce-investment-act-reauthorization/).

The presentation made by Dr. Dann-Messier and all presenters at the College Transition Summit Meeting were recorded and are now available as streamed video on the CALPRO Web site (http://www.calpro-online.org/collegeTransition.asp). Each video is embedded with the presenter’s slide show materials. We encourage you to use these videos and related materials in your agencies and communities to introduce the concepts, issues, and practices involved in supporting college transitions for adult learners.

Visit CALPRO College Transition at www.calpro-online.org/collegeTransition.asp
Articulation Background

Throughout the State of California, public high schools, adult schools, and colleges face many difficulties in developing and sustaining Career Technical Education (CTE) courses and pathways—especially in the current critical economic climate. In 2005 the Legislature passed SB 70, providing $20 million to fund the Career Technical Education Pathways and Workforce Development Program to align K-12 career technical education with adult schools and local community colleges to ensure successful educational transitions. However, with the current deepening fiscal crisis, committed grant funding is being reduced. Even so, the East Bay/TriValley Career Technical Education Community Collaborative (EB/TV CTE CC), formed in 2007, is continuing to further its work using the CTE pathway development model that is intended to improve education pathways and career-technical awareness for students enrolled in both the K-12 and community college systems as they transition from one level to the next. The EB/TV CTE CC members are supporting each other’s efforts in creating career pathways through an articulation process that is fast becoming the model for the vision of a statewide articulation and transition plan. The end goal is to prepare students for statewide, articulated postsecondary programs of study that will result in high-skilled jobs with high wages.

Articulation Process

As an example of how the articulation process develops and serves students transitioning from high school and adult school to college, Hayward Adult School professional learning communities have been reviewing the California State Framework and CTE Standards, aligning curriculum...
Positive Outcomes

A seamless transition from high school to higher levels of education is a major benefit of the pathway model. High schools can provide students with several career options from which to choose and a clearer vision of future opportunities. Teachers who share common students throughout the pathway education can examine student data and better provide for students' needs in reaching their academic goals. The articulation program also supports high school students, registered concurrently at their adult schools, in their quest toward a college education.

Adults who are in need of basic education will be able to attend adult schools to receive literacy training coupled with career training. The articulated pathways also support adults who are re-entering today's competitive job market, seeking a high school diploma coupled with job skills, retraining, and/or seeking to accomplish the required stepping stone to higher education.

A benefit of the articulation, pathway development, and transition process is the development advisory committees as conduits among middle school, high school, adult schools, and community college stakeholders, including curriculum development staff and grant writers. This important collaboration provides conduits at each level to ensure planning consistency. The CB/TV CTE CC will identify, collect, evaluate, and report project data during the life of the SB 70 grant's funding (through 2014).

Conclusion

While the CB/TV CTE CC moves forward in the articulation/transition support planning process, Hayward Adult School is exploring providing bilingual pathway opportunities, seeking additional grants to fund its work in supporting the Hayward district's K-12 students and the community's adult population, who will be equally supported in the transition program's goal of providing the bridge to a college education leading to high skilled jobs with higher wages.

Contributing to this article is Dawn Girardelli, Director of Chabot College Off-Campus Programs and member of EB/TV CTE Community Collaborative.

Visit Hayward Adult School at www.has.edu
California's diversity is unequalled, and rapidly changing; the state also has a large unmet need for an educated and skilled workforce. How do we create educational pathways that are clear and achievable for the many Californian adult learners? Transitioning between adult education courses, noncredit coursework, regional occupational programs, and credit-based community college coursework is essential to meeting the economic and workforce needs in California. One of the keys to building bridges between these programs is understanding the unique California community college governance authority, pathways, and funding.

