

## VI. ACCEL's Guiding Framework

This section presents the core principles and models ACCEL will use to create an aligned system to support the success of adult learners, communities and the regional economy:

### Core Principles for ACCEL's Integrated System

Below are our core principles and concepts for a redesigned system.

#### 1. Support for Our Diverse Students

Our students are at the core of the redesigned system. Key principles regarding students include the following:

- **Build on Student Strengths:** Our integrated system recognizes and integrates student strengths – from prior employment and life experience – into students' educational path.
- **Support Diverse Student Educational Goals:** The integrated system encourages long-term career awareness and engagement with learning, but provides options for those who are not immediately college-bound, including core life skills for immigrants, re-entry students, adults with disabilities and others.
- **Increase Awareness and Viability of Pathways to Post-Secondary Education:** The redesigned system raises the bar by combining high expectations with high levels of support, so that more students see post-secondary education as viable and successfully transition and complete valued-added amounts of course work.
- **Expand Alignment to Careers:** Infusing career options and the possibility of career growth into adult education will support expanded student success, and support the educational and career success of the children of adult education students.
- **Provide Differentiated Instructional Options:** Reflecting the goal-orientation of adult students, the redesigned system seeks to tailor education to the strengths and needs of all students.

#### 2. Coordinated and Integrated Agency Roles

The roles of the K12-based adult schools and the community colleges need to be coordinated, and aligned to community partnerships. Key principles include:

- **Structurally Integrate Agency Functions:** The two agencies, along with CBO and governmental partners, operate as ongoing strategic partners through formal agreements, joint programming, joint professional development, co-located services, and shared success metrics and data systems.
- **Differentiate Agency Roles:** The structural integration in the redesigned system allows the strengths of both systems to be fully leveraged:

- **Adult Schools** provide an open door to educational opportunities leading to contributions to society and economic self-sufficiency, primarily for students who have not succeeded in previous education or been out of school for a period of time, never had much formal schooling, or are unfamiliar with US customs and institutions. Adult schools are located in the communities of greatest need and therefore can have great potential positive impact. Adult Schools provide supports for individuals who have had low engagement or success with education and use differentiated and innovative strategies to engage these students and promote learning. Adult Schools efficiently assess students, provide robust information about educational and career options, and refer students to the programs at their Adult School, another Adult School, a Community College or other programs that will most effectively meet their needs. Students who can benefit from post-secondary education will be encouraged to continue on and be provided with the transition and other support services needed to transition and succeed.
- **Community Colleges** provide an open door to educational opportunities leading to societal contributions and economic self-sufficiency, primarily for students who have a base of foundational skills and behavioral characteristics that prepare them for success in a college setting and levels. The colleges' core missions are transfer, basic skills and career-technical education, and offer a wide range of academic and wraparound support services.
- **Educational Partners** provide services for students lacking literacy or having very low literacy, including students who are low literate in their language of origin. Our partners also provide education in jails and other correction settings.
- **Public, Community and Faith-Based Organizations:** CBO's and public agencies provide funding for child care, transportation, other life needs, as well as case management and social and personal support.

### 3. Access to Diverse Employment and Career Paths

Adult education student have a wide variety of employment needs and desired career pathways. This is a key pathway to success, as economic studies show that postsecondary education – defined in the research as including On-the-Job training (OJT), apprenticeships, and military service occupations, as well as college and university – is increasingly important in career success. Key principles and concepts include:

- **Include Options for Job Upgrades and Immediate Employment within Pathways:** Many students need to work for economic self-sufficiency. Further, labor market competitiveness requires job experience in addition to classroom learning.
- **Support Small Business Ownership:** Small business ownership and independent work is a growing and preferred choice in the economy

generally, and for adult education students. The integrated future system will support students who seek skills to start their own businesses.

- **Provide Access to Apprenticeships:** The integrated system includes apprenticeships as potential careers, and includes apprenticeships and other bridges to connect students to these rewarding pathways.
- **Support Transition to Supported Employment:** Some adults with developmental disabilities can achieve the greatest level of autonomy and success in careers not supported by current college pathways. The redesigned adult education system includes bridges to supported employment and other forms of meaningful service and contribution.

#### **4. Effective Educational Pathways and Transition Support**

Educational pathways and transitions are central integrating mechanisms for the AB 86 opportunity. Key principles and concepts include:

- **Provide Effective Pathways for All AB 86 Programs:** The integrated system provides pathways and transition supports for low-skill English speakers, immigrants, and adults with disabilities.
- **Ensure Multiple Points of Entry and Exit:** Provide education in components that allow adults to enter and exit at various skill levels and exit with meaningful learning gains and evidence of success. Use stackable designs to facilitate progressive attainment of skills.
- **Provide Intentional and Resourced Transition Support:** The redesigned system has explicitly funded and staffed transitions.
- **Integrate Basic Skills and Post-Secondary Training:** Contextualized approaches make learning college and career relevant.
- **Co-Locate and Blend Services:** Provide dual and concurrent enrollment, and provide adult school and community college services at the partner agency's location.

