# The California Adult Education 2008—09 Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program

## A Review

Dennis Porter, OTAN Distance Learning Consultant,
and Dr. Richard Stiles, CASAS Consultant

2010

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**The California Adult Education 2008 – 09 Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program — A Review**

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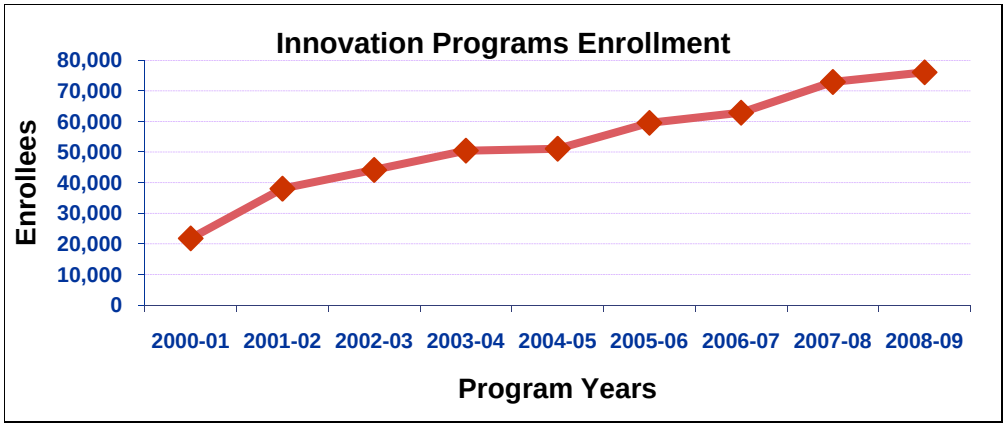
## Executive Summary

State legislation permits California adult schools to spend up to five percent of their apportionment on non-traditional educational approaches. In 2008, legislation expanded the permission to 15 percent, based on specific requirements. The resulting "Innovation Programs" continue to grow while overall adult education remains relatively static. In program year 2008–09, nearly 73,000 adult learners participated in Innovation Programs, all of which were distance learning in nature. This report draws information from the annual Innovation Program applications, the statewide student information system, TOPSpro, and from statewide CASAS reading and listening tests. The availability of this data enables researchers to describe and examine distance learning program characteristics, learner characteristics, and learner progress and outcomes using several measures.

For the fourth year, the report compares and contrasts key outcome data between classroom, distance-learning-only, and blended learning. The importance of blended learning as an effective intervention whenever possible is clearly documented. This has major program implications at the state and national levels. When comparing classroom data with the Innovation Programs, it is clear that the blended-learning programs combining classroom and distance learning instruction are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities.

In California adult education the distance learning blended model has a very specific description. It refers to adult schools with Innovation Programs that offer somewhat simultaneous classroom and distance learning courses in which students can dual enroll. The key considerations are that each course must have its own approved course outline, course number, assigned instructor, separate student roster, and distinctive and different full-length course materials. The courses can share the same course outline (A22), meaning the courses cover the same designated competencies, but the course materials must be different, and each course has its own course number.

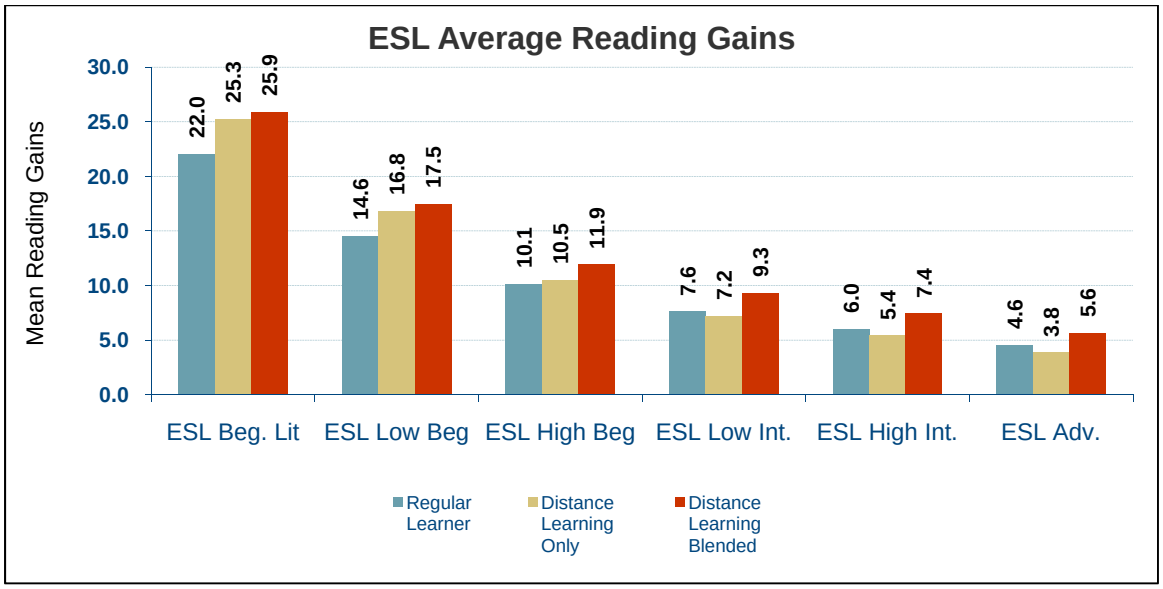
One hundred twenty adult schools were approved to offer distance learning programs. Over 76,000 learners participated in these programs. The following chart displays the growth of distance learning over this decade. It shows steady growth in student participation in distance learning.




*Source: CASAS 2009*

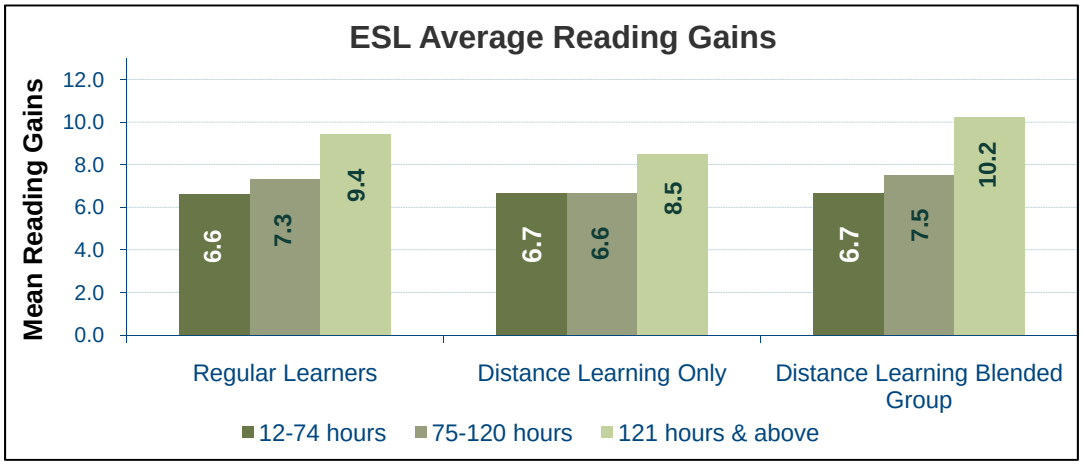
## ESL Distance Learning Effectiveness

The following two charts document the relative effectiveness for English as a second language (ESL) distance learning, which is the predominant program area. The first describes relative ESL average reading gain scores and the second documents reading gains by hours of instruction and method of instruction. Overall distance learning interventions perform comparatively well for the ESL beginning literacy through the ESL low-intermediate segments, while blended learning again performs the best throughout the six National Reporting System (NRS) levels of ESL.




*Source: CASAS 2009*

The following chart compares the reading gains for ESL learners reported in the federal Workforce Investment Act Title II (WIA II) National Reporting System (NRS) in 2008–09. It indicates that blended learners perform the best and that the distance learning cohort, as a group, performed lower but somewhat comparable to regular learners.



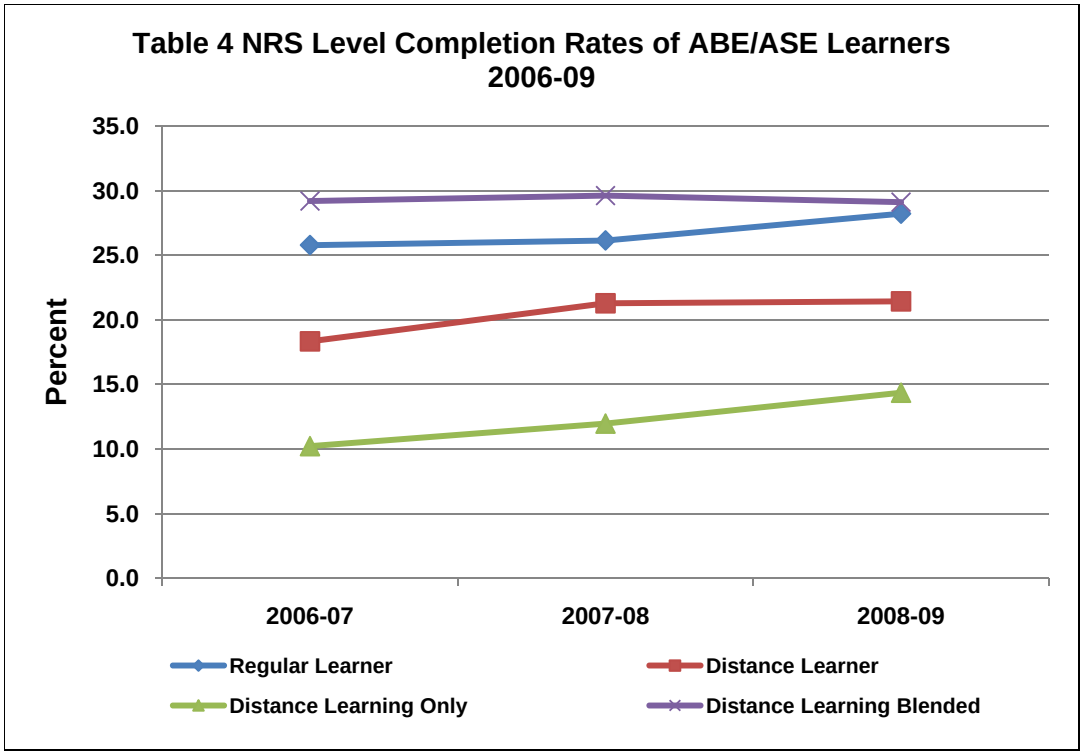

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Learner Persistence and Completion Rates

The Innovation Program participants' level of program completion was better than adult school classroom programs with blended learning showing the highest completion rate. Overall Innovation Program persistence rates for blended distance learning are higher than the classroom programs. However, distance-learning-only programs showed the lowest levels of persistence and have proven to be the most difficult group on which to obtain matched pre– and post–tests. Persistence is defined as completing a matched CASAS pre- and post-test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction.

The three-year comparisons of student persistence indicate that blended learning students perform the best, followed by the classroom learner. Distance–learning–only students have the lowest persistence rates. CASAS defines persistence as completing a post-test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction.

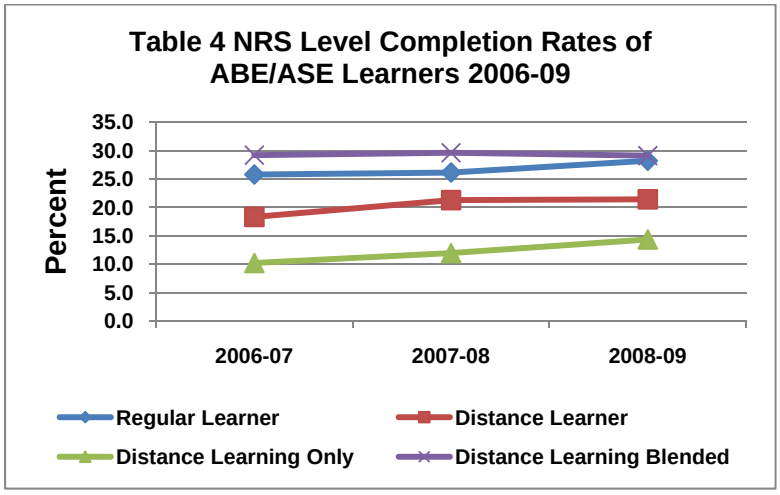
**Persistence Rates of CA WIA Title II ABE/ASE Learners 2006-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

The following graphic displays the relative ABE/ASE level completion rates for the three learning interventions together with the average between distance–learning–only and blended distance learning. Blended learners perform the best. The percent of adult basic education to adult secondary education learners completing an instructional level are roughly the same for blended learning and classroom learning in 2008–09. All learning interventions show increases in level completion over time.

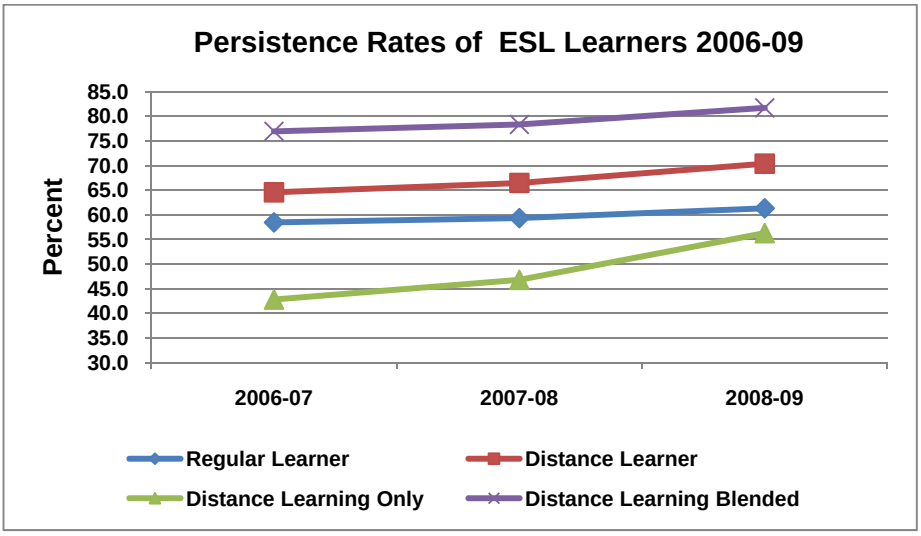
**NRS Level Completion Rates of CA WIA Title II ABE/ASE Learners 2006-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

Blended learning in most cases and most importantly in ESL beginning through intermediate levels has the highest completion rates. Persistence means that a student has completed a pre- and post-test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction intervening between the two tests. The blended learner rates strongly influence the overall distance learning rates in the chart. Distance–learning–only shows a steady increase over the three year period.

**Persistence Rates of CA WIA Title II ESL Learners 2006-09**



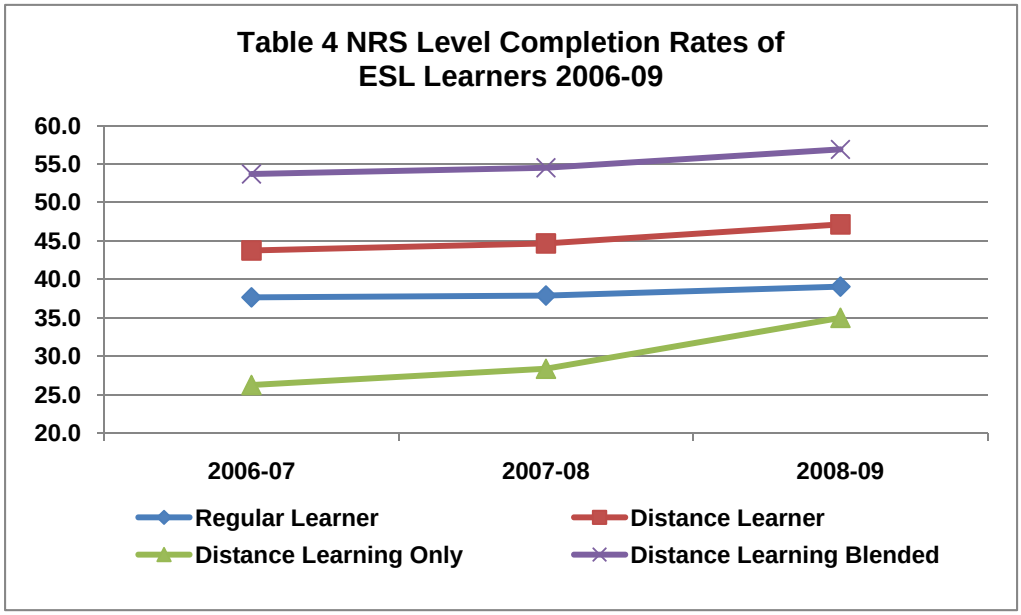

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Tested learners in the Innovation Programs' ESL/ESL–Citizenship programs showed higher mean reading gains for the <180, 181–200, and 210–220 CASAS scoring ranges than the CASAS historical norm. Their comparative listening score mean gains also are greater than the historical.

Blended learning in most cases and most importantly in ESL beginning through intermediate levels has the highest completion rates. Completion means that a student has completed an NRS Educational Functioning Level (e.g. ESL beginning

literacy). All learning interventions have improved over time. As shown in this and the following chart, the persistence and completion rates of learners in distance–learning–only were substantially below that attained in 2006–07 by ESL learners in regular classroom settings; however, this gap closed considerably in 2008–09 where both the persistence and completion rates of the distance–learning–only participants increased to the extent that they were nearly comparable to those attained by the regular classroom learners.