California's system of community colleges serves over 2.9 million students through 110 independently operated colleges with campuses and centers throughout the state—the largest postsecondary system in the world. Assembly Bill 1725 granted primary responsibility for curriculum and programs in community colleges to faculty, codified in Title 5 §53200. This empowered the state-level Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC), which is composed of faculty from community colleges across the state. The Academic Senate has policy-making authority within the California Community College system (and therefore the ability to create transition pathways); it works in collaboration with the Chancellor's office and other higher education authorities. Meanwhile, individual college senates and curriculum committees create local agreements, transitions, and policies. The Academic Senate's official role is to:

- Foster effective faculty participation, locally and statewide in academic and professional matters;
- Develop, promote, and act upon policies of statewide concerns;
- Serve as the official voice of the faculty in academic and professional matters; and
- Strengthen and support the local senates.

The Academic Senate has emphasized the importance of transitions between high school, adult education, regional occupational programs, and noncredit-to-credit college work. The Academic Senate has worked to facilitate these transitions at the state level, but there are challenges that must be addressed elsewhere as well.

For example, counseling is essential to effective transitions. The transitioning students, many of whom are immigrants, children of immigrants, or first-generation college students, need guidance. This year the California Community Colleges (CCC), although emphasizing the need for adequate matriculation resources, received a 62 percent cut in matriculation funding. We know from national research that, absent these student services, transitioning success is limited to only the most sophisticated students.

Transitioning also requires that students be academically prepared for college-level credit coursework. This indicates a need for accurate assessment and effective placement into courses where students can succeed. It also requires aligned coursework with a clear pathway. During the Academic Senate’s work to assess basic skills needs, create effective assessments, and align curriculum, we have become increasingly aware of a gap between expectations of high school graduates (including GED standards) and the skills required for college work. Recent data on CCC placement for 76,138 students revealed that 75 percent were not at college level in English. This is consistent with the 2009 Early Assessment results (EAP) for California State University (CSU)-prepared high school juniors completing A-G coursework, where only 17 percent were prepared for college-level English. Math gaps are even bigger, with 65 percent being assessed at 8th or 9th grade or below and nearly 40 percent requiring work in simple arithmetic. CCCs have made efforts to address basic skills to get students to college level, but a performance gap still exists. We have made progress on this by aligning our statewide basic skills curriculum, clarifying our expected outcomes at each level of English, reading, math and ESL (for more information on this refer to the CB 21 rubric project at www.cccbsi.org/cb21-information).

In spite of the challenges, there are active initiatives that serve as models for bridging adult education and transitioning noncredit students to the college credit side. In an effort to provide guidance about educational opportunities, the Academic Senate has created a student resource (www.whodouwant2b.com) that explains potential pathways. This Web site provides testimonials, career summaries, career assessment quizzes, and other valuable resources to provide career and college advice. Another initiative has been an effort
to provide students credit where credit is due. This involves two efforts: “examinations for credit,” where students take an exam to receive credit for college-level courses, and statewide pathways that provide documentation and streamlining to articulate high school and ROP courses with credit college courses. Examples of the curriculum templates and course articulations can be found at www.statewidepathways.org. This Web site has information on ordering counseling kits that provides specific guidance for particular career pathways.

The Academic Senate’s resolutions have urged colleges to honor advanced placement certificates, provide credit-by-exam opportunities, and develop articulation agreements in an effort to identify and create bridges to college credit. We support giving credit where credit is due. The Academic Senate is facilitating and encouraging transitions from noncredit adult coursework to credit coursework; the CB 21 rubrics create reference points for these bridges.

However, transitioning will require that individuals identify the appropriate local policy channels and resources at each college—people with the funding and authority to provide access and resources for transitioning and articulation. These people will include Career Technical Education Deans or the tech prep coordinator, faculty department chairs, basic skills coordinators, STEM (science technology, engineering, and math) coordinators, and curriculum chairs. Many of these people have funding available for targeting transitioning efforts (e.g., STEM funding, Basic Skills Initiative allocations, Perkins funding, SB 70 funding, and individual grants). Final articulation of any coursework or credit by exam will be determined by the faculty in the discipline and the curriculum committee.

Transitions are a critical and complex component of adult education. Bridges between adult education courses, noncredit coursework, regional occupational programs, and credit-based community college coursework are essential to meeting California’s economic and workforce needs. Those of us who are in a position to build these bridges at different levels and in different areas must work together, for our students, our institutions, and the future of our state.