#### **5. Adequate and Leveraged Resources**

The research literature stresses the value of intensive programming, faculty collaboration, original materials that contextualize to regional careers, and the necessity of wraparound support services. At the same time, the adult education segment in both agencies has been historically underfunded. The core principles related to resources include:

- **Provide Support for Adoption of Best Practices:** Provide funding for professional development, faculty/teacher planning, design and collaboration.
- **Coordinate Funding Across Programs:** Provide sufficient funding and training for the administration and coordination of multiple funding streams such as private philanthropy, WIOA, Perkins, Calworks support services, etc.

#### **6. Professional and Organizational Development**

Individual and institutional capacity must be expanded to create a coordinated and aligned system. Key principles and concepts include:

- **Conduct Joint Professional Development:** Professionals from multiple agencies develop a common language, understanding, and approaches to their shared mission
- **Promote Active Learning:** Learning among faculty and staff is active and oriented to solving real problems.
- **Provide Skills-Based Learning:** Professional development builds instructional and program design competencies.
- **Leverage Employer Engagement:** Employers advise on the skills required of the incoming workforce and on the needs of specific workplaces. Employers host faculty to learn through direct exposure to workplaces. Advisory boards jointly serve Adult School and Community College programs.
- **Build on the Student Voice:** Faculty and staff are guided in their program development by the systematic input of students.
- **Develop Ongoing Capacity-Building for System Improvement:** Training for ongoing collaboration and change management is an integral component of professional development.

## **System Alignment for Adult Learners**

The graphic on the next page depicts an integrated system. This approach is based on the principles described above, and will be implemented through the strategies described in Section VI. Key elements of the integrated approach include:

**Aligned Assessment, Career Planning and Placement:** The student's first experience sets a foundation for success. The intake process has common elements, including aligned assessments across systems. The student clarifies their long-term educational and career plans and understands the pathways for achieving them. The student is referred to best combination of institutions and services to get them to their goal as quickly as possible.

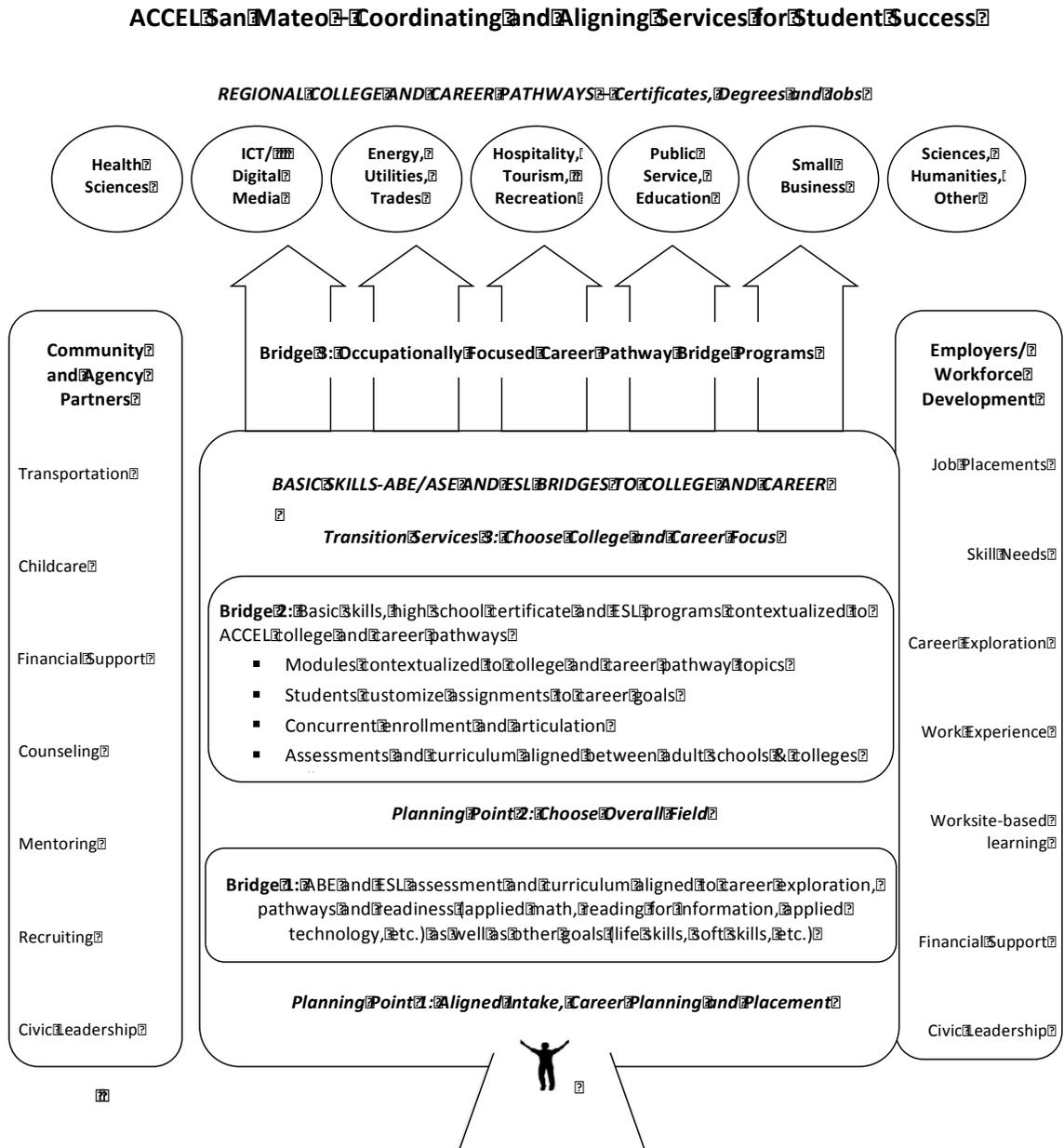
**Bridges to Colleges and Careers:** The redesigned system reinforces college and career preparation, while aligning the programs and services of the partners. Students take classes that are contextualized to their goals, whether immediate employment, life skills or career pathways. Career awareness and soft skills are integrated into courses and activities such as advising, job and college tours, and speakers. Assessments and curriculum are aligned across all educational partners: basic literacy programs, adult schools, and community colleges, and programs offered in correctional and other settings. There is also alignment of pedagogical approaches, creating a common language for student success. Transition services provide dedicated support for students moving between educational providers, and between education and work. Educational strategies accelerate success, including dual enrollment, cohorts, technology, and individualized learning.