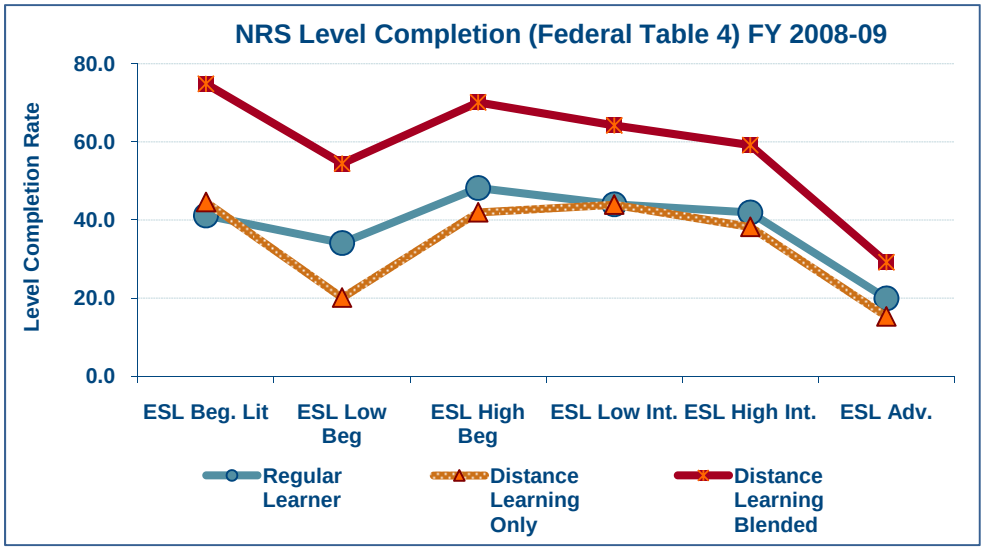
**NRS Level Completion Rates of CA WIA Title II ESL Learners 2006-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

Completion rates for ESL beginning literacy, low-beginning, low-intermediate, and high-intermediate are impressive, especially for distance–learning–only as the following chart indicates. The drop in completion rates at the ESL Advanced level is typical and represents a small percentage of learners.

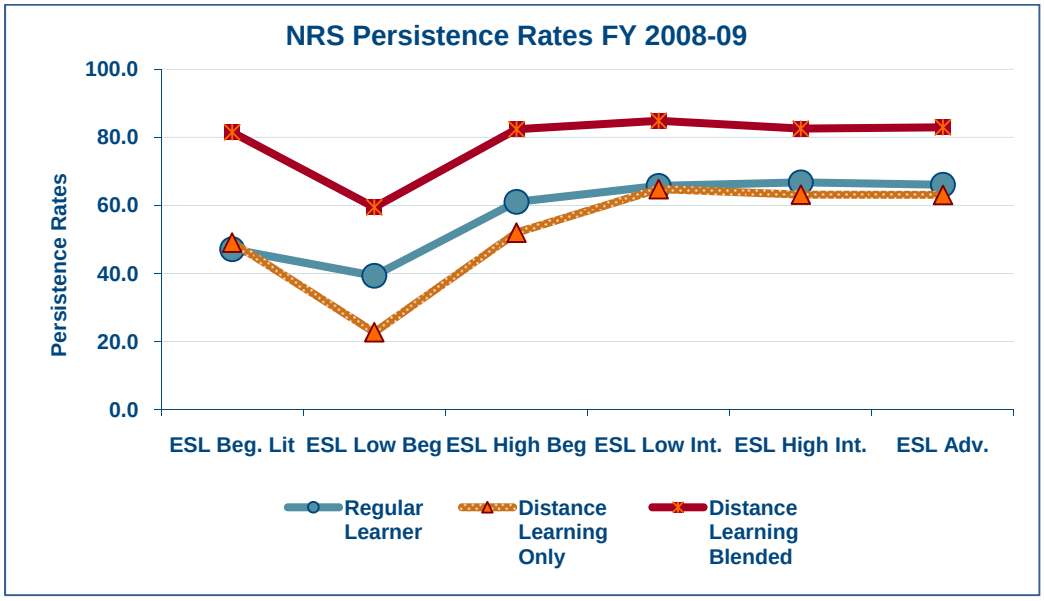
**Completion Rates for ESL Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular Learners – FY 2008-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

Blended learning and distance learning show higher persistence rates with the federally reported WIA Title II learners. In this chart the CASAS definition of persistence is used – completing a CASAS pre- and post-test. At the ESL low-beginning level, all three modes of ESL instructional interventions found post–testing to be problematic, but especially so for distance learning participants as they performed poorly in comparison to classroom and blended learning. However, with the other learning levels, distance learning performs very well. Again, it is the blended model that enables the overall distance learning approach to show good results.

**Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular and Blended Learners**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Reasons for Distance Learning

Distance learning provides significant and meaningful alternatives for adults for multiple reasons. Adults may:

Need more practice of skills to achieve mastery
Have work and family obligations that make attending a regular class time difficult
Lack the full confidence to participate in a large classroom setting in front of other students
Want the participation, assistance, and support of their families in their learning
Live in locations without convenient access to traditional classes
Live in areas where desired programs are either full or not available
Be interested in pursuing their education in work settings with co–workers
Learn more effectively from video, audio, and Web–based media when moving at their own pace
Have other reasons that they cannot access traditional classroom programs

Remember that adults engaged in formal education are voluntary learners. They participate to advance themselves in multiple ways. Distance learning adds another intervention option to assist them.

## Program Year Statistics

Video and audio checkout programs continue to be the most common delivery modalities followed by online instruction. English as a Second Language instructional programs represent the bulk of the Innovation Program enrollments (85.5%) in 2008–09. Los Angeles County adult schools dominate the enrollment statistics (64.9%) and the outcome data. Women represent almost two-thirds (63.1%) of the basic education participants in the Innovation Programs. The core basic education programs are English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), and GED/adult secondary education (ASE).

In 2008–09, age group participation was balanced between the 21–30 (26.9%) and the 31–40 (27.1%) age groups. Hispanics accounted for 71.2 percent of enrollment with Asians representing 17 percent. Spanish was the primary language spoken by 73.6 percent of the population.

Over 45 percent of the Innovation Program participants reported having nine or less years of schooling. Well over half (56.7%) of the 2008–09 Innovation Program participants reported having no earned degrees with 26.5 percent having high school diplomas or GEDs. Less than 25 percent (24.5%) of the ESL learners were at the beginning or beginning literacy levels at the time of entry and 53 percent were determined to be at the intermediate levels.

Over 84 percent of all the learners reported that improving basic skills or English language skills were their primary reasons for enrolling in 2008–09. Improving their English skills accounted for 69.1 percent and improving basic skills was 15.8 percent.

## Conclusions

The Innovation Programs follow the same accountability requirements as class–based apportionment programs. Over the past seven years the Innovation Programs have been successful in standardizing their reporting procedures, while still maintaining alternative instructional delivery methods. All Innovation Program students are expected to be tracked in the TOPSpro system, and all programs are using a standardized format for both program applications and annual evaluation. This format makes gathering of data and program monitoring more substantive and meaningful.

CASAS pre- and post- reading and listening testing are not required for state programs, unless those agencies participate in the Workforce Investment Act Title II (WIA II) program. However, state-funded programs have been strongly encouraged to implement standardized testing. Pre- and post-testing are more difficult than in traditional settings. The tests are not standardized for programs other than ESL, ABE and GED/ASE. In the past, the Innovation Program coordinators have noted that they collect more program documentation and learner progress information than do the classroom programs.

The Innovation Programs continue to meet the three crucial benefit–cost criteria often used to evaluate the utility of a program intervention. They are:

**Effectiveness** — CASAS pre– and post–test data indicate that the Innovation Programs' ESL program participants, on average, show substantial learning increases in reading and listening. Much of this is attributed to the results of the blended learning model. The ABE/ASE participants show learning gains consistent with historical CASAS test data.

**Efficiency** — Participant and program cost data indicate that the Innovation Programs are cost effective. Common sense tells us that the programs would not be offered if they were not cost effective.

**Equity** — Reported years in school, primary language, reading and listening scores on entry, and ethnic data indicate that lower level, often hard–to–serve learners are the primary participants in the Innovation Programs.

This rich data provides the most detailed comparative examination of adult basic education learning interventions available in the United States. They result from a statewide data system, standardized testing and assessment, and the foresight of California legislators to permit school districts to use distance learning as an instructional intervention.

This is the eighth annual report that similar summary conclusions have been reached. A closer look at comparative classroom, blended learning, and distance-learning-only data follows in the full report.

# The California Adult Education 2008—09 Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program

This report is the eighth in a series of research papers on the California Innovation and Alternative Instructional Delivery Program.[i] The purpose is to provide current information on the implementation of California Education Code (EC) 52522, give an overview of the adult education Innovation Program initiative, and offer comparative information on adult education distance learning in California.[ii]

The report draws data from three sources as follows: [iii] [iv]

- 2008–09 Innovation Program applications
- 2008–09 Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records
- 2008–09 CASAS reading and listening pre and post tests

These data sets provide a detailed examination of adult school distance learning programs in California.

## The Legislation

In 1993, the California legislature passed EC 52522 permitting the Superintendent of Public Instruction to approve adult school plans to spend up to five percent of their block entitlement on innovation and alternative instructional delivery. This authorization and the subsequent initiative are commonly known as the Innovation Program initiative. It was amended in 2008 to permit programs to spend up to 15 percent of their apportionment on innovation programs. (See endnote [iv])

Types of innovative programs identified in the legislation follow:[v]

1. Worksite adult basic education skills instruction
2. Distance learning using video and other communication technologies
3. Home–based and community–based independent study approaches using instructional technologies
4. Tests of alternative reimbursement approaches other than average daily attendance to determine whether they are reasonable and feasible, to the extent that there is no decrease in the number of students served nor an increase in cost to the state

Any adult school wishing to request authorization for the innovative programming submits an annual application to the California Department of Education. The application form is available on the CDE Adult Education Office Web site - www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ae/ga - under Governance and Accountability. Authorized programs are required to submit an annual report outlining budget information, student activities, learners served, accomplishments, the alternative instructional delivery design, average daily attendance (ADA) accounting procedures, and how the program is evaluated and continuously improved.

## Current Uses

The Innovation Program initiative began in earnest in 1995. Almost all the approved innovative programs have fallen under the California adult education definition of distance learning. This means that several key requirements must be met. They are:

- The separation of teacher and learner in space and/or time during at least a majority of each instructional process
- The provision of two–way communication between teacher, tutor, or educational agency and learner
- The use of educational media and technology to unite teacher and learner and carry course content
- The control of the learning pace and frequency by student rather than the distance instructor[vi]

The 2008 changes in the Innovation Program legislation added a definition of distance learning by reference. See endnote.[iv]

There is a continued stress on the importance of two-way communication. While some people equate distance education with impersonal self-directed learning, California adult education emphasizes the role of the instructor in providing the learning intervention. In fact, feedback and comments from the field indicate that the relationship between the teacher and the learning in distance learning is often rated as more responsive and personal than in traditional classes.

## One Hundred Twenty Participating Adult Schools

The statewide Innovation Program has reached extensive acceptance by the adult education field. In program year 2008-09, 120 adult schools were approved to operate Innovation Programs.

Feedback from the field indicates that an Innovation Program for small adult schools is too expensive and time consuming to implement with a smaller budget.

## Current Participation

Table 1 describes the distribution of distance learners in program year 2008-09. According to TOPSpro data collected by CASAS, 76,061 learners participated in Innovation Programs in program year 2008-09. The 76,061 number indicates the number of enrollees per program area and includes 2,258 learners who enrolled in more than one program during the year. About three to three and a half percent of the unduplicated enrollees enrolled in more than one program over the three-year period. There were 73,803 unduplicated (unique) enrollees during 2008-09.

**Table 1**

**Three Years of Innovation Program Participation with Percent of Program Enrollment for 2008–09**

| | 2006–07 | 2007–08 | 2008–09 | 2008–09 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **%** |
| **ABE** | 722 | 1,036 | 1,119 | 1.47% |
| **ESL** | 55,905 | 61,978 | 65,030 | 85.50% |
| **HS/GED** | 2,221 | 4,045 | 4,323 | 5.68% |
| **Citizenship** | 89 | 94 | 140 | 0.18% |
| **Career Tech Education** | 923 | 1,252 | 1,037 | 1.36% |
| **Adults with Disabilities** | 48 | 108 | 31 | 0.04% |
| **Health & Safety** | 96 | 298 | 123 | 0.16% |
| **Home Economics** | 45 | 62 | 52 | 0.07% |
| **Parent Education** | 2,614 | 3,826 | 3,914 | 5.15% |
| **Older Adults** | 199 | 201 | 292 | 0.38% |
| **Total Enrollments by Program** | 62,862 | 72,900 | 76,061 | 100% |
| **Total Number Unique (Unduplicated) Enrollees** | **60,794** | **70,301** | **73,803** | |
| **Number Enrollees in Multiple Programs** | **2,068** | **2,599** | **2,258** | |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

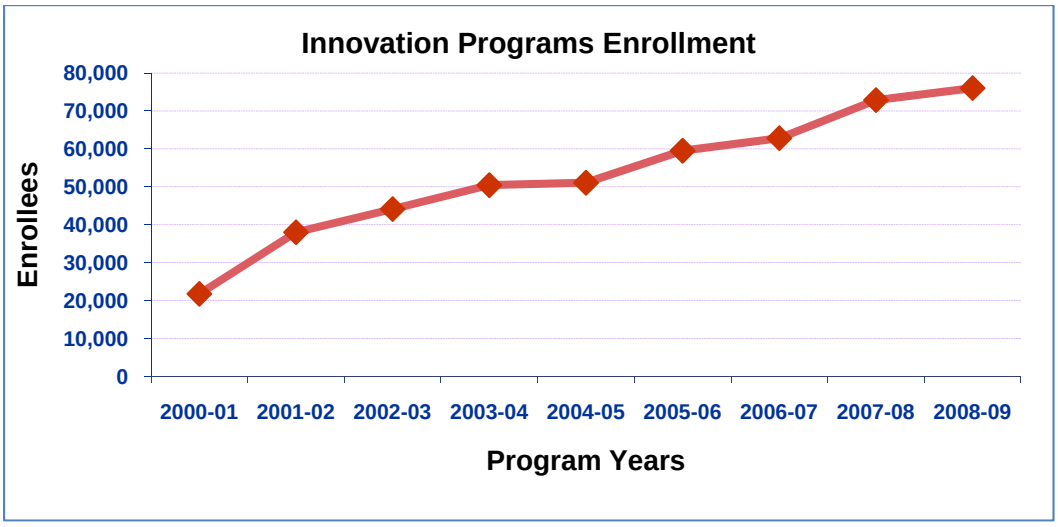
## Changes in Participation Since 2000

Chart 1 displays the growth in the Innovation Programs since standardized data has been available. In the earlier days, some Innovation Programs did not document their “distance learning” participation, so there may be a slight undercount in program year 2000-01.

The graphic shows a steady growth in Innovation Program size even though overall adult school apportionment has remained reasonably stable for this time period. The probable explanation for this steady rise is the increase in participating adult schools and adult schools seeking waivers to allow them to operate at seven percent, especially Los Angeles Unified School District. The new legislation has not impacted this program year.

**Chart 1**

**Program Enrollment Participation in Innovation Programs from 2000 to 2009**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

The changes in program participation from 2001 to 2008-09 are displayed in Table 2. There are significant increases with the ABE, HS/GED, Career Technical Education and Parent Education programs, but ESL participation predominates throughout.

**Table 2**

**Innovation Program Participation by Program Areas 2000 to 2009**

| | 2000–01 | 2001–02 | 2002–03 | 2003–04 | 2004–05 | 2005–06 | 2006–07 | 2007–08 | 2008–09 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** | **N** |
| **ABE** | 359 | 486 | 335 | 398 | 526 | 750 | 722 | 1,036 | 1,119 |
| **ESL** | 19,835 | 35,468 | 40,581 | 46,621 | 47,140 | 53,766 | 55,905 | 61,978 | 65,030 |
| **HS/GED** | 618 | 714 | 753 | 1,152 | 1,039 | 1,885 | 2,221 | 4,045 | 4,323 |
| **Citizenship** | 34 | 19 | 183 | 95 | 111 | 130 | 89 | 94 | 140 |
| **Career Tech Ed.** | 364 | 456 | 622 | 592 | 693 | 714 | 923 | 1,252 | 1,037 |
| **Adults w/Disabilities** | 66 | 96 | 34 | 163 | 33 | 72 | 48 | 108 | 31 |
| **Health & Safety** | 1 | 55 | 27 | 74 | 108 | 53 | 96 | 298 | 123 |
| **Home Economics** | 1 | 24 | 55 | 82 | 73 | 44 | 45 | 62 | 52 |
| **Parent Ed.** | 359 | 589 | 1,414 | 1,113 | 1,116 | 1,921 | 2,614 | 3,826 | 3,914 |
| **Older Adults** | 152 | 127 | 145 | 175 | 250 | 210 | 199 | 201 | 292 |
| **Total** | 21,789 | 38,034 | 44,149 | 50,465 | 51,089 | 59,545 | 62,862 | 72,900 | 76,061 |
| | *Unduplicated Enrollment* | | | | | *57,629* | 60,794 | 70301 | 73,803 |

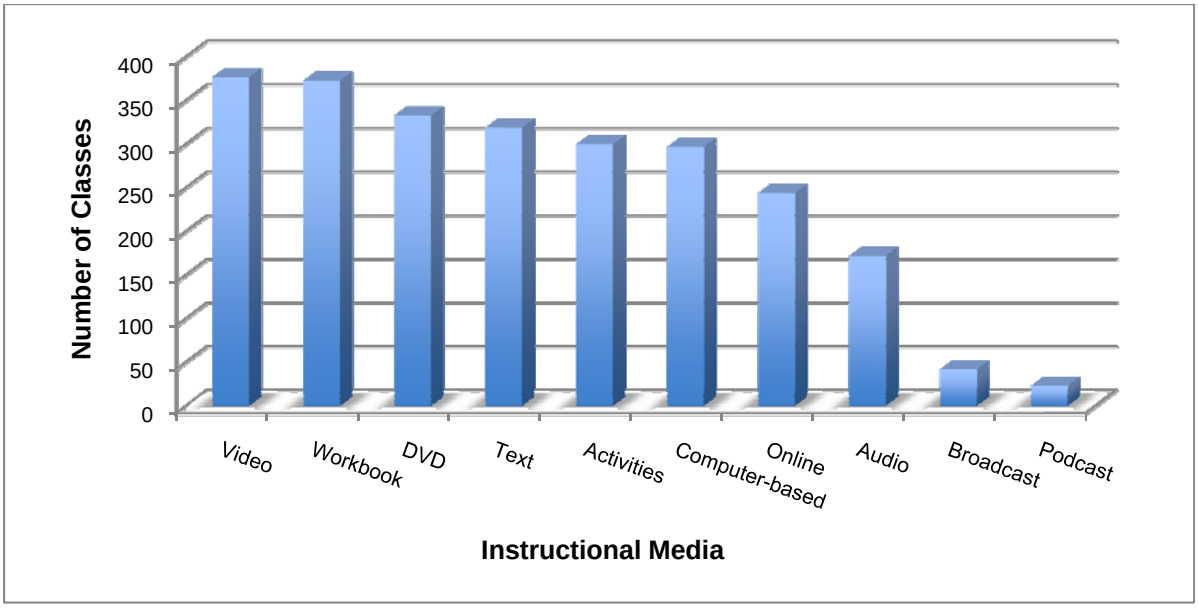
*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Distribution by Instructional Media Delivery Type

Chart 2 summarizes the most popular instructional media types proposed for FY 2008-09. These numbers reflect multiple classes offered at some adult schools. Video/DVD checkout remains, by far, the most popular media used in Innovation Programs.