Visit Academic Senate for California Community Colleges at www.asccc.org

Footnote

Resources

Basic Skills CB 21 Rubric Project
Archive of curricular work in the basic skills disciplines of reading, writing, math, and English as a Second Language.
www.cccbsi.org/cb21-information

Statewide Career Pathways: Creating School to College Articulation
Provides curriculum templates and course articulations.
www.statewidepathways.org

Student Resource: Who Do U Want 2B?
Explains potential pathways, and provides testimonials, career summaries, career assessment quizzes, and other valuable resources for career and college advice.
www.whodouwant2b.com

Calendar of Events

CAEAA State Conference
January 27-29, San Francisco
www.caeaa.org

COABE/ProLiteracy National Conference
March 16-19, Chicago
www.coabe.org

CATESOL State Conference
April 22-25, Santa Clara
www.catesol.org

CCAE State Conference
May 7-8, Palm Springs
www.ccaestate.org

Adult Education Research Conference/Western Region Research Conference on the Education of Adults
June 3-6, Sacramento
www.cce.csus.edu/conferences/aerc/aerc10/index.htm

CASAS Summer Institute
Celebrating its 30th Anniversary
June 17-19, San Diego
www.casas.org/si

ACSA Adult Education Conference
Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Sacramento
www.acsa.org
National Symposium Focuses on Overcoming the Barriers Facing Adult Learners

by Heidi Silver-Pacuilla, Ph.D.,
Senior Research Analyst, American Institutes for Research

Research has identified the barriers adult learners face in attaining their goals of education and English proficiency, entering and advancing in employment, succeeding in postsecondary education and training, and navigating the health care system. Most adult learners face long odds in trying to meet these goals. What would it take to address these barriers and produce better outcomes? What policies and focused investments would help change the odds?

On September 16, 2009, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) hosted a Symposium, "Changing the Odds: Informing Policy with Research on How Adult Learners Succeed," to discuss innovative solutions collaborations, and alignments of programs for supporting today's low-skilled adult learners, and challenges facing the nation in improving adult education and workforce development outcomes.

Steve Reder, a professor of applied linguistics at Portland State University, kicked off the Symposium with a keynote address that discussed the importance of building a ladder of opportunity between public and private partnerships to involve people with a variety of talents in improving adult learning in the 21st century. Reder also talked about the importance of building persistence in adult learners, noting that for a variety of reasons, these learners often are unable to stay long enough in programs that can assist them in their learning process, and suggested ways to enhance the learning process through technology and other support services to make self-study and continued learning more feasible.

The structure of the symposium allowed for interactive sessions focused on specific topics relevant to adult educators. After the keynote address, the agenda included three panel presentations followed by special interest groups (SIG) sharing ideas, reflecting further on topics that the panels presented, and gathering questions for the panelists. Participants reconvened for a roundtable panel discussion addressing the SIG's questions.

The first panel presentation addressed ways of achieving postsecondary and vocational success. One example shared was teaching basic skills and strategies in context of the workplace such as carpenters' mathematics and teaching English for the workplace. Another innovative programming idea was reconceptualizing how content is packaged into courses so learners can focus on specific elements of a subject—such as fractions—rather than to retake the entire course. Also mentioned was blended learning when learners engage in self-directed learning (usually online or computer-based) with opportunities to learn with peers and a teacher or tutor. The discussion confirmed the need for creative partnerships and alignment between education and vocational programs to provide opportunities for learners to nurture their motivation and persistence as well as move toward achieving their goals.

The next panel topic was on innovative program models for a 21st century workplace. Questions discussed included: What are elements of successful models? How can we scale those elements up? How do we coordinate and align various systems? Key issues discussed were

- Organizing the delivery system toward learner needs and goals;
- Innovative ways to reach the large number of adults with low skills who are not in programs;
- Case management for learners to support learners across various service providers;
- Professional development and professionalization needs in the workforce; and
- Revisiting the national reporting system (NRS) and proposing ways to align it with programmatic and policy changes.