**Community Engagement and Wraparound Support Services:** Community partners are integral parts of the integrated system. They extend services provided internally by school, college and other educational providers. As trusted institutions in the community, partners provide access points for educational services, and help provide the guidance, resources and encouragement necessary for success. Partners also advocate for the community recognition and resource support for the adult opportunity system.

**Employer Engagement and Near-Term Employment:** Employers and industry organizations play a foundational role. They provide information on skill needs and demand occupations. They support students in exploring career options, and building resumes through internships and work based learning. They provide jobs for program completers, and provide civic leadership for adult education programs.

**College and Career Pathways:** The integrated system is focused on building skills, competencies and work histories that prepare students for employment in living wage jobs. The college and career pathways provide jobs with upward mobility in stable or growing industries, and connect the adult education system to regional workforce and economic development initiatives.

**Figure 2: Integrated Adult Education System**



## Pathways for Different Student Profiles

Narrative Table 12 illustrates the diversity of potential pathways. Students access educational and career pathways on varying timelines reflecting their educational readiness and their career, family and other life circumstances. The table suggests options for exploration in system design, and these pathways would require collaborative efforts of adult schools, community colleges, community-based organizations, faith communities libraries, employers and government agencies.

**Narrative Table 12: Illustrative Educational Pathways Based on Student Profiles**

	<i>Potential Areas of Near-Term Focus</i>	<i>Potential Areas of Medium- to Long-Term Focus</i>
<i>Low-Skill English Learner</i>	<p>First language literacy at a community-based organization</p> <p>English contextualized to US norms, school communications, life skills</p> <p>Short-term occupational training, including contextualized English</p>	<p>High School Equivalency (HSE)</p> <p>Post-secondary certificate</p> <p>Associate's Degree</p>
<i>High-Skill English Learner</i>	<p>English contextualized to US norms, school communications, life skills</p> <p>English contextualized to existing profession, and validation of non-US credentials</p>	<p>Ongoing professional development</p> <p>Continued English acquisition</p> <p>Lateral move into new career</p>
<i>Low-Skill English Speaker</i>	<p>Attainment of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade reading, writing, Math contextualized to an overall occupational target</p>	<p>High School Equivalency contextualized to career goal</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to Post-Secondary Certificate</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to AA/AS, BA/BS, MA/MS Degrees</p>
<i>Intermediate-Skill English Speaker</i>	<p>HSE contextualized to career goal</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to Post-Secondary Certificate</p>	<p>Career Pathway Leading to AA/AS, BA/BS, MA/MS Degrees</p>
<i>Adult with Developmental, Behavioral or Emotional Disability</i>	<p>Development of a career plan and support system</p> <p>Development of skills in a chosen occupational field</p> <p>HSE contextualized to career goal</p>	<p>Career Pathway leading meaningful engagement with a chosen occupation</p> <p>Ongoing skill building and education</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to Post-Secondary Certificate</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to AA/AS, BA/BS, MA/MS Degrees</p>

	<b><i>Potential Areas of Near-Term Focus</i></b>	<b><i>Potential Areas of Medium- to Long-Term Focus</i></b>
	<p>Development of a career plan, support system, and immediate income/employment stability</p> <p>Attainment of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade reading, writing, Math contextualized to an overall occupational target</p> <p>HSE contextualized to career goal</p>	<p>Career Pathway Leading to Post-Secondary Certificate</p> <p>Career Pathway Leading to AA/AS, BA/BS, MA/MS Degrees</p>