**Chart 2**

**The Most Popular Instructional Delivery Modes Used in the Innovation Program Courses in FY 2008–09**




*Source: 2008–2009 Applications*

The video and audio media normally are provided on a checkout basis with workbooks, study packets, work assignments, or activities included. Since video checkout usually is combined with one or more other delivery methods, it makes determining the statewide percentages of the delivery modes difficult.

The checkout model is flexible and easy to manage. The availability of pre-produced and school-site produced videos continues to make checkout a popular model. Multiple delivery methods can be used for any approved course.

The "Other" category encompasses a wide range of activities including "software to develop English and life skills," community activities, group discussions, DVDs, "learning events," and career plans and practice interviews.

## Class Distribution by Instructional Areas

Innovation Programs are permitted to offer multiple classes. It is not unusual for an adult school to offer several levels of ESL, an ABE course, as well as a parent education course. Table 3 describes the fiscal year 2008-09 distribution for the six areas of authorized instruction.[vii]

ESL is the predominant instructional course offered (2,189). Those courses represent 67.8 percent of the total courses offered. It is a decrease from the previous year of 9.1 percent, indicating that more distance learning options are being offered in other program areas. GED/ASE (16.9%) and career education (7.3%) are the next most popular.

**Table 3**

**Distribution of Innovation Program Classes by Instructional Area (FY 2008–09)**

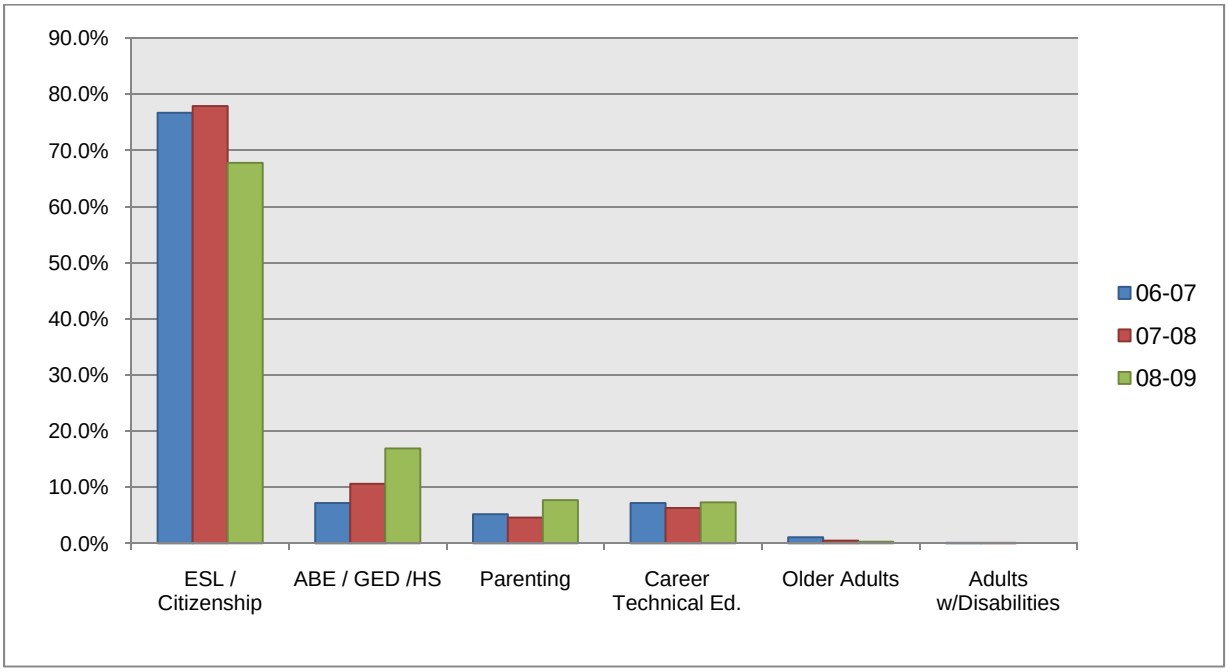
| Program Area | Number of Classes | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| ESL/Citizenship | 2,189 | 67.8% |
| ABE/GED/HS | 545 | 16.9% |
| Parenting, Family, and Consumer | 248 | 7.7% |
| Career Technical Education | 237 | 7.3% |
| Older Adults | 9 | 0.3% |
| Adults with Disabilities | 1 | 0.0% |
| Total | 3,229 | 100% |

*Source: 2008-09 Applications*

Comparing the percentage of offerings in different program areas from the last three years, it is again clear that ABE and ASE courses as well as Parent Education courses are increasing their percentages, even though are far smaller than ESL.

**Chart 3**

**Annual Percentage of Enrollment of Courses in Each Program Area 2006-09**



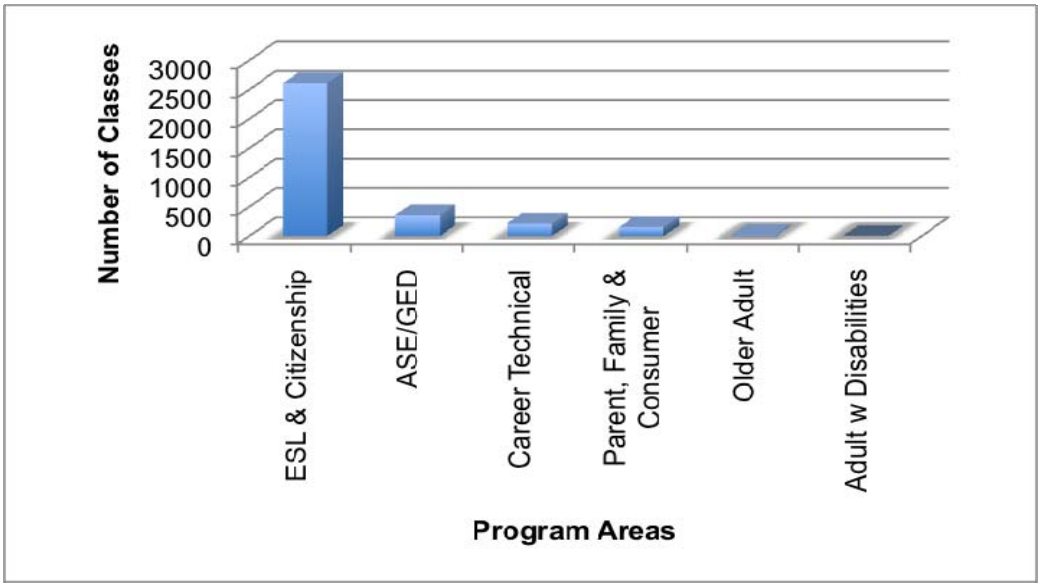

*Source: 2006-09 Applications*

The CDE Adult Education Office modified the course coding system effective in the 2006-07 fiscal year, resulting in slight changes the authorized areas of program instruction.

This data is based on approved courses and classes, not necessarily those actually offered. Chart 4 provides the rank order and numbers of courses proposed for each program area. ESL offerings continue to predominate.

**Chart 4**

**Rank Order Distribution of Innovation Program Classes by Instructional Area (FY 2008–09)**




*Source: 2008-09 Applications*

Most of the adult high school subjects, ASE, are, in fact, GED test preparation. Few high school subjects are offered via the Innovation Program initiative. The Independent Study option is often considered more useful because it is not capped at five percent, although other rules apply to this delivery method.

### Estimated Cost per Learner

There is a very wide range of local averages for cost per learner per course. Innovation Program applications show the estimated average cost per learner ranging from $0 to $2,406. End-of-the-year program evaluation reports indicate that the average distance learning cost per student was $340. The median was $254. All these numbers are less than the previous year. Distance learning is not supported by new funds, but rather a portion of the adult school's state apportionment.

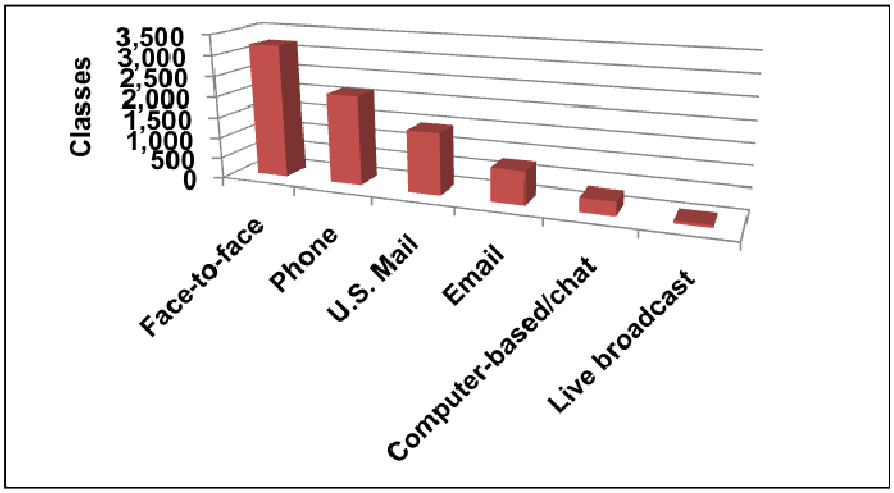
### Student – Teacher Contact

Learners and teachers are expected to maintain contact throughout each distance learning class. This contact can include student orientation, assessment, demonstrating student progress, tutoring, progress monitoring, advising, and explaining new assignments. The distribution among the primary methods of student–teacher interactions follows.

Chart 5 documents the primary methods of contact. Many programs offer multiple ways for student contact with face-to-face communication being the preferred method.

**Chart 5**

**Distribution of Offered Student – Teacher Contact Methods**




*Source: 2008-09 Applications*

## Monitoring Student Progress

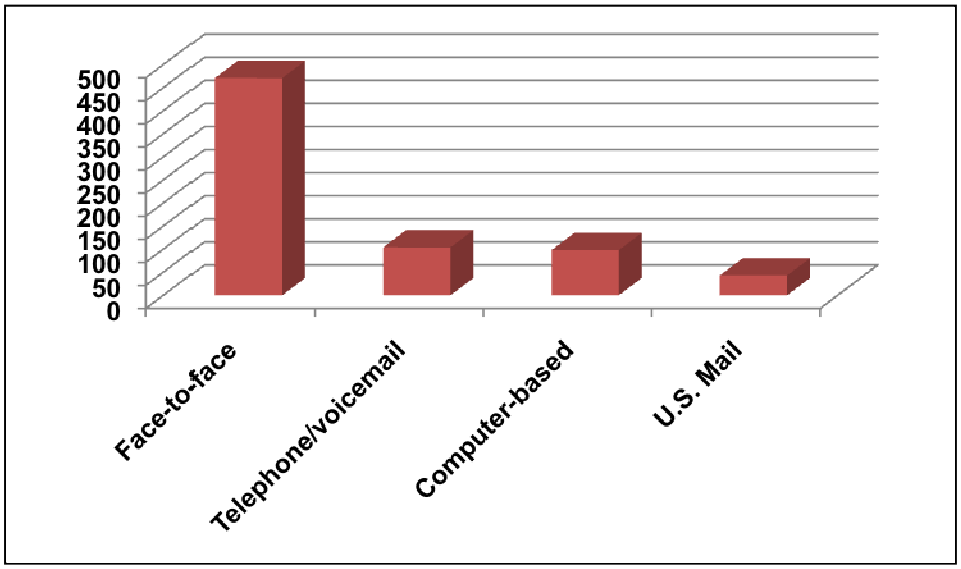
Three key events are identified in assigning the student to the proper course: the placement into a course, the initial orientation, and the TOPSpro data entry. The following graphs (Charts 6 and 7) document how the contact occurs for each event.

## Student Placement

Face-to-face communications between the student and teacher for the distance learning classes was by far the most common placement approach (Chart 6). Computer-based and email were the next most common approaches used in placing learners into the proper course.

**Chart 6**

**Contact Methods for Learner Orientation by Course (FY 2008–09)**

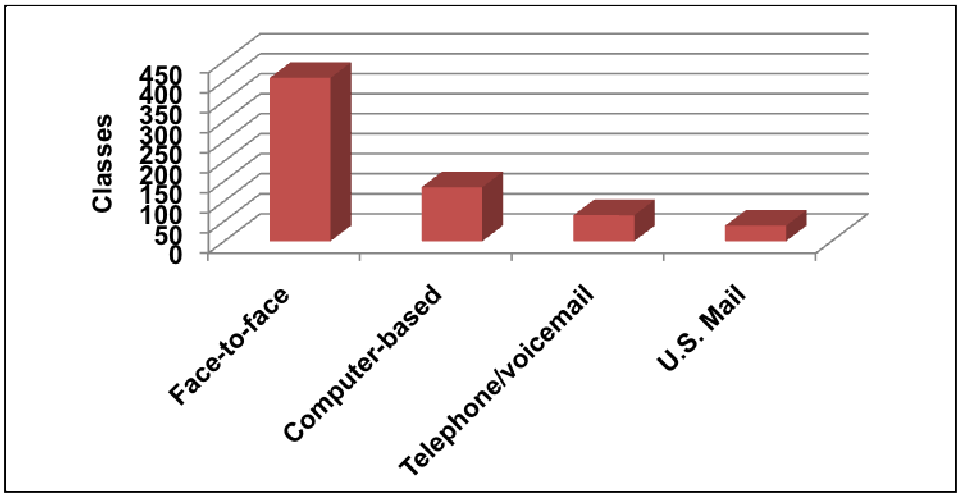



*Source: 2008–2009 Applications*

Innovation Programs use the Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records to maintain student information. All adult schools are required to utilize these data elements as part of their apportionment-related reporting. Face-to-face data collection is offered in 69.7 percent of the courses.

**Chart 7**

**Distribution of Approaches to Course Level TOPSpro Data Collection (FY 2008–09)**




*Source: 2008-09 Applications*

## Accountability

All adult schools are required to utilize the Tracking of Programs and Students (TOPSpro) Entry and Update records for their student participation reporting. This applies to the Innovation Programs also. Other program outcomes are included in the annual performance reporting submitted by the Innovation Programs to the Department of Education's Adult Education Office. This interactive report form is available to the Innovation Program administrators via the Internet at: http://adulted.otan.us.

### 2008–09 Learner Statistics

The following tables and charts are drawn from TOPSpro data collected by CASAS for fiscal year 2008-09. They are based on programs that identify their learners as participating in distance learning programs, and consequently are a very good approximation of the statewide Innovation Programs' learning populations. The data are based on unduplicated counts.

### Participation by Instructional Program

As reported, over 85 percent (85.5%) of the learners recorded via TOPSpro participated in ESL programs. The adult secondary education/GED programs (5.7%) followed by the parent education programs (5.2%) represent a distant second and third most popular programs.