The last panel discussed how changing demographics will impact program delivery and demand. The presentation addressed the trends in the population of people who need English language learning, education and vocational training, and skill improvement. Understanding the demographic landscape helped structure the conversation on how policy-makers and program managers could shift resources and plan more appropriate programs. Participants considered the idea of strengthening tracking systems and differentiating offerings as well as the coordination of multiple federal and state systems and redesigns of intake, placement, and advancement models.

There was widespread interest in leveraging technology in innovative models to scale up programs, accelerate learning, and reach untapped populations. Resources for adult learners to engage in self-study were mentioned such as Learner Web for Adults Continuing to Learn at...
www.learnerweb.org and U.S.A. Learns at www.usalearns.org. Adult educators can promote these Web sites to their learners as a complement to their classroom instruction or as an interim resource while learners are waiting to enroll in an adult education program.

Other highlights of the Symposium were recognizing the immediate need for leadership and the pressing need for alignment and contextualized learning opportunities among Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I and Title II programs, including:
• the ability to co-mingle funds and offer learners enrollment concurrently in different programs (i.e., dual enrollment);
• a need for model demonstration projects and evaluations;
• the need for innovative ways to reach the vast majority of adults with low skills who are not in programs; and
• the reality of impending immigration reform, which may result in five to seven million adults seeking English classes, potentially straining the existing systems and programs.

The Symposium brought together a wide range of stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds and organizations, including policy-makers, researchers, practitioners, community colleges and universities, foundations, policy institutes, and the government. Staff from the U.S. Department of Education were in attendance such as Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Glenn Comings, and Cheryl Keenan. Other attendees included representatives from the Committee on Education and Labor, the Senate HELP Committee, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

To foster continued networking and facilitate wider participation in this important topic, the AIR team launched an online community. This online resource includes presentation slides and audiorecordings of the panel presentations and discussions which can be downloaded. Users can request to join the online community by sending an e-mail to changingtheodds@air.org. AIR also released a policy report summarizing the Symposium findings and citations to reports and research studies at www.air.org/news/documents/Changing%20the%20Odds%20Final%20PDF.pdf.

Over the last 20 years, AIR has been supporting improvements in adult basic education, with services that include training, technical assistance, and research at the federal, state, and local levels and has been conducting projects in adult education in professional development, English as a Second Language, numeracy, assessment, use of technology in instruction, and accountability.

Visit American Institutes for Research at www.air.org

Professional Development Options by State Leadership Projects

SPRING 2010

The Administrators Forum Spring Webinar Series
Register at www.caadultedtraining.org
Access the archive of previous webinars at www.otan.us/AdminForum

CASAS Assessment & Accountability
CASAS is offering a wide variety of Professional Development Workshops. Web conferencing workshop topics include CASAS Assessment, Accountability, and TOPSpro®. Starting February 1, self-paced courses including topics in CASAS Implementation, Appraisals, Lesson Planning, and CASAS eTests® will be available for registration and participation. All workshops are accessible at www.caadultedtraining.org (filter on Sponsor: CASAS).

In January, CASAS launched the Workforce Skills Certification System (WSCS) Pilot Project. The goal of the pilot is to promote transition of adult ABE and ASE students into the workforce. Visit www.casas.org for details.

OTAN Professional Development
OTAN offers many workshops on technology topics, both online and at agencies. Topics include Teaching Critical Thinking for the Internet, Getting Started with Wikis, Creating a Free Web Site for Your Class, and many others. See www.caadultedtraining.org to see what’s offered and to register.
What kinds of recommendations resulted from the IP Summer Planning Project?

