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California Hospital Association  
California Workforce Association  
California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO  
California Manufacturing and Technology Association  
Career Ladders Project for the California Community Colleges  
National Council of La Raza  
PolicyLink  
State Building and Construction Trades of California

**Our vision** is a broadly shared prosperity.

**Our focus** is “middle skill” jobs that require significant post-secondary education and training but not necessarily a baccalaureate degree.

**Our commitment** is to all Californians, including dislocated workers, young men and women of color, disconnected youth, veterans, and welfare recipients.

**California EDGE Coalition**

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*EDGE Response to Governor Brown's  
Adult Education Budget Proposal*

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**GUIDING PRINCIPLES *for*  
RESTRUCTURING ADULT EDUCATION**

**G**overnor Brown's budget proposal for Adult Education restores dedicated state funding for the program, limits the use of funding to core instructional areas “such as vocational education, English as a Second Language, elementary and secondary education, and citizenship”, and proposes to reduce duplication and streamline services by moving responsibility for the Adult Education program from the California Department of Education to the California Community Colleges. The proposal is an long overdue recognition of a policy arena with important consequences for California's future. California's ability to expand the share of students from low-income and unrepresented communities who gain the skills they need to be successful in the labor market may well hold the key to our future. However, the Governor's budget addresses only some of the principal policy issues California needs to examine in restructuring its Adult Education program. The EDGE Campaign urges the Governor and the Legislature to consider the guiding principles outlined in this policy brief in their debate over Adult Education reform.

*EDGE Response to Governor Brown's Adult Education Budget Proposal*

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES for RESTRUCTURING ADULT EDUCATION**

**Adequate, guaranteed funding.** Since Adult Education was “flexed” in 2009, there has been a dramatic decline in programs and services. Implications include:

- California should support the Governor’s commitment to restoring dedicated state funding for Adult Education and focusing that funding on core services.
- The Governor and Legislature should ensure that responsibility for the state funds and the federal WIA Title II funds, which also support the Adult Education program, are within the same institution.

**A focus on transition to college and career.** In the 21st century, the high school diploma or GED can no longer be the goal of Adult Education. California needs to ensure that for most students, transition to college and career is an explicit goal. Whether under community college or CDE governance, Adult Education should link students to career technical and academic pathways that provide them the opportunity to continue their education and attain credentials with currency in the labor market. Implications include:

- The method by which Adult Education funds are awarded and distributed should reflect and ensure conformance with these commitments.

**A commitment to student success.** The length of time it takes students to move through basic skills “levels” is a major reason so many do not achieve meaningful goals. Implications include:

- Whether under a single governance structure or not, the Adult Education program and community college basic skills programs must be tightly integrated so students are not forced to take duplicative, disconnected courses.
- Students should not be rigidly defined by “level”; instead interventions should be flexibly tailored to their needs. Evidence-based approaches that accelerate learning (such as contextualized instruction) should be encouraged.

**A varied and well-integrated delivery system.** Adult Education serves students with a wide range of goals and needs, both instructional and in the support services they need to be successful. Implications include:

- California should ensure that organizations eligible to provide Adult Education services include K-12 districts, community colleges, and community-based organizations. Partnerships among these organizations and others, such as workforce investment boards, should be strongly encouraged.