**Table 4**

**Students Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program (FY 2008–09)**

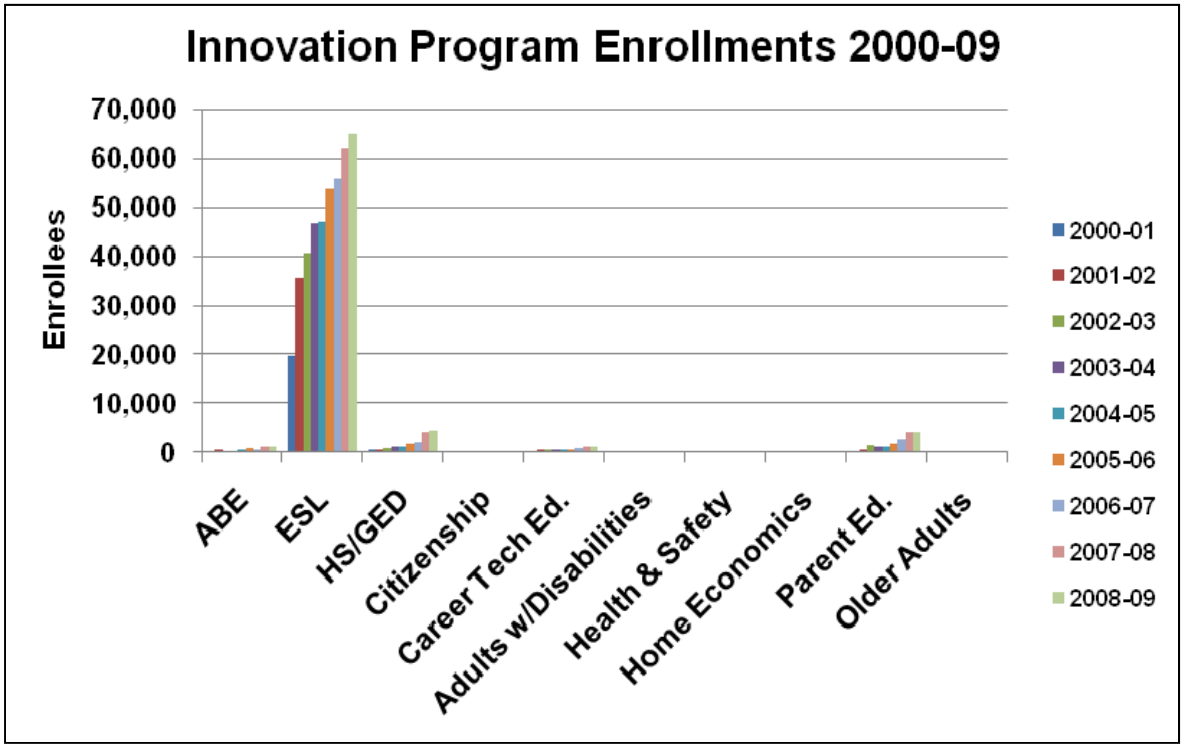
| Program | N | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| ABE | 1,119 | 1.5% |
| ESL | 65,030 | 85.5% |
| HS/GED | 4,323 | 5.7% |
| Citizenship | 140 | 0.2% |
| Career Tech Ed. | 1,037 | 1.4% |
| Adults w/Disabilities | 31 | 0.0% |
| Health & Safety | 123 | 0.2% |
| Home Economics | 52 | 0.1% |
| Parent Ed. | 3,914 | 5.2% |
| Older Adults | 292 | 0.4% |
| **Total** | **76,061** | **100%** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

The ESL percentage of participation over the last two program years has decreased slightly. Overall there has been a steady increase in Innovation Program participation from inception with an increase of 3,161 learners from 2007-08 to 2008-09.

**Chart 8**

**Comparison of Annual Population Participating in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program, Fiscal Years 2000-01 through 2008-09**




*Sources: CASAS 2009 and previous*

## Enrollment by Geographic Region

The Innovation Programs distribution by region remains very uneven. Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles Unified School District, in particular, dominate the enrollment statistics with 64.9% of the participants residing in Los Angeles County for 2008-09. The distribution of program enrollments for the 11 geographical regions across the two years remained relatively constant with the exception of the South Bay Region that increased from 3,599 in 2007-08 to 6,166 in 2008-09.

**Table 5**

**Innovation Programs Distribution of Program Enrollments by Region – FY 2007-09**

| | 2007–08 | | 2008–09 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CDE Geographic Region** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| Bay Region | 6447 | 8.8 | 6176 | 8.1 |
| Capitol Region | 4692 | 6.4 | 5081 | 6.7 |
| Central Valley Region | 837 | 1.1 | 1550 | 2.0 |
| Costa del Sur Region | 1994 | 2.7 | 2083 | 2.7 |
| Delta Sierra Region | 3 | 0.0 | 4 | 0.0 |
| Los Angeles Region | 50451 | 69.2 | 49416 | 64.9 |
| North Coast Region | 1078 | 1.5 | 1396 | 1.8 |
| Northeastern Region | 118 | 0.2 | 84 | 0.1 |
| Rims Region | 897 | 1.2 | 1018 | 1.3 |
| South Bay Region | 3599 | 4.9 | 6166 | 8.1 |
| Southern Region | 2784 | 3.8 | 3113 | 4.1 |
| **Total** | **72,900** | **100.0** | **76,087** | **100.0** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Distribution by Gender and Program

Women participated in far greater numbers than men (63.1% to 36.9%). This is a slight decrease in women's' participation from the previous year (64.8%% to 35.2%). The preponderance of women was even greater in the career education (75%), adult basic education (67.6%) and older adult programs (74%).

**Table 6**

**Gender of Students Enrolled in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2008-09**

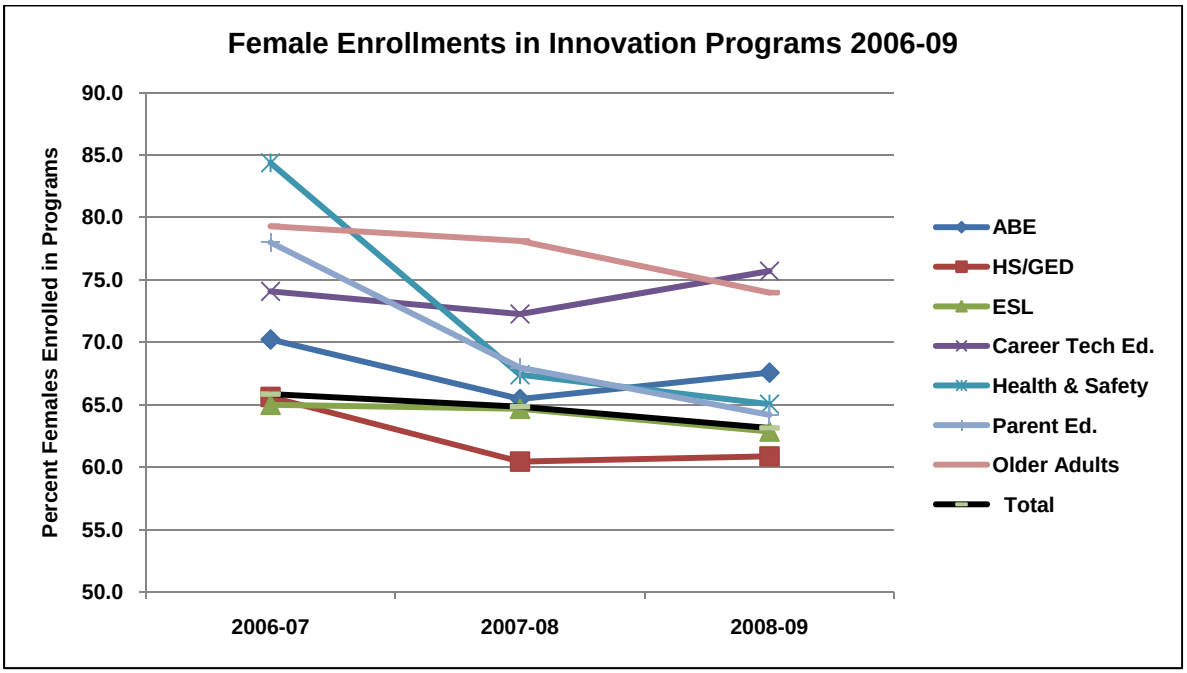
| Program | Female % | Male % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| ABE | 67.6 | 32.4 | 1,119 |
| HS/GED | 60.9 | 39.1 | 4,348 |
| ESL | 62.8 | 37.2 | 64,998 |
| Citizenship | 72.9 | 27.1 | 140 |
| Career Tech Education | 75.7 | 24.3 | 1,037 |
| Adults with Disabilities | 51.6 | 48.4 | 31 |
| Health & Safety | 65.0 | 35.0 | 123 |
| Home Economics | 88.5 | 11.5 | 52 |
| Parent Education | 64.2 | 35.8 | 3,912 |
| Older Adults | 74.0 | 26.0 | 292 |
| **Total** | **63.1** | **36.9** | **76,052** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

However as shown in the following graphic (Chart 9), female participation in the innovation programs has decreased in all program areas over the past three years except in career technical education (vocational education). This decrease included ABE which seemed to rebound in 2008–09 from the decrease the previous year. *(Note: Data is only shown for programs with a total innovation program enrollment of 200 or more in 2006–07).*

**Chart 9**

**Innovation Program Enrollment by Program Area of Females From 2006 to 2009**




*Sources: CASAS 2009*

## Participation by Age Group

Participation by age groups shows the 21-30 and 31-40 year old age groups being the largest cohorts with about the same percentage (26.9% and 27.1%), which is almost the same as the previous year (26.7% and 26.9%). The third largest cohort was age 41-50 at 19.2%. Sixteen percent (16.2%) of the participants were 51 years or older. Among the ESL learners, the largest program, the 31-40 age cohort was the largest (28.3%).

**Table 7**

**Learner Age in Innovation Programs by Instructional Program – FY 2008-09**

| | ABE | | ESL | | Citizenship | | HS/GED | | Career Tech. | | Adults w/ Disabilities | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| 16–20 | 113 | 10.1 | 4,211 | 6.5 | | 0.0 | 1,383 | 32.0 | 37 | 3.6 | 2 | 7.1 |
| 21–30 | 321 | 28.7 | 18,100 | 27.9 | 8 | 5.7 | 1,223 | 28.3 | 246 | 23.8 | 11 | 39.3 |
| 31–40 | 287 | 25.6 | 18,368 | 28.3 | 23 | 16.4 | 887 | 20.5 | 279 | 27.0 | 3 | 10.7 |
| 41–50 | 232 | 20.7 | 13,097 | 20.2 | 38 | 27.1 | 571 | 13.2 | 285 | 27.5 | 8 | 28.6 |
| 51–64 | 138 | 12.3 | 8,377 | 12.9 | 38 | 27.1 | 223 | 5.2 | 172 | 16.6 | 6 | 21.4 |
| 65+ | 28 | 2.5 | 2,811 | 4.3 | 33 | 23.6 | 30 | 0.7 | 16 | 1.5 | | 0.0 |
| **Total** | **1,119** | **100** | **64,964** | **100** | **140** | **100** | **4,317** | **100** | **1,035** | **100** | **28** | **107.1** |

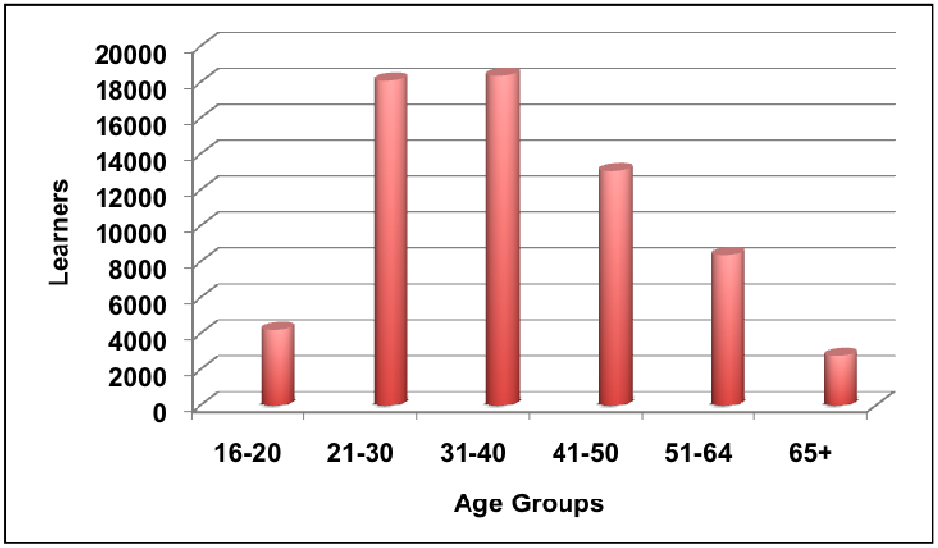
| | Health & Safety | | Home Economics | | Parent Education | | Older Adults | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Age** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| 16–20 | 6 | 4.9 | 3 | | 2,222 | 61.9 | 2 | 0.7 | 7,979 | 10.5 |
| 21–30 | 18 | 14.6 | 13 | 26.5 | 370 | 10.3 | 16 | 5.5 | 20,326 | 26.9 |
| 31–40 | 24 | 19.5 | 9 | 18.4 | 627 | 17.5 | 32 | 11.0 | 20,539 | 27.1 |
| 41–50 | 27 | 22.0 | 22 | 44.9 | 242 | 6.7 | 41 | 14.0 | 14,563 | 19.2 |
| 51–64 | 33 | 26.8 | 5 | 10.2 | 97 | 2.7 | 63 | 21.6 | 9,152 | 12.1 |
| 65+ | 15 | 12.2 | | 0.0 | 29 | 0.8 | 138 | 47.3 | 3,100 | 4.1 |
| **Total** | **123** | **100** | **49** | **100.0** | **3,587** | **100.0** | **292** | **100.0** | **75,654** | **100.0** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Chart 10 provides a graphical picture of the age distributions for the ESL students. The 31–40 is the largest (18,368) closely followed by the 21–30 cohort (18,100). In the previous year the 21–30 was the largest by a small margin.

**Chart 10**

**ESL Learner Age in Innovation Programs – FY 2008–09**

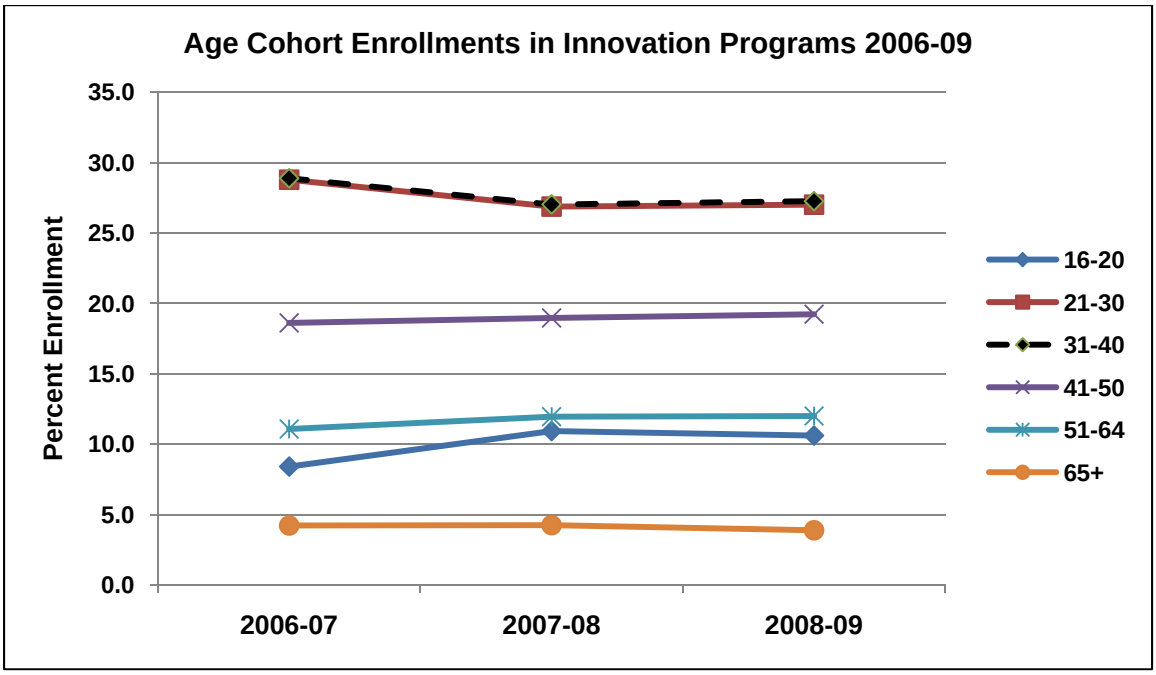



*Source: CASAS 2009*

The following graphic (Chart 11) shows a relative constant distribution of program enrollments over the three year period (2006–09) for each of the age cohorts.