To truly integrate our programs and to respond to student needs, we made the following recommendations:

1. Identifying CTE classes and programs to focus on initially, in terms of creating bridging and/or team-taught classes for students who need more preparation to succeed in CTE. (Team-taught classes integrate basic skills with specific career content.)
2. Creating bridging/prep classes for students entering ASE or General Educational Development (GED) classes.
3. Creating bridging and prep classes for students preparing to enroll in another educational institution such as a community college.
4. Aligning curricula within programs and articulating curricula across programs.
5. Defining pathways (sequences of courses and student supports) for OACE students.
6. Establishing comprehensive intake, orientation, goal-setting, and Individualized Learning Plans (ILP) development and monitoring processes.
7. Altering how we schedule classes so that students will be more easily able to take a sequence of courses over time or a set of courses at once.

What processes were used?

At the outset of the meetings, we stated that our objective was to create a set of recommended actions to move us from our current state of operating as individual programs and "stand alone" classes to a state of interconnectedness, with bridges and pathways for students to take full advantage of all programs. To reach that objective, the following basic process was put into place:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From...</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Operating primarily as six relatively independent programs...</td>
<td>Operating as four interdependent, collaborative programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Offering programming based on special populations (rather than educational content) such as older adults, ex-offenders, and adults with disabilities...</td>
<td>Ensuring that those and other special populations receive excellent educational services through enhanced curriculum and instruction within the Integrated Programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Instructional programs that sometimes work in coordination...</td>
<td>Integrated programs that work in constant collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Developing curricula independently and offering predominantly “stand alone” classes...</td>
<td>Developing curricula that are articulated within programs and across programs so that students can make clearer and more efficient progress toward their goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Programs scheduling classes in isolation with minimal regard to students’ ability to engage in concurrent or sequenced coursework...</td>
<td>Programs scheduling classes collaboratively and strategically so that students can move efficiently from one course or program to the next.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Individual teachers bearing the responsibility of making connections between programs for their students...</td>
<td>Having an infrastructure that makes program connections transparent for all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Offering our literacy classes almost exclusively as general classes...</td>
<td>Also offering a range of targeted literacy classes (for example, classes with a vocational focus, a continuing education focus, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Offering very few “bridging” classes that prepare students for success in the next level or program...</td>
<td>Offering a number of bridging classes that specifically prepare students for success at the next level or in the next course or program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Offering relatively minimal orientation and goal-setting opportunities for students...</td>
<td>Having a rich orientation and goal-setting infrastructure for students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Review our current course offerings, with particular attention paid to the highest-level courses in ASE, GED, and CTE, since they frequently represent "end goal" courses within OACE. Also, review typical continuing education destinations for OACE students to determine how we can best prepare students for training and education external to OACE.

2. Review and analyze research regarding best practices in transitions within adult education and from adult education to other opportunities. Discuss how we might create pathways within OACE and after OACE to prepare students to be most successful.

3. Develop, analyze, and rank models and options.

4. Develop a prioritized subset of those options to develop more fully.

5. Analyze the more fully developed options.

6. Present recommendations to the full faculty at the August 27th professional development event.

To support the recommendation development process, careful facilitation of group and team processes was important, and the group spent a great deal of time and energy learning about and practicing various facilitation strategies. Large group work and small group work featuring intra- and inter-program teams had to function effectively if we were to accomplish our objective and do so with integrity. Among many facilitation techniques, listening carefully, balancing advocating for one's beliefs and genuinely considering others', brainstorming/narrowing/deciding, and, most significantly, building consensus were explicitly taught, demonstrated, and practiced. Thus, teachers were actively building a repertoire of teamwork skills while doing the work of researching and planning for integrated programs.

What research was studied?

We read, analyzed, and discussed a wide variety of research, including these three particular works, to which we dedicated substantial study and reflection time:

- Bridges to Careers for Low-Skilled Adults - A Program Development Guide, by Women Employed, with the Chicago Jobs Council and University of Illinois at Chicago's Great Cities Institute
- CALPRO's CALPROgress spring 2009 newsletter on transitions
- Excerpts from NCSALL's Program Administrator's Sourcebook, by Jackie Taylor, Cristine Smith, and Beth Bingman

We also reviewed and discussed model standards, the literature on persistence, material from the National College Transition Network, the principles of Universal Design for Learning, labor market statistics, and many other helpful resources.

Who was invited and who participated?

All teachers, hourly and full time, were invited to participate. Because OACE held a very limited summer school program in 2009, many teachers were available and willing to work on the project. Over 80 teachers took part, with an average of 30-35 per day and a core group of 20-25 who participated in about three-fourths of the meetings. All program areas were represented, with ESL teachers as the main subgroup.

What was the cost?

The project cost approximately $75,000 in salaries. Very little was spent on anything else except for a couple of occasions when food was provided.

What were the outcomes?

The main tangible outcome is the set of recommendations. Subcommittees drafted the plans, which were reviewed for clarity and consistency. The subcommittees presented the recommendations to the full faculty at an all-day staff development meeting on August 27, 2009. Feedback was collected from the whole faculty, and relatively minor revisions were made; most faculty members were very supportive of the work their colleagues had done over the summer. The sense of validation and confirmation of the summer work was palpable among participants.

Another outcome was a much better sense of the need for our agency to address students' basic literacy and numeracy skills in a more comprehensive, systematic fashion.

A recommendation that emerged from the process that was not a part of the originally envisioned recommendations was to deal with students' literacy and numeracy skills in at least three ways: 1) to assess and place literacy students more accurately and in more discrete proficiency levels, 2) to make students more aware of the skills needed to succeed in any given class, and 3) to increase collaboration between literacy teachers and CTE teachers, in particular, to help students apply skills in meaningful contexts.

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Innovative Practice

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An outcome that was hoped for but perhaps not explicitly stated was a culture shift. This occurred, and had two main themes: trust and camaraderie.

In the past there has been a fairly high degree of teachers' distrust of administration, especially among teachers in certain program areas. Teachers have frequently spoken out about the need for a type of collaboration and communication that is different from what they have experienced in the past. Because the facilitation of the summer meetings was designed to bring to the surface and reflect on diverse points of view, and because decisions were arrived at transparently and with multiple sources of input, over time there developed a much greater sense of trust between faculty and staff. The recommendations, authored completely by groups of teachers, were completely supported by OACE administration, and the emergence of newfound trust was cited by many involved as a phenomenal byproduct of the project.

The other outcome was a profound sense of appreciation and respect for colleagues and their work. Like instructional programs in many schools, OACE’s programs had functioned largely independent of each other, in silos, and teachers rarely had the chance to get to know the offerings and the people in other programs. Now there is a powerful sense that all OACE students are "our" students, supported by a united faculty, as opposed to the prior mindset that might be described as "my students, my class, my program."

Comments from participants:
- I was truly struck by a sense of pride at the richness of OACE’s offerings and the incredible commitment we teachers have to our students. I can better serve my students knowing what other programs have to offer.
- It was an experience that left me personally feeling very hopeful about the future of our program, despite the uncertainty (of the current state of the adult ed system in the state).
- The contradiction of having to act with great urgency, yet having the work proceed in a careful and thoughtful way, so that every idea for change was fully presented and examined—urgency did not mean having to race through the process.
- When my ESL students transfer to Career Tech or GED classes, I don’t feel that I’m losing students, I feel like I’ve sent them on their way. I feel like I’ve done my job in promoting classes that will help them meet their goals.
- The dedicated commitment to process demonstrated fairness and built trust, patience, and lots of genuine listening.

- When we work together on common goals, we build relationships that will sustain our ultimate mission.
- I learned that I need to move away from my comfort zone of control (doing it by myself) to trusting the insights and contributions of other professionals.

What’s next?

What is now needed is dedicated time for groups of teachers to begin work on the implementation steps for each of the recommendations. OACE is heavily influenced by the research on Professional Learning Communities (PLC), and one of the main PLC practices is the embedding of collaboration time within the regular schedules of teachers. To accomplish substantial continuous improvement work with quality, it is necessary to have frequent, ongoing, highly focused working sessions. With the dramatic change in how adult schools are funded, OACE saw a silver lining: in the absence of average daily attendance (ADA)-based funding, we decided to capitalize on the opportunity to build collaboration time into teachers’ regular schedules. We have just reached an agreement, effective January 2010, with one of our teachers’ unions to adjust teachers’ assignments; teachers now have the opportunity, responsibility, and support to continue the work that they started during the summer. Faculty will be teaching a bit less and working together a lot more. After the lull in activity on the project while we worked on the agreement to build collaboration time into teachers’ schedules, we anticipate that the “build and implement” phase will begin in February 2010, with most of the action items being ready and in place for the start of the 2010-2011 school year.