**Chart 11**

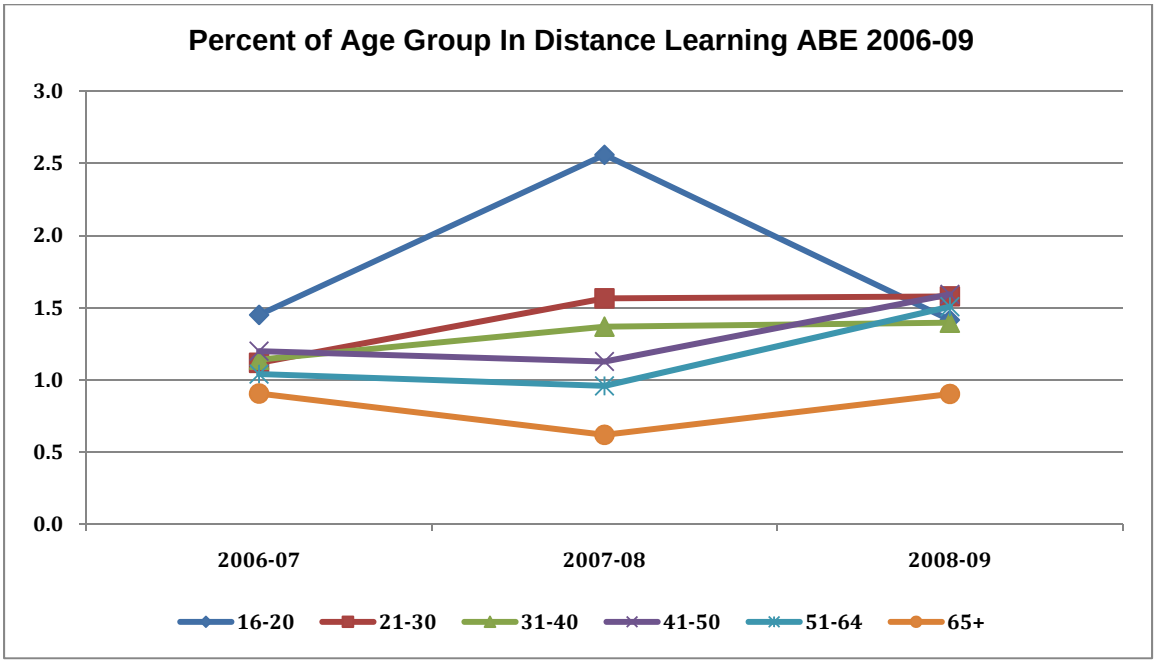
**The Distribution of Program Enrollments in Innovation Programs for Age Cohorts 2006-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

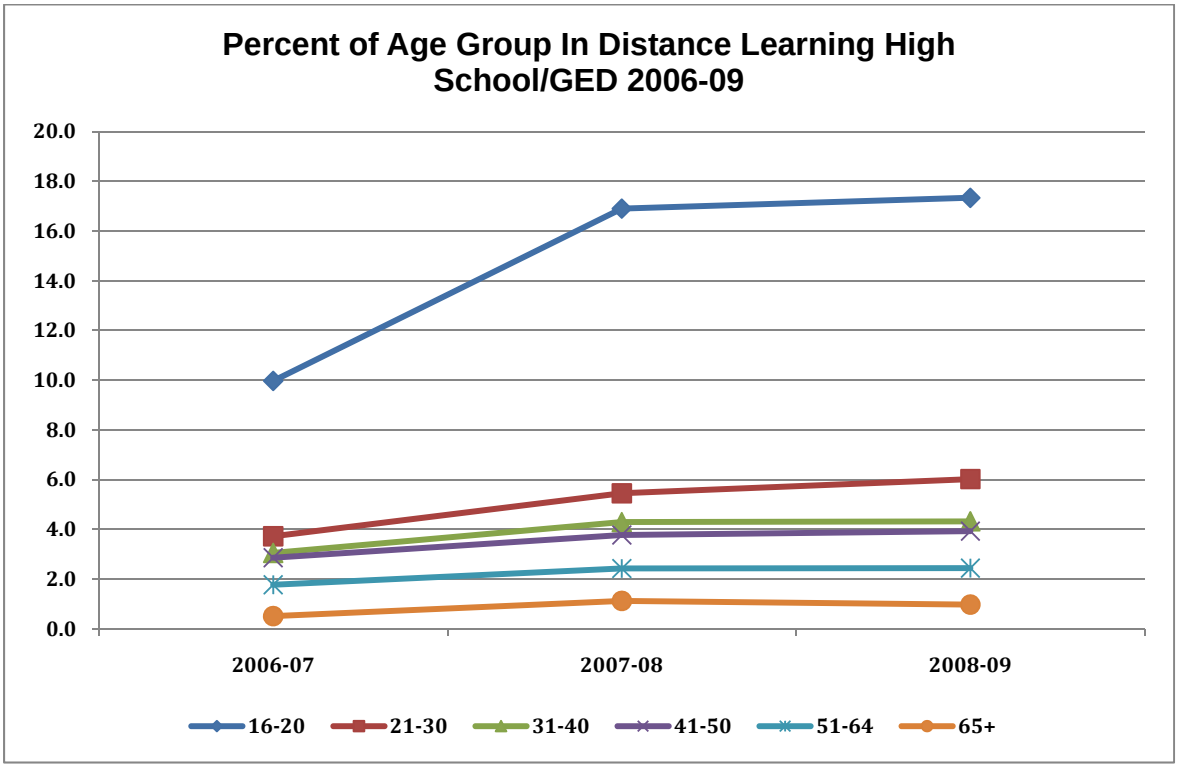
Notice that the leading age cohort served in ABE, ASE, and Parent Education is the 16-20 age cohort; whereas ESL serves all the other age cohorts at high rates of participation. Also note that the 16-20 age cohorts' participation rate in ESL is declining. It would seem that distance learning is providing a very valuable educational service to the youth in having them participate in high rates in high school completion courses and especially preparing for parenthood. (See Charts 12-15)

**Chart 12**



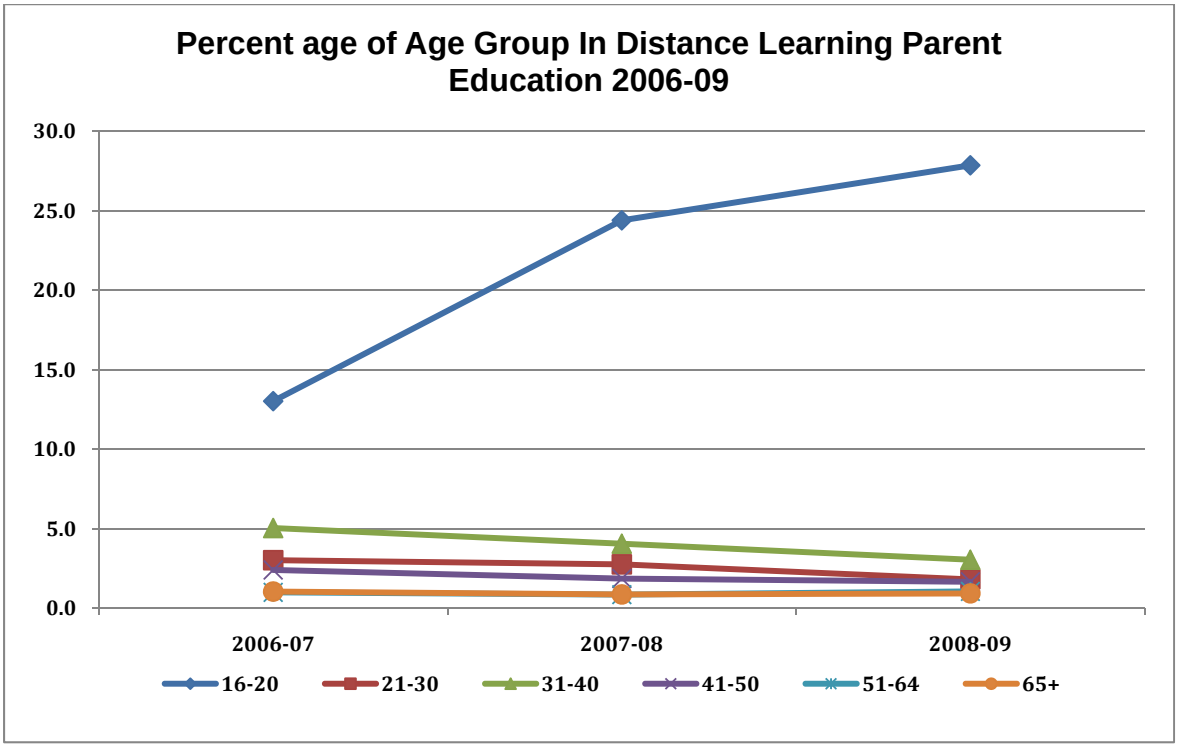

*Source: CASAS 2010*

**Chart 13**



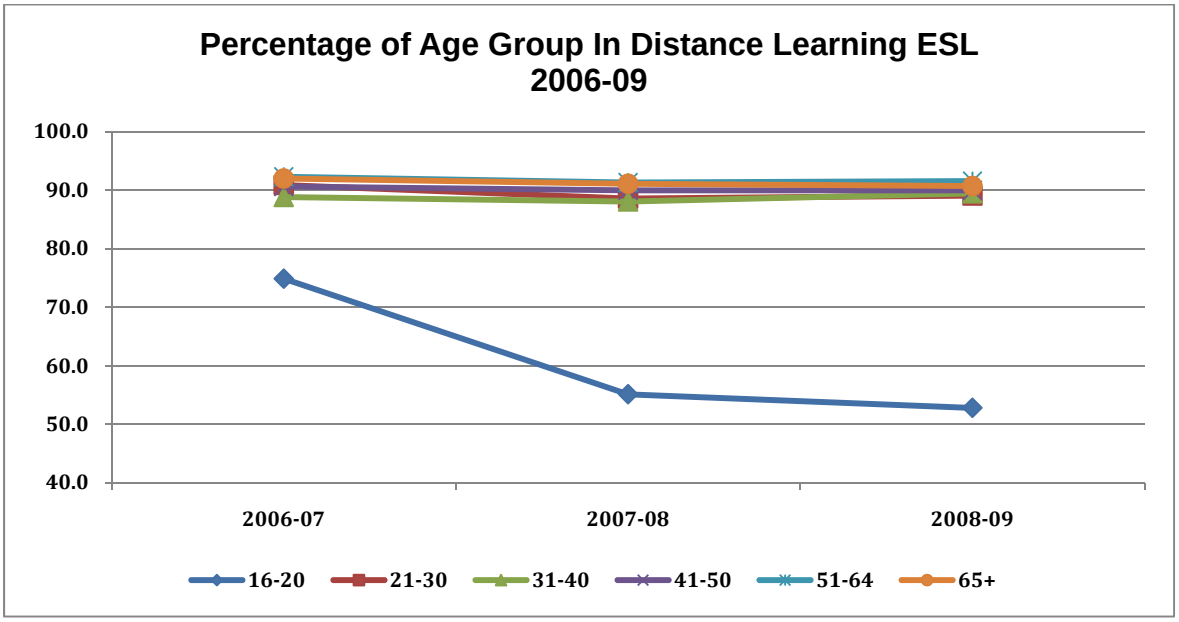

*Source: CASAS 2010*

**Chart 14**




*Source: CASAS 2010*

**Chart 15**




*Source: CASAS 2010*

## Ethnicity by Instructional Program

As shown in Table 8, Hispanics comprise 71.2% of the distance–learning participants. This is a very slight increase from the previous year (70.7%). Asians made up 16.9 percent. White non–Hispanics represented 7.4 percent of the participants while Native American and Native Alaskan learners made up 1.8 percent of the learners. Hispanics dominated (more than 50%) in ABE, ESL, Citizenship, ASE/GED, career technical education and parent education while white learners had the largest enrollments in Older Adults Programs.[viii]

The Black learner participation percentage is the same as the previous program years. The absence of Black (non-Hispanic) learners participating in the Innovation Program (1.9%) continues to be an outreach challenge. However, for the blacks that did enroll the percent of their program enrollment leads the other four ethnic cohorts in ABE, high school/GED preparation, career tech education, and parent education. Their program enrollment in high school/GED preparation (Chart 16) serves as such an example.

**Table 8**

**Innovation Programs' Learner Ethnicity by Instructional Program – FY 2008-09**

| | ABE | | ESL | | Citizenship | | HS/GED | | Career Tech Ed | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ethnicity** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| White (Non Hispanic) | 117 | 10.5 | 3,820 | 5.9 | 9 | 6.5 | 858 | 19.8 | 214 | 20.7 |
| Hispanic | 677 | 60.8 | 47,153 | 73.0 | 86 | 61.9 | 2,543 | 58.7 | 491 | 47.4 |
| Black (Non-Hispanic) | 82 | 7.4 | 462 | 0.7 | 1 | 0.7 | 468 | 10.8 | 119 | 11.5 |
| Asian | 185 | 16.6 | 11,690 | 18.1 | 42 | 30.2 | 253 | 5.8 | 126 | 12.2 |
| Pacific Islander | 14 | 1.3 | 63 | 0.1 | 1 | 0.7 | 31 | 0.7 | 16 | 1.5 |
| Filipino | 12 | 1.1 | 181 | 0.3 | | 0.0 | 94 | 2.2 | 54 | 5.2 |
| Native American | 27 | 2.4 | 1,208 | 1.9 | | 0.0 | 85 | 2.0 | 14 | 1.4 |
| Native Alaskan | | 0.0 | 16 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 2 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.1 |
| **Total** | **1,114** | **100** | **64,593** | **100** | **139** | **100** | **4,334** | **100** | **1,035** | **100** |

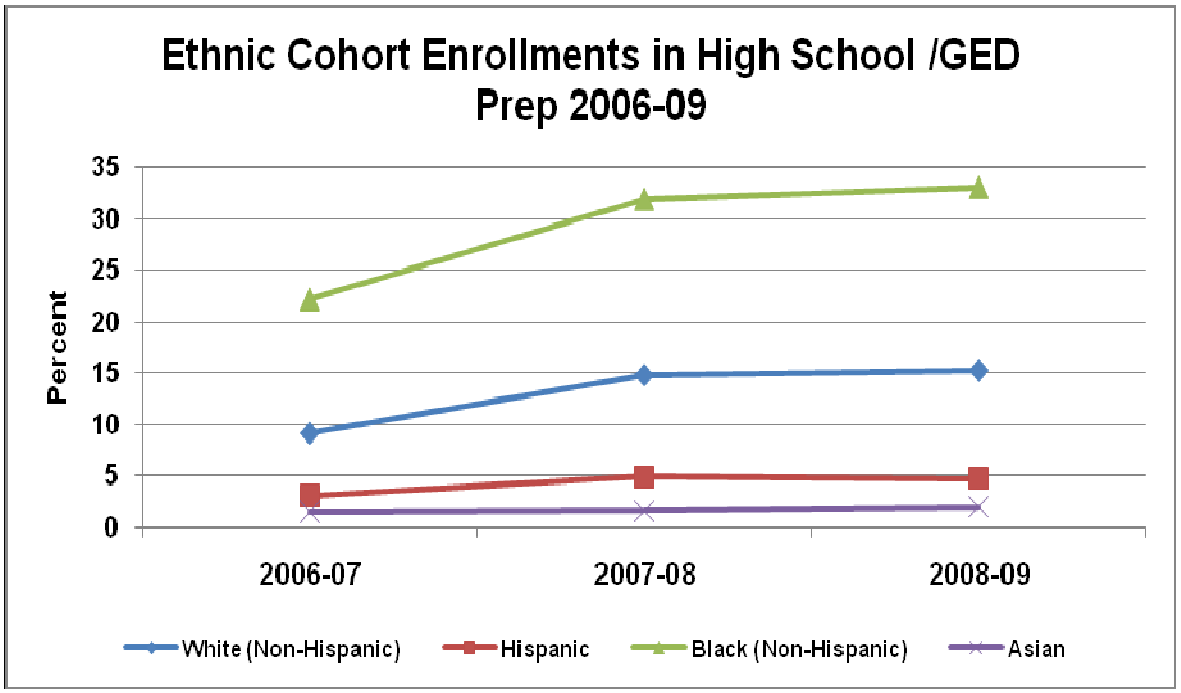
| | Health & Safety | | Home Economics | | Parent Education | | Older Adults | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ethnicity** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| White (Non-Hispanic) | 17 | 14.3 | 8 | 15.4 | 467 | 12.0 | 106 | 36.4 | 5,622 | 7.4 |
| Hispanic | 45 | 37.8 | 29 | 55.8 | 2,753 | 70.6 | 66 | 22.7 | 53,863 | 71.2 |
| Black (Non-Hispanic) | 3 | 2.5 | | 0.0 | 269 | 6.9 | 11 | 3.8 | 1,416 | 1.9 |
| Asian | 50 | 42.0 | 14 | 26.9 | 291 | 7.5 | 101 | 34.7 | 12,754 | 16.9 |
| Pacific Islander | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 16 | 0.4 | | 0.0 | 141 | 0.2 |
| Filipino | 3 | 2.5 | | 0.0 | 52 | 1.3 | 6 | 2.1 | 403 | 0.5 |
| Native American | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 51 | 1.3 | 1 | 0.3 | 1,387 | 1.8 |
| Native Alaskan | 1 | 0.8 | 1 | 1.9 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 22 | 0.0 |
| **Total** | **119** | **100** | **52** | **100** | **3,900** | **100** | **291** | **100** | **75,608** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

.

**Chart 16**

**Percent of Each Major Ethnic Cohort's Program Enrollment in High School/GED Preparation from 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Innovation Program Participants' Primary Language

The wide variety of primary languages spoken by Innovation Programs participants is another indicator of participant diversity as shown in Table 9. More than 73 percent of the participants reported speaking Spanish as their primary language. Chinese is a distant second at 6.4 percent, followed by English (3.6%) and Korean (3.3%).

**Table 9**

**The Primary Language Spoken by Innovation Programs' Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2008–09**

| Primary Language | ABE | | ESL | | Citizenship | | HS/GED | | CTE | | Adults w/ Disabilities | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| English | 159 | 21.3 | 261 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.8 | 733 | 39.1 | 112 | 16.0 | 55 | 76.4 |
| Spanish | 457 | 61.3 | 40,125 | 76.1 | 98 | 77.2 | 924 | 49.3 | 427 | 60.9 | 12 | 16.7 |
| Vietnamese | 7 | 0.9 | 1,185 | 2.2 | 2 | 1.6 | 12 | 0.6 | 13 | 1.9 | | 0.0 |
| Chinese | 30 | 4.0 | 3,437 | 6.5 | 11 | 8.7 | 45 | 2.4 | 59 | 8.4 | | 0.0 |
| Hmong | 1 | 0.1 | 295 | 0.6 | | 0.0 | 6 | 0.3 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| Cambodian | 5 | 0.7 | 146 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.8 | 8 | 0.4 | 1 | 0.1 | | 0.0 |
| Tagalog | 17 | 2.3 | 138 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.8 | 35 | 1.9 | 11 | 1.6 | 2 | 2.8 |
| Korean | 15 | 2.0 | 1,807 | 3.4 | 1 | 0.8 | 26 | 1.4 | 22 | 3.1 | 1 | 1.4 |
| Lao | | 0.0 | 29 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| Russian | 8 | 1.1 | 1,080 | 2.0 | 2 | 1.6 | 10 | 0.5 | 5 | 0.7 | | 0.0 |
| Farsi | 7 | 0.9 | 1,024 | 1.9 | 4 | 3.1 | 8 | 0.4 | 5 | 0.7 | | 0.0 |
| Other | 40 | 5.4 | 3,181 | 6.0 | 6 | 4.7 | 66 | 3.5 | 46 | 6.6 | 2 | 2.8 |
| **Total** | **746** | **100** | **52,708** | **100** | **127** | **100** | **1,874** | **100** | **701** | **100** | **72** | **100** |

| Primary Language | Health & Safety | | Home Economics | | Parent Education | | Older Adults | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| English | 12 | 23.5 | 4 | 9.1 | 679 | 35.9 | 88 | 42.9 | 2,104 | 3.6 |
| Spanish | 17 | 33.3 | 22 | 50.0 | 850 | 45.0 | 54 | 26.3 | 42,986 | 73.6 |
| Vietnamese | 1 | 2.0 | 2 | 4.5 | 18 | 1.0 | 2 | 1.0 | 1,242 | 2.1 |
| Chinese | 7 | 13.7 | 8 | 18.2 | 117 | 6.2 | 16 | 7.8 | 3,730 | 6.4 |
| Hmong | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 302 | 0.5 |
| Cambodian | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 5 | 0.3 | | 0.0 | 166 | 0.3 |
| Tagalog | | 0.0 | 1 | 2.3 | 26 | 1.4 | 2 | 1.0 | 233 | 0.4 |
| Korean | | 0.0 | 4 | 9.1 | 12 | 0.6 | 12 | 5.9 | 1,900 | 3.3 |
| Lao | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | 31 | 0.1 |
| Russian | 1 | 2.0 | | 0.0 | 5 | 0.3 | 6 | 2.9 | 1,117 | 1.9 |
| Farsi | 1 | 2.0 | | 0.0 | 39 | 2.1 | 5 | 2.4 | 1,093 | 1.9 |
| Other | 12 | 23.5 | 3 | 6.8 | 137 | 7.3 | 20 | 9.8 | 3,513 | 6.0 |
| **Total** | **51** | **100** | **44** | **100** | **1,889** | **100** | **205** | **100** | **58,417** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Years of Schooling

As reported in Table 9, over 45 percent (45.7%) of the learners reported having nine or less years of schooling at the time of enrollment. About half of these (23.6%) have six or fewer years of prior schooling. This continues to suggest that the Innovation Programs reach lower level learners in need of adult education services.