Where can I get more information about the project?

One of the important supports for the project was a blog, inspired by the e-PLC blog of colleague Martha Rankin of Newport-Mesa Adult School. Found at http://oace.wordpress.com/, the Summer Planning Project blog captured artifacts and reports on almost everything that transpired during the meetings. It was a communication vehicle for feedback and input from faculty who could not participate in person, and a place for additional reflections from project participants. If you’d like to explore the project, please check out the blog. It has links to most of the resources we studied, and the final recommendations are posted there. You may also e-mail Jacques LaCour at jacques.lacour@ousd.k12.ca.us.

Visit Oakland Adult & Career Education at www.ousd.k12.ca.us
Online Options for ESL Instructors

In December 2009, CALPRO unveiled two new resources supporting multilevel ESL instructors: the Virtual Workroom for Multilevel ESL Instructors, and its companion electronic Professional Learning Community (e-PLC). The Virtual Workroom, open to all, provides a host of research-based professional development (PD) resources on five key challenges of multilevel instruction: needs assessment, lesson planning, group work, materials, and evaluation. Log in today at www.calpro-online.org/VirtualWorkroom/default.asp.

The Multilevel ESL electronic Professional Learning Community is open to all adult literacy providers working in programs that receive Workforce Investment Act Title II federal funds or California state apportionment. In this Professional Learning Community, instructors can network with other multilevel ESL teachers across California, respond to a subject expert’s blog, discuss Virtual Workroom resources, share teaching tips and classroom materials, get advice and support from mentors, and more! Eligible educators can sign up for the e-PLC at calpromultilevelesl.ning.com.

Online Delivery for All Practitioners

For 2009-2010, CALPRO is offering 15 facilitated online courses on a variety of topics, such as optimizing ESL instructional planning, using questioning strategies to improve instruction, and teaching adults with learning disabilities. Each four-week course is led by a facilitator, who guides discussions of research-based content; within a given week, participants log in to read and write comments in shared discussion boards, and can talk to each other in real time through two live Webinars. For more information, visit www.calpro-online.org/onlineCourses.asp.

For adult educators who wish to work on their own and at their own pace, CALPRO also offers three self-directed online courses, the newest of which, Learner Goal Setting in Adult Education Programs, opened December 1, 2009. Registration is open year-round at www.calpro-online.org/onlineCourses.asp.

Regional Workshops

CALPRO is collaborating with agencies across the state to offer face-to-face PD for various regions. Twenty-eight sessions have been scheduled on topics such as Organizing and Managing ABE Instruction and Teaching Critical Thinking. The regional workshops are part of CALPRO’s Facilitators Network, which has more than 300 certified workshop facilitators to provide research-based PD to adult educators. Participants can register for regional workshops online using the Event Calendar at www.calpro-online.org. Agency staff interested in hosting a workshop for their region can find details at www.calpro-online.org/documents/HostRegionalWorkshops2009.pdf.

Professional Development Modules

To help prepare adult learners for the workforce, CALPRO is working with four California adult educators to develop two new modules on contextualized instruction. Authors Ronna Magy of Los Angeles Unified School District and Donna Price of San Diego Community College District are writing the version for ESL practitioners, while Carolyn McGavock of San Diego Community College District and Jerilynn Domenico of Hacienda La Puente Adult Education are developing the version for ABE/ASE practitioners. The content includes collaborative and problem-solving activities, strategies to integrate transferable work skills in classroom instruction, and more. An advisory group met online to provide feedback on the draft outlines and objectives; CALPRO will gather input from practitioners in the spring, and will offer these modules at the June Training-of-Trainers Institute.