In the judgment of program operators, it demonstrates that lower-level learners can be effectively served by non-traditional interventions. Of the largest learning population, ESL learners, 49.8 percent report having nine or fewer years of education. (See Table 10)

**Table 10**

**Years of Schooling for Innovation Programs' Participants by Instructional Program – FY 2008-09**

| | <=3Years | | 4-6 Years | | 7-9 Years | | 10-11 Years | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| ABE | 59 | 1.4 | 80 | 0.6 | 207 | 1.3 | 290 | 2.5 |
| ESL | 4,054 | 93.8 | 12,237 | 96.5 | 14,440 | 90.5 | 6,429 | 56.0 |
| Citizenship | 12 | 0.3 | 32 | 0.3 | 15 | 0.1 | 10 | 0.1 |
| HS/GED | 76 | 1.8 | 111 | 0.9 | 573 | 3.6 | 2,588 | 22.5 |
| Vocational Ed. | 22 | 0.5 | 69 | 0.5 | 107 | 0.7 | 119 | 1.0 |
| Adults w/ Disabilities | 4 | 0.1 | 8 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| Health & Safety | 6 | 0.1 | 4 | 0.0 | 16 | 0.1 | 21 | 0.2 |
| Home Economics | 3 | 0.1 | 8 | 0.1 | 6 | 0.0 | 2 | 0.0 |
| Parent Education | 69 | 1.6 | 126 | 1.0 | 582 | 3.6 | 2,003 | 17.4 |
| Older Adults | 17 | 0.4 | 9 | 0.1 | 11 | 0.1 | 26 | 0.2 |
| **Total** | **4,322** | **100.0** | **12,684** | **100.0** | **15,957** | **100.0** | **11,488** | **100.0** |

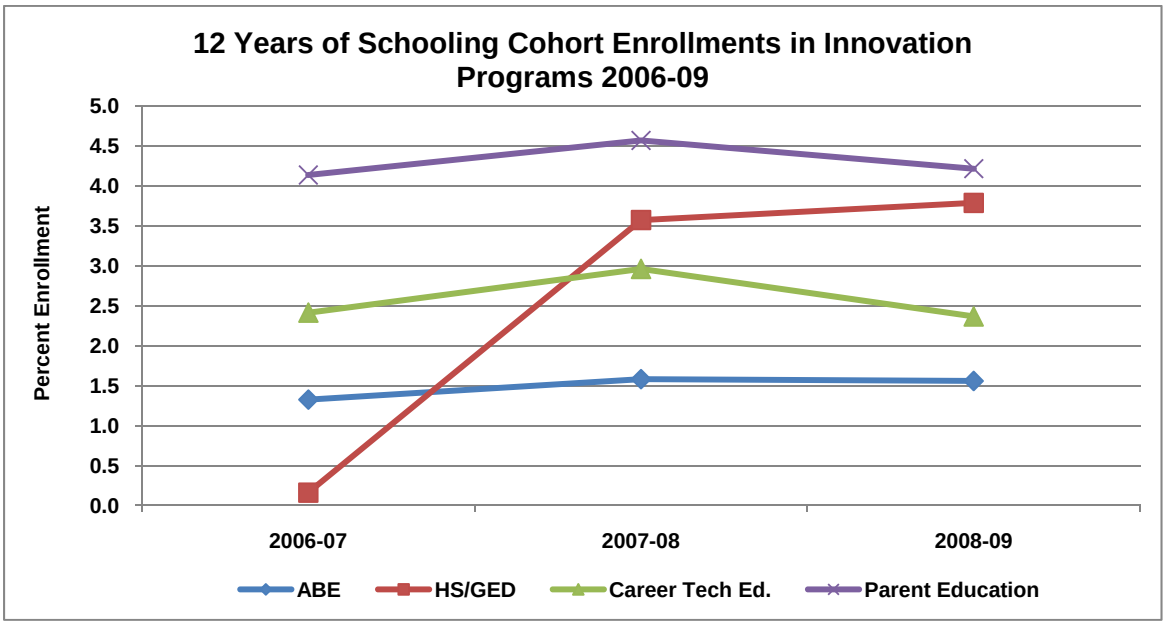
| | 12 Years | | 13+ Years | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| ABE | 251 | 1.6 | 181 | 1.5 | 1,068 | 1.5 |
| ESL | 14,032 | 87.1 | 10,464 | 89.3 | 61,656 | 85.3 |
| Citizenship | 19 | 0.1 | 22 | 0.2 | 110 | 0.2 |
| HS/GED | 610 | 3.8 | 260 | 2.2 | 4,218 | 5.8 |
| Vocational Ed. | 381 | 2.4 | 295 | 2.5 | 993 | 1.4 |
| Adults w/ Disabilities | 5 | 0.0 | 4 | 0.0 | 21 | 0.0 |
| Health & Safety | 30 | 0.2 | 36 | 0.3 | 113 | 0.2 |
| Home Economics | 17 | 0.1 | 15 | 0.1 | 51 | 0.1 |
| Parent Education | 679 | 4.2 | 320 | 2.7 | 3,779 | 5.2 |
| Older Adults | 77 | 0.5 | 122 | 1.0 | 262 | 0.4 |
| **Total** | **16,101** | **100.0** | **11,719** | **100.0** | **72,271** | **100.0** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Because ESL comprised over 85 percent of the program enrollments in the Innovation Programs for the past three years, analyses were made of the program enrollment trends of the remaining four dominant program areas. Chart 17 shows the typical program enrollment pattern for participants in distance learning with 12 or fewer years of schooling. Parent education had higher program enrollments than the other three program areas across all the years of schooling cohorts over the three-year period. High school/GED preparation was a close second for each schooling cohort except those with 13 or more years of schooling.

**Chart 17**

**Percent of Program Enrollment for Innovation Program Participants with 12 Years or Fewer Years of Schooling 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Highest Degree by Instructional Program

Well over half (56.7%) of the Innovation Programs' learners reported having no earned degrees or certificates at the time of enrollment. This is an increase over the previous year (54.3%). Over 26 percent (26.6%) reported possessing a high school diploma or GED, while 5.3 percent said they had a technical or associate of arts (AA) degrees. Over nine percent (9.3%) of the learners reported having a college degree or some graduate study, as shown in Table 11.

**Table 11**

**Highest Educational Level Attained by Innovation Program Participants in Instructional Programs, FY 2008–09**

| Program | None | | GED | | HS Diploma | | Technical | | AA Degree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| **ABE** | 566 | 1.4 | 42 | 3.8 | 252 | 1.4 | 43 | 1.9 | 18 | 1.2 |
| **ESL** | 33,268 | 82.7 | 911 | 81.6 | 15,969 | 90.2 | 1,939 | 83.9 | 1,277 | 84.7 |
| **Citizenship** | 82 | 0.2 | 1 | 0.1 | 27 | 0.2 | 4 | 0.2 | 1 | 0.1 |
| **HS/GED** | 3,092 | 7.7 | 63 | 5.6 | 431 | 2.4 | 143 | 6.2 | 41 | 2.7 |
| **Career Tech Ed.** | 229 | 0.6 | 52 | 4.7 | 379 | 2.1 | 97 | 4.2 | 64 | 4.2 |
| **Adults w/ Disabilities** | 14 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 4 | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| **Health & Safety** | 41 | 0.1 | 3 | 0.3 | 34 | 0.2 | 4 | 0.2 | 8 | 0.5 |
| **Home Economics** | 16 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 17 | 0.1 | 3 | 0.1 | 2 | 0.1 |
| **Parent Education** | 2,848 | 7.1 | 36 | 3.2 | 488 | 2.8 | 68 | 2.9 | 67 | 4.4 |
| **Older Adults** | 49 | 0.1 | 8 | 0.7 | 94 | 0.5 | 9 | 0.4 | 30 | 2.0 |
| **Total** | **40,205** | **56.7** | **1,116** | **1.6** | **17,695** | **25** | **2,311** | **3.3** | **1,508** | **2.1** |

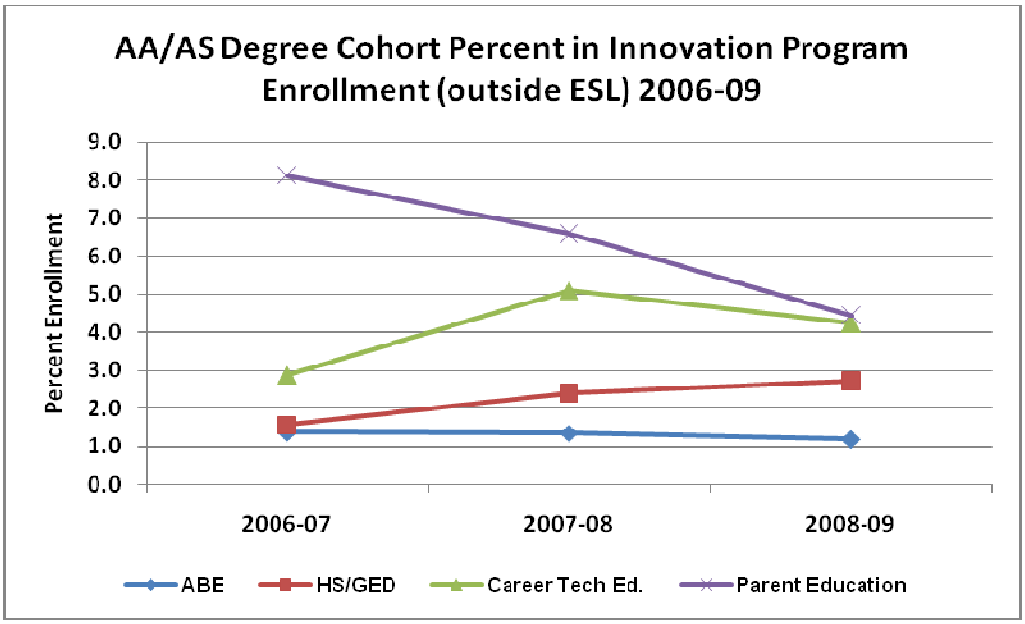
| Program | 4 Yr. College | | Graduate Study | | Other | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| ABE | 58 | 1.2 | 40 | 2.2 | 18 | 1.2 | 1,037 | 1.5 |
| ESL | 4,274 | 90.4 | 1,625 | 88.4 | 1,348 | 90.3 | 60,611 | 85.5 |
| Citizenship | 13 | 0.3 | 6 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.1 | 135 | 0.2 |
| HS/GED | 92 | 1.9 | 37 | 2.0 | 74 | 5.0 | 3,973 | 5.6 |
| Career Tech Ed. | 89 | 1.9 | 33 | 1.8 | 20 | 1.3 | 963 | 1.4 |
| Adults w/ Disabilities | 3 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 22 | 0.0 |
| Health & Safety | 16 | 0.3 | 8 | 0.4 | 1 | 0.1 | 115 | 0.2 |
| Home Economics | 5 | 0.1 | 5 | 0.3 | 2 | 0.1 | 50 | 0.1 |
| Parent Education | 124 | 2.6 | 67 | 3.6 | 26 | 1.7 | 3,724 | 5.3 |
| Older Adults | 52 | 1.1 | 18 | 1.0 | 2 | 0.1 | 262 | 0.4 |
| **Total** | **4,726** | **6.7** | **1,839** | **2.6** | **1,492** | **2.1** | **70,892** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

As mentioned previously with the schooling cohorts analysis, since ESL comprised over 85 percent of the program enrollments in the Innovation Programs for the past three years, analyses were made of the program enrollment trends of the remaining four dominant program areas. Chart 18 shows the typical program enrollment pattern for participants in distance learning with an AA/AS Degree. Program enrollment in parent education declined over the three year period for those with a GED, High School Diploma, AA/AS Degree, BA/BS Degree, or Graduate Degree. Over the three-year period, high school/GED preparation had the highest percent of program enrollments for those with no diploma or GED, or had tech training. (See Chart 19)

**Chart 18**

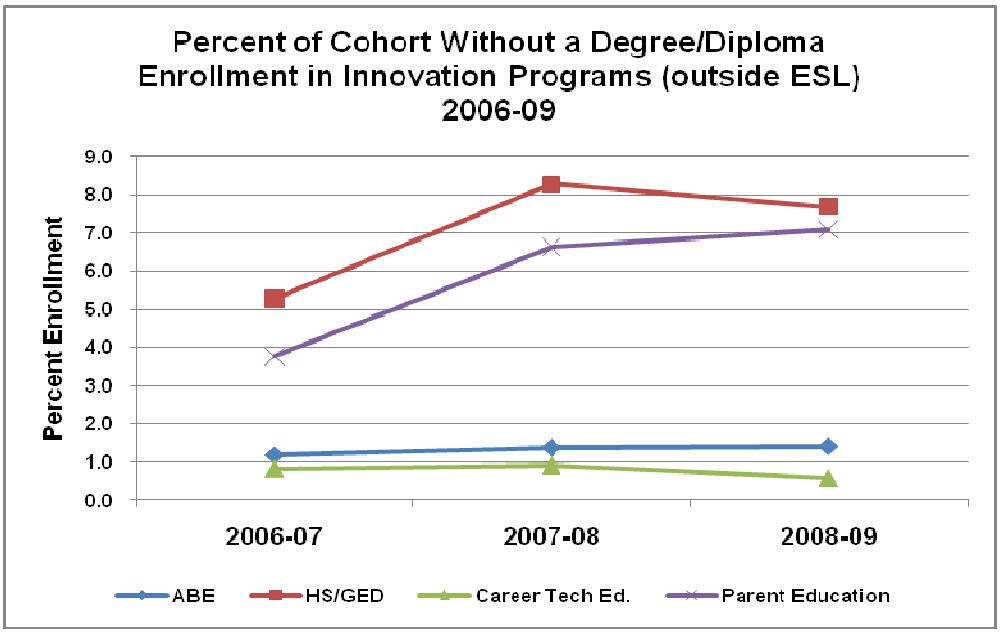
**Percent of Program Enrollment for Innovation Program Participants With an AA or AS Degree 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

**Chart 19**

**Percent of Program Enrollment for Innovation Program Participants Without a Diploma or Degree 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

## ABE/ASE Instructional Level on Program Entry

As shown in Table 12, upon entry, over six percent (6.5%) of the adult basic education and adult secondary education learners were tested and enrolled in the beginning literacy or beginning levels adult basic education. Over 63 percent (63.5%) of the learners were enrolled in intermediate ABE instruction while 30 percent were enrolled in adult high school subjects, GED, or pre-GED.

**Table 12**

**Adult Basic Education Instructional Level of Innovation Programs' ABE and ASE Program Participants upon Entry – FY 2008-09**

| Level Upon | Score | ABE | | ASE | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Entry | Range | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Beginning Literacy | 200 & below | 31 | 5.4 | | 0.0 | 31 | 1.3 |
| Beginning | 201–210 | 55 | 9.5 | 67 | 3.8 | 122 | 5.2 |
| Intermediate Low | 211–220 | 99 | 17.2 | 215 | 12.1 | 314 | 13.4 |
| Intermediate High | 221–235 | 284 | 49.2 | 895 | 50.5 | 1179 | 50.1 |
| ASE Low | 236–245 | 80 | 13.9 | 393 | 22.2 | 473 | 20.1 |
| ASE High | 246+ | 28 | 4.9 | 204 | 11.5 | 232 | 9.9 |
| **Total** | | **577** | **100.0** | **1774** | **100.0** | **2351** | **100.0** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## ESL and ESL–Citizenship Level on Program Entry

The instructional continuum of adult basic learning goes from beginning ESL literacy through advanced adult basic education to adult secondary education/GED. Beginning literacy is very difficult to provide in a distance learning format and is usually discouraged. This is because students need a certain foundation level of literacy in order to access the curriculum and program components.

Participation in the lower level programs (beginning-low ESL and above) serves as another indicator of whether the distance learning programs are reaching the hard to serve and/or the most in need of adult basic education services.

As shown in Table 13, beginning literacy and beginning ESL learners represented 24.5 percent of the students receiving English language instruction while intermediate-low learners represented 36.1 percent. This data reflects the statewide focus in lower level ESL instruction and continues to suggest, as do other measures, that distance learning can be used to reach and serve learners once they demonstrate beginning literacy.

For example, the following are the kinds of reading and listening life skills stressed in the beginning-low courses.