Training-of-Trainers’ (ToT) Institute

As part of The Facilitators Network, CALPRO will offer its annual Training-of-Trainers (ToT) Institute on June 29-30, 2010. Sessions will include the two new modules on contextualized workforce instruction and a module on managed enrollment. The focus of the ToT is to present the research-based CALPRO modules and provide practice in facilitation skills. The purpose is to build the capacity of professional development leaders across the state. Participants interested in applying for the Institute must be nominated by their administrator. Nomination forms will be available on the CALPRO Web site at www.calpro-online.org.
Jennifer Block
Shortly after completing her training as a reading specialist at San Francisco State University, Jennifer began teaching in an ABE reading lab at Oakland Adult & Career Education (OACE). She has spent the past 20 years teaching reading and language arts in the ABE program at Edward Shands Adult School in East Oakland, working with students who are trying to achieve a GED or high school diploma but read below the eighth grade level. She is currently the lead teacher for the ABE program at OACE. She is part of the statewide ABE Initiative and is implementing evidence-based reading instruction. She became a CALPRO study circle facilitator in 2006 and developed the online study circle facilitator training on the topic of reading instruction.

Susan Coulter
For the last 20 years, Susan has served in many different roles for the Baldwin Park Unified School District: ESL instructor, community integration instructor in the Adults with Disabilities program, and instructor in the older adult program. For the last 8 years she has taught ABE students. She also has been working for the Azusa Unified School District as a high school subjects teacher and ABE instructor. Her passion for technology was sparked when she was selected and trained as an OTAN Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC) mentor. Through TIMAC, she gained experience mentoring other instructors and presenting at various conferences. For the past three years, she has been facilitating workshops for OTAN and CALPRO. Recently, she designed and developed the technical aspects of CALPRO's online study circle facilitator training.

Deborah Gordon
Deborah’s first class was for 38 Nissan automotive factory workers in Tokyo in 1986. This was followed by short-term ESL classes in the San Francisco Bay Area and a semester as a professor of prospective English teachers at the University of Guadalajara. Deborah started teaching ESL to seventh graders in the Oakland Unified School District in 1991, also teaching in the Independent Study program for 10 years. She has worked as a new teacher mentor, teacher trainer, coordinator of professional development, and curriculum writer, finally coming to OACE as the Distance Learning Coordinator for the ESL & Citizenship Program. Her current projects include web-based learning and coaching writing teachers; and now a developer and trainer of the online study circle facilitator training on the topic of learner persistence. Her goal is to create lively virtual classrooms for all learners in Oakland and beyond, synthesizing the virtual environment with project-based learning.

LaRanda Marr
A native of California, LaRanda has always worked with adult learners, beginning with her first class in Hong Kong while studying abroad for her UC Berkeley master's degree. When she returned to California, she worked in community-based organizations, eventually becoming the Executive Director of the English Action Center, a refugee resettlement project for Southeast Asians. In the early 1980s she came to OACE, where she began as an ESL teacher, continued as a Teacher Coordinator, and is now an Instructional Program Leader for the ESL & Citizenship Program. LaRanda has focused on providing training for teachers in all aspects of the instructional process. She participated on the team that developed the CALPRO Study Circle Facilitation Training on the topic of learner persistence. LaRanda looks forward to working with teachers from all over California in the online environment.

Evidence-Based Reading Instruction
Eighteen practitioners from six agencies are participating in an intensive six-day training on evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI). From January to April, education consultant Margaret Rogers and CALPRO’s Amy Park are facilitating this training in diagnostic assessment and instructional strategies in the four major components of reading. The EBRI training is part of a federal reading reform initiative called Student Achievement in Reading (STAR), developed by the U.S. Department of Education to assist teachers of intermediate adult readers. California was one of the six pilot states starting in 2004. The agencies participating in this year’s training are Elk Grove Community and Adult Education, Fairfield-Suisun Adult School, Hayward Adult School, Martinez Adult Education, Oakland Adult and Career Education, and Stockton School for Adults.