- Relating phonological sounds to letters and clusters of letters (sound/symbol correspondence).
- Recognizing basic sight words.
- Interpreting sentences using vocabulary and structures previously learned orally.

Language practice and drill types of activities are often a part of the beginning-low instruction. These drill and practice activities often lend themselves well to at-home practice and repetition.

Students in the intermediate-low, intermediate-high, and advanced-low represent 74 percent of the ESL distance learners while beginning-high students represent 16.2 percent. Those students in theiIntermediate-low and above levels seem to benefit the most from blended classroom and distance learning alternatives because of the focus on and improving quality of the available learning materials, and the opportunity to incorporate life skills and higher-order thinking skills with the language acquisition instruction.

**Table 13**

**ESL and ESL–Citizenship Instructional Level of Innovation Programs' Participants on Entry – FY 2008–09**

| Level Upon Entry | Score | ESL | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Range | N | % |
| Beginning Literacy | 180 & below | 1,694 | 3.1 |
| Beginning Low | 181–190 | 2,828 | 5.2 |
| Beginning High | 191–200 | 8,758 | 16.2 |
| Intermediate Low | 201–210 | 19,558 | 36.1 |
| Intermediate High | 211–220 | 10,111 | 18.7 |
| Advanced Low | 221–235 | 10,483 | 19.3 |
| Advanced High | 236–245 | 779 | 1.4 |
| **Total** | | **54,211** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Primary Reasons for Enrollment

Improving basic skills and English skills account for almost 85 percent (84.9%) of the primary reasons learners reported for enrollment. This is slightly more than the previous year (83.5%). Direct work-related reasons (get a job and retain a job) make up only 1.7 percent of the primary reasons for enrolling. However, improving skills probably has implications for work preparedness and therefore link these two reasons for enrollment.

Basic skill and language improvement was most important for ABE learners (84.7%). Improving English skills was the most important for ESL learners (80%). Getting a High School Diploma or GED and improving basic skills were the most important for learners in parent education (31.6% and 24.5%).

Note that the Adults with Disabilities program is not included in Table 14. There were only 31 participants of whom 64.5 percent stated that their goal was to improve basic skills.

**Table 14**

**The Innovation Programs' Participants Primary Reason for Enrolling in FY 2008–09**

| Primary Reason | ABE | | ESL | | Citizenship | | HS/GED | | CTE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Improve Basic Skills | 787 | 72.0 | 7,687 | 11.8 | 15 | 11.0 | 2,140 | 49.2 | 344 | 33.2 |
| Improve English Skills | 139 | 12.7 | 52,003 | 80.0 | 30 | 22.1 | 204 | 4.7 | 41 | 4.0 |
| HS Diploma or GED | 90 | 8.2 | 322 | 0.5 | | 0.0 | 1,495 | 34.4 | 20 | 1.9 |
| Get Job | 8 | 0.7 | 604 | 0.9 | | 0.0 | 42 | 1.0 | 105 | 10.1 |
| Retain Job | 5 | 0.5 | 356 | 0.5 | 1 | 0.7 | 20 | 0.5 | 168 | 16.2 |
| Enter College/Training | 7 | 0.6 | 194 | 0.3 | | 0.0 | 19 | 0.4 | 28 | 2.7 |
| Work–Based Project | | 0.0 | 36 | 0.1 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 10 | 1.0 |
| Family Goal | 3 | 0.3 | 506 | 0.8 | | 0.0 | 28 | 0.6 | 14 | 1.4 |
| U.S. Citizenship | 2 | 0.2 | 879 | 1.4 | 89 | 65.4 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| Military | | 0.0 | 8 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 |
| Personal Goal | 49 | 4.5 | 1,797 | 2.8 | | 0.0 | 318 | 7.3 | 228 | 22.0 |
| None/ Not Identified | | 0.0 | 502 | 0.8 | | 0.0 | 72 | 1.7 | 64 | 6.2 |
| Other | 3 | 0.3 | 136 | 0.2 | 1 | 0.7 | 9 | 0.2 | 15 | 1.4 |
| **Total** | **1,093** | **100** | **65,030** | **100** | **136** | **100** | **4,349** | **100** | **1,037** | **100** |

| Primary Reason | Health & Safety | | Home Economics | | Parent Ed. | | Older Adults | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Improve Basic Skills | 18 | 14.6 | 18 | 34.6 | 958 | 24.5 | 29 | 10.7 | 12,016 | 15.8 |
| Improve English Skills | 2 | 1.6 | | 0.0 | 128 | 3.3 | 3 | 1.1 | 52,552 | 69.1 |
| HS Diploma or GED | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 1,237 | 31.6 | | 0.0 | 3,164 | 4.2 |
| Get Job | 2 | 1.6 | | 0.0 | 15 | 0.4 | 3 | 1.1 | 779 | 1.0 |
| Retain Job | 5 | 4.1 | | 0.0 | 7 | 0.2 | | 0.0 | 563 | 0.7 |
| Enter College/ Training | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 9 | 0.2 | | 0.0 | 258 | 0.3 |
| Work–Based Project | 7 | 5.7 | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 54 | 0.1 |
| Family Goal | 11 | 8.9 | 17 | 32.7 | 712 | 18.2 | 13 | 4.8 | 1,304 | 1.7 |
| U.S. Citizenship | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 1 | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 972 | 1.3 |
| Military | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 9 | 0.0 |
| Personal Goal | 78 | 63.4 | 16 | 30.8 | 707 | 18.1 | 216 | 79.7 | 3,415 | 4.5 |
| None/ Not Identified | | 0.0 | 1 | 1.9 | 61 | 1.6 | | 0.0 | 700 | 0.9 |
| Other | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 78 | 2.0 | 7 | 2.6 | 250 | 0.3 |
| **Total** | **123** | **100** | **52** | **100** | **3,914** | **100** | **271** | **100** | **76,036** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

**Learner Progress**

Learners are monitored on their progress throughout the time of enrollment. Over 25 percent (25.4%) of the ESL participants completed or moved to a more advanced course compared to 27.1 percent in the previous year. Over 50 percent (50.3%) of the ESL enrollees were retained at the same level. For students remaining at the same level, more information is needed about the year in which they enrolled and progress within their given level.

Over 40 percent (40.7%) of the ABE learners remained at the same level. ASE/GED, career education, and parent education learners completed and/or advanced 28.1 percent, 44.6 percent, and 39.5 percent respectively. (See Table 15)

**Table 15**

**Innovation Programs' Participants Status by Program – FY 2008–09**

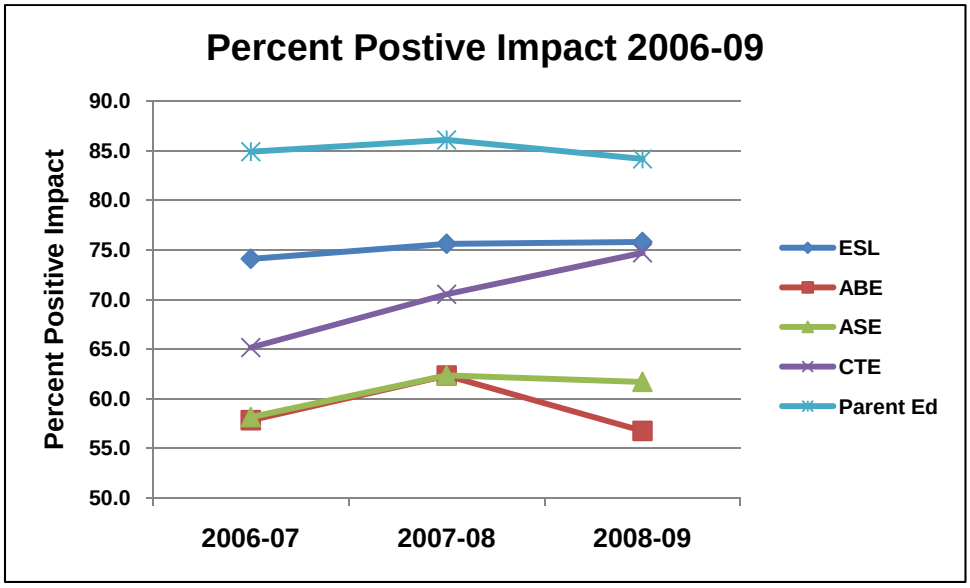
| | Retained at Same Level | | Completed & Moved Up | | Left Before Completion | | Left After Completion | | No Show or < 12 hrs | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** | **N** | **%** |
| **ABE** | 389 | 40.7 | 111 | 11.6 | 247 | 25.9 | 42 | 4.4 | 166 | 17.4 | 955 | 100 |
| **ESL** | 30,242 | 50.4 | 12,142 | 20.3 | 7,828 | 13.1 | 3,042 | 5.1 | 6,695 | 11.2 | 59,949 | 100 |
| **Citizenship** | 66 | 75.9 | 0 | 0.0 | 5 | 5.7 | 6 | 6.9 | 10 | 11.5 | 87 | 100 |
| **HS/GED** | 1,319 | 33.6 | 652 | 16.6 | 863 | 22.0 | 452 | 11.5 | 641 | 16.3 | 3,927 | 100 |
| **Career Tech Education** | 267 | 30.1 | 195 | 22.0 | 124 | 14.0 | 200 | 22.6 | 100 | 11.3 | 886 | 100 |
| **Adults w/ Disabilities** | 27 | 87.1 | 1 | 3.2 | 1 | 3.2 | 0 | 0.0 | 2 | 6.5 | 31 | 100 |
| **Health & Safety** | 10 | 9.7 | 9 | 8.7 | 7 | 6.8 | 23 | 22.3 | 54 | 52.4 | 103 | 100 |
| **Home Economics** | 20 | 46.5 | 6 | 14.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 14.0 | 11 | 25.6 | 43 | 100 |
| **Parent Ed.** | 1,573 | 44.7 | 622 | 17.7 | 199 | 5.7 | 765 | 21.8 | 357 | 10.2 | 3,516 | 100 |
| **Older Adults** | 94 | 41.6 | 38 | 16.8 | 34 | 15.0 | 14 | 6.2 | 46 | 20.4 | 226 | 100 |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Participant progress is a key indicator of the impact of the service delivery. ESL data indicates that 25.4 percent of the Innovation Program participants completed and moved up or left after completion. An additional 50.4 percent continued in the program to progress toward level completion and beyond for a total positive impact of 75.8 percent in 2008-09. Results for all three years for each of the dominant program areas are graphically displayed in Chart 20.

**Chart 20**

**Percent Total Positive Impact Innovation Program Enrollees Had in Five Dominant Program Areas 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Learner Status by Program

In Table 16, learner progress for those included in the positive impact group shows that 66.6 percent of the ESL enrollees were retained at the same level, 26.7 percent completed their course and/or moved up, and 6.8 percent completed their program and did not re-enroll.

Completion rates (completed and moved up and left after completion) were highest for career tech education students (59.7%), followed by high diploma/GED students (45.6%) and ESL learners (33.4).

**Table 16**

**Innovation Programs' Learner Status by Program – FY 2008–09**

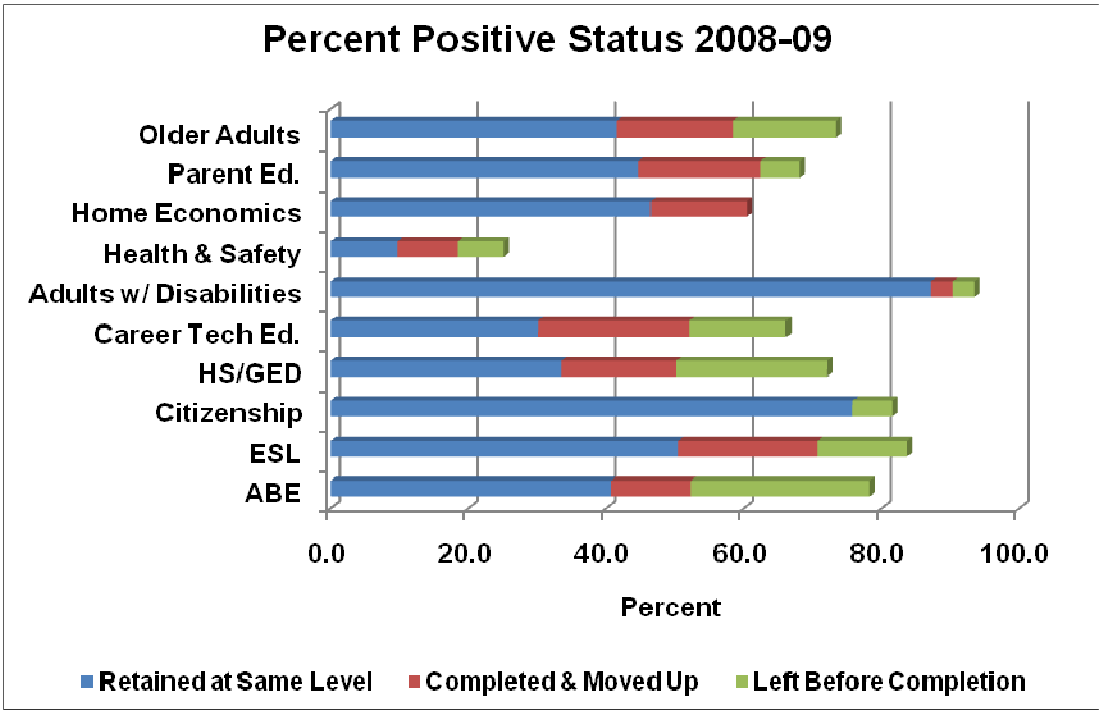
| Program | Retained at Same Level | | Completed & Moved Up | | Left After Completion | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| ABE | 389 | 71.8 | 111 | 20.5 | 42 | 7.7 | 542 | 100 |
| ESL | 30,242 | 66.6 | 12,142 | 26.7 | 3,042 | 6.7 | 45,426 | 100 |
| Citizenship | 66 | 91.7 | 0 | 0.0 | 6 | 8.3 | 72 | 100 |
| HS/GED | 1,319 | 54.4 | 652 | 26.9 | 452 | 18.7 | 2,423 | 100 |
| Career Tech Education | 267 | 40.3 | 195 | 29.5 | 200 | 30.2 | 662 | 100 |
| Adults w/ Disabilities | 27 | 96.4 | 1 | 3.6 | 0 | 0.0 | 28 | 100 |
| Health & Safety | 10 | 23.8 | 9 | 21.4 | 23 | 54.8 | 42 | 100 |
| Home Economics | 20 | 62.5 | 6 | 18.8 | 6 | 18.8 | 32 | 100 |
| Parent Ed. | 1,573 | 53.1 | 622 | 21.0 | 765 | 25.8 | 2,960 | 100 |
| Older Adults | 94 | 64.4 | 38 | 26.0 | 14 | 9.6 | 146 | 100 |
| **Overall** | **34,007** | **65.0** | **13,776** | **26.3** | **4,550** | **8.7** | **52,333** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2008*

Chart 21 graphically displays the learner status by program. The completed and moved up and left after completion are the two measures of progress; however, much depends on when the student entered the course. The parent education, older adult, and career tech education show promising results.

**Chart 21**

**Innovation Programs' Learner Status by Program – FY 2008–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

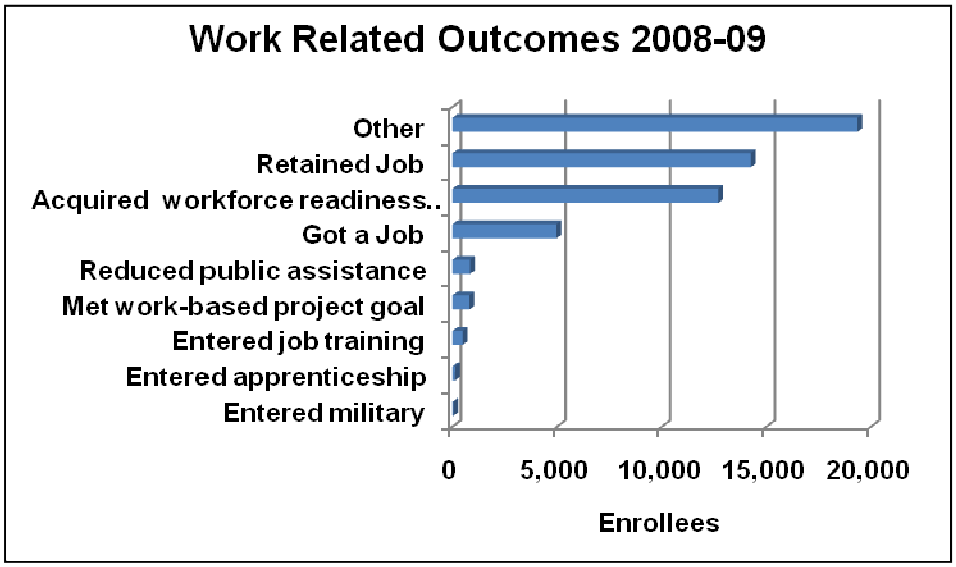
## Learner Outcomes

### Work Related Outcomes

Among the learners identifying work related outcomes in Chart 22, 31.2 percent reported that they obtained or retained a job. The "other" category accounts for 31.4 percent of the responses while acquiring workforce readiness skills accounts for 20.6 percent.

**Chart 22**

**Reported Innovation Programs' Learner Work Related Outcomes – FY 2008–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Personal Outcomes

Learners that identified meeting a personal goal (or goals) account for 63.1 percent of the personal outcome responses in Table 17. Over 17 percent (17.9%) of the learners identifying personal outcomes said that they have increased their involvement in their children's education and 13.6 percent said that they had increased their involvement in their children's literacy goals. Twenty three percent (23.7%) said they had met another family goal. The "other" category accounts for 33.3 percent.

**Table 17**

**Reported Innovation Programs' Learner Personal Outcomes – FY 2008–09**

| Personal/Family Outcomes | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Increased involvement in children's education | 9,367 | 17.9 |
| Increased involvement in children's literacy activities | 7,137 | 13.6 |
| Met other family goal | 12,409 | 23.7 |
| Met personal goal | 33,008 | 63.1 |
| Other | 17,448 | 33.3 |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Community Outcomes

As reported in Table 18, learners reporting community outcomes identified increased community involvement in 32 percent of the cases and "other" outcomes in 41.3 percent of the responses. Over eight percent (8.2%) of the learners identified achieving U.S. citizenship skills as their primary community outcome.

**Table 18**

**Reported Innovation Programs' Learner Community Outcomes – FY 2008–09**

| Community Outcomes | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Achieved U.S. citizenship skills | 4,282 | 8.2 |
| Registered to vote or voted first time | 670 | 1.3 |
| Increased involvement in community | 16,755 | 32.0 |
| Other | 21,593 | 41.3 |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Educational Outcomes

Learners reporting educational outcomes in Table 19 identified the mastery of course competencies (23.2%) and gained computer/tech skills (21.2%) the most often. Fourteen percent (14.1%) reported passing the GED, earning a certificate or high school diploma, or entering college as their educational goal. The "other" category accounts for over 46 percent of the responses (46.6%) and provides little information regarding what the respondents had in mind.

**Table 19**

**Reported Innovation Programs' Learner Educational Outcomes – FY 2008–09**

| Educational Outcomes | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Returned to K–12 | 617 | 1.2 |
| Passed GED | 598 | 1.1 |
| Earned Certificate | 5,648 | 10.8 |
| Earned High School diploma | 520 | 1.0 |
| Entered college | 615 | 1.2 |
| Entered training program | 457 | 0.9 |
| Gained computer/tech skills | 11,120 | 21.2 |
| Mastered course competencies/Education Plan | 12,117 | 23.2 |
| Other | 24,365 | 46.6 |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Reading Pre-test Scores

The following tables and charts are taken from CASAS reading (Table 20) and listening test data (Table 21). The reader can observe the comparatively small number of tested learners to enrolled learners.[ix] As noted, CASAS pre- and post- testing for all ESL, ABE, Citizenship, and ASE/GED learners in distance learning programs is difficult due to non–traditional schedules, infrequent visits to campus, and other factors associated with the very reason they are enrolled in a distance learning program.

ABE/ASE reading level 181-200 denotes beginning and pre–beginning literacy. Reading levels 201-210 and 211-220 reflect beginning and intermediate basic skills learners respectively while level 221-235

identifies the pre-GED/advanced basic skills learners. Level 236-245 is adult secondary education, and the 246+ grouping identifies the advanced adult secondary learner including GED preparation.

The small numbers of learners involved in the ABE/ASE reading pre-test do not provide useful information other than to identify the reading level characteristics of the Innovation Programs ABE/ASE learners. The largest percentage (47.7%) was tested in the pre-GED/advanced basic skills level.

For the ESL/ESL civics learners the data are more useful. A reading score level at or below 180 identify beginning literacy and pre-beginning ESL learners. The 181-200 reading score level identifies the low and high-beginning ESL CASAS instructional level. Levels 201-210 and 211-220 identify the low- and high-intermediate ESL learners while level 221-235 is the advanced ESL reading group. ESL learners with reading pre-test scores of 236-245 are ready for adult secondary education. However, it is not unusual that they do not feel comfortable with their language skills and wish to receive more language training.

The ESL learners reading at the intermediate and advanced levels form the majority of the Innovation Programs participants (75.9%). This seems appropriate because the learning resources are often the most robust for these groups.

**Table 20**

**Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Pre-test Mean Scores – FY 2008–09**

| CASAS Reading Score Range | Mean Pre Test Score | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ABE/ASE** | | | |
| 181–200 | — | 20 | 4.9 |
| 201–210 | 207.0 | 33 | 8.1 |
| 211–220 | 216.9 | 66 | 16.1 |
| 221–235 | 229.3 | 195 | 47.7 |
| 236–245 | 239.9 | 63 | 15.4 |
| 246+ | 250.8 | 32 | 7.8 |
| **ABE/ASE Overall** | **235.0** | **409** | **100** |
| | | | |
| **ESL/ESL–Cit** | | | |
| <=180 | 173.3 | 1,659 | 3.1 |
| 181–190 | 186.2 | 2,722 | 5.1 |
| 191–200 | 196.2 | 8,554 | 15.9 |
| 201–210 | 206.6 | 19,479 | 36.2 |
| 211–220 | 215.9 | 9,976 | 18.6 |
| 221–235 | 227.0 | 10,464 | 19.5 |
| 236–245 | 239.6 | 901 | 1.7 |
| **ESL/ESL–Cit Overall** | **209.5** | **53,755** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

### Listening Mean Scores

The ESL/ESL citizenship listening scores fall into the same categories as the reading scores — levels at or below 180 and 181-200 are beginning/pre-beginning literacy ESL learners. Levels 201-210 and 211-220 are intermediate ESL learners while level 221-235 is the advanced ESL group. ESL learners with listening pretest scores of 236-245 are ready for adult secondary education. (See Table 21)

For all Innovation Programs the overall mean listening pre-test score for ESL learners was 210.8, the high end of the ESL beginning-ESL intermediate score range.

**Table 21**

**Innovation Programs' Participant Listening Pretest Mean Scores – FY 2008-09**

| CASAS Listening Score Range | Mean Pre-test Score | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ESL/ESL - Citizenship** | | | |
| <=180 | 175.1 | 26 | 1 |
| 181-190 | 186.4 | 119 | 4.7 |
| 191-200 | 196.1 | 421 | 16.7 |
| 201-210 | 205.5 | 636 | 25.2 |
| 211-220 | 215.3 | 686 | 27.2 |
| 221-235 | 226.3 | 604 | 23.9 |
| 236-245 | 238.1 | 34 | 1.3 |
| **ESL/ESL - Citizenship Overall** | **210.8** | **2,526** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Reading Score Gains

CASAS has maintained a long history of research on reading gains. This research shows that learners testing 210 or below on the CASAS reading pre-test on average show greater than a seven point gain after 80-100 hours of instruction. Learners testing 211 or above on average show greater than a four point reading gain with 80-100 hours of instruction. All mean scores with the exception of the ESL/ESL citizenship 236-245 group tested at approximately the average when comparing the Innovation Programs with this longitudinal CASAS data.

Table 22 identifies the ABE/ASE and ESL/ESL reading gain scores for FY 2008–09. The ABE/ASE 211-220 scores show substantial gains, as do the ESL/ESL Citizenship scores in the <180, 181-190, and 191-200 ranges. Charts 23 and 24 show the respective gains over three years.

**Table 22**

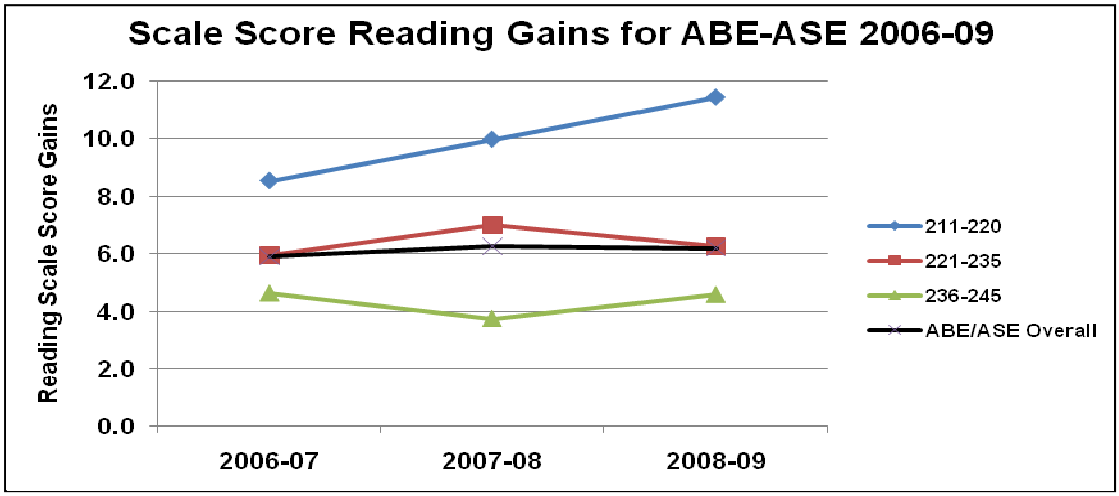
**Innovation Programs' Participant Reading Score Mean Gains – FY 2008–09**

| CASAS Scoring Range Reading | Pre-test Mean | Post-test Mean | Learning Gain Mean | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ABE/ASE** | | | | | |
| < 200 | — | — | — | — | — |
| 201–210 | — | — | — | — | — |
| 211–220 | 216.7 | 228.1 | 11.4 | 62 | 10.8 |
| 221–235 | 229.1 | 235.4 | 6.3 | 304 | 53.1 |
| 236–245 | 239.9 | 244.5 | 4.6 | 206 | 36.0 |
| **ABE/ASE Overall** | **231.7** | **237.9** | **6.2** | **572** | **100.0** |
| | | | | | |
| **ESL/ESL–Citizenship** | | | | | |
| < 180 | 173.0 | 199.0 | 26.0 | 1169 | 3.1 |
| 181–190 | 186.2 | 203.8 | 17.6 | 1910 | 5.0 |
| 191–200 | 196.2 | 207.7 | 11.4 | 6089 | 15.9 |
| 201–210 | 206.7 | 215.2 | 8.5 | 14114 | 36.9 |
| 211–220 | 215.9 | 222.6 | 6.7 | 7203 | 18.9 |
| 221–235 | 227.0 | 231.9 | 4.9 | 7257 | 19.0 |
| 236–245 | 239.5 | 242.7 | 3.2 | 461 | 1.2 |
| **ESL/ESL–Citizenship Overall** | **208.9** | **217.8** | **8.9** | **38,203** | **100** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

**Chart 23**

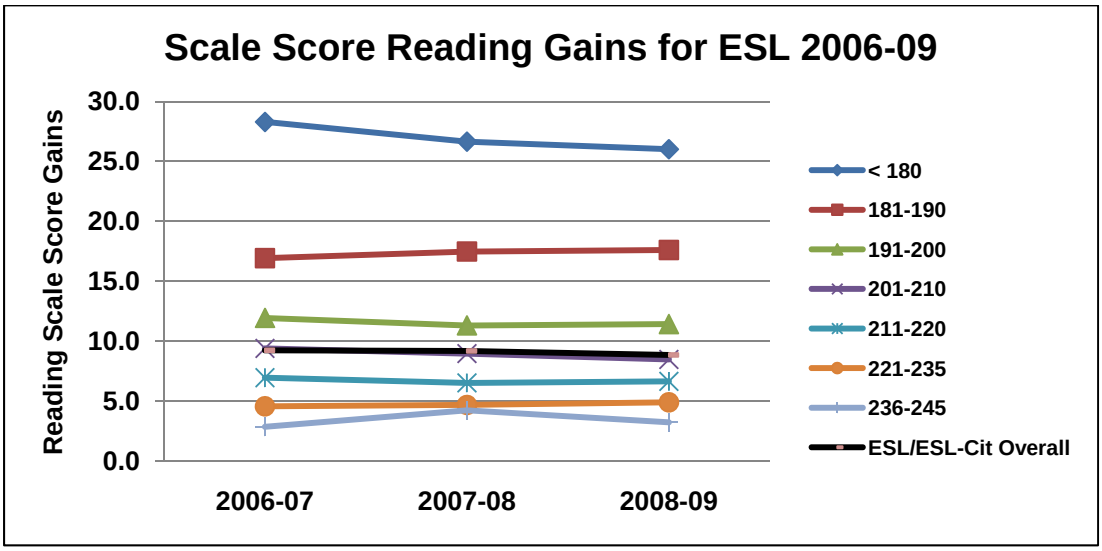
**Reading Gains for ABE and ASE in Innovation Programs 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

**Chart 24**

**Reading Gains for ESL in Innovation Programs 2006–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

Overall reading gain scores for ESL were also virtually static across the three years with a slight consistent downward trend. (See Chart 24) However, those learners pre-testing <180 made consistent decreases over the three years.

### Listening Score Gains

The same history of CASAS research shows that learners testing 210 or below on the CASAS listening test on average show five point gains after 80-100 hours of instruction. Learners testing 211 or above on average show three point reading gains with 80-100 hours of instruction.

Listening gains were highest with the lower level ESL/ESL citizenship learner. (See Table 23 and Chart 25 below) All groups performed higher than anticipated with the exception of the higher groups. The 221-235 groups performed below expectancy.

**Table 23**

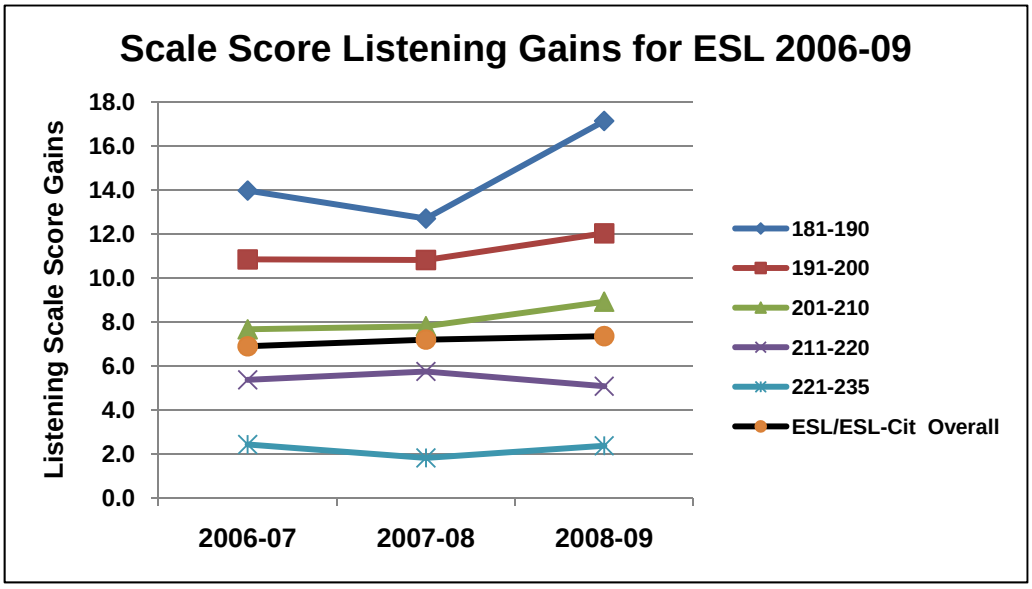
**Innovation Programs' Participant Listening Score Mean Gains – FY 2008-09**

| CASAS Scoring Range Listening | Pre-test Mean | Post-test Mean | Learning Gain Mean | N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ESL/ESL–Cit** | | | | | |
| < 180 | | | | | |
| 181–190 | 186.7 | 203.9 | 17.1 | 68 | 4.8 |
| 191–200 | 195.9 | 208.0 | 12.0 | 253 | 17.8 |
| 201–210 | 205.6 | 214.5 | 8.9 | 392 | 27.6 |
| 211–220 | 215.3 | 220.4 | 5.1 | 392 | 27.6 |
| 221–235 | 226.1 | 228.5 | 2.4 | 315 | 22.2 |
| 236–245 | — | — | — | | 0.0 |
| **ESL/ESL–Cit Overall** | **210.2** | **217.6** | **7.4** | **1,420** | **100.0** |

*Source: CASAS 2009*

**Chart 25**

**Listening Gains for ESL Learners in Innovation Programs 2006-09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

## Program Effectiveness and Student Persistence

In 2007, learner persistence became a California strategic focus to enhance adult education program improvement. In adult education, student persistence is often defined as the length of time that learners spend in active instruction. Another definition sees persistence as the learner staying engaged in some kind of formal learning structure even if not enrolled in specific adult education classes. Increasing persistence addresses methods to retain adult learners in programs long enough to significantly improve their learning skills — usually in the 80-100 hour range. CASAS defines persistence as completing a pre- and post- test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction.

Increasing persistence is very important for learners enrolled in ESL programs. A study of ESL learner gains in California over a four year period (Stiles 2004) showed CASAS reading test scores for ESL learners increased as the number of hours of instruction increased, although the actual gains in reading scores varied across years and program levels.

In 1999, research by Comings, Parella, and Scoicone defines persistence broadly as "adults staying in programs for as long as they can, engaging in self–directed study when they must drop out of their programs, and returning to programs as soon as the demands of their lives allow.[x] The Comings *et al* contribution recognizes that adult learners' lives and responsibilities make consistent participation in learning difficult over the approximately 80 hours often necessary to demonstrate learning gains. The study discusses several strategies to facilitate persistence, and elaborates at some length on self-study interventions. However, it does not dwell on the possible roles for distance learning. Distance learning may also provide a "bridge or link" so that students stay involved and keep learning during times when they are not able to attend traditional classroom programs.

There are some semantic and contextual difficulties with the ways the terms "student retention" and "student persistence" are applied. In some cases they are treated as having almost synonymous meanings. However, retention refers to keeping a learner enrolled long enough to show learning gains while persistence promotes flexibility allowing students to leave and return to learning somewhat seamlessly. Persistence refers to the strategies and compromises that learners make to maintain participation in formal instruction — to persevere. Retention relates to institutional strategies while persistence refers to student strategies.

Distance learning is a viable instructional strategy to address both goals. From the analyst's perspective the easiest way to increase student persistence data is to post-test more adult learners. Unfortunately, the foci in the persistence discussions address retention strategies to reduce student drop-out and to re-engage them when they "stop out." What is missing is a strong emphasis on systematically encouraging and introducing independent learning in curricular strategies including more emphasis on distance and alternative forms of instruction to serve as a bridge back and forth for students stopping out and as a way to encourage students to see their learning as continuous and not limited to one form of instruction.

Distance learning and interventions like hybrid and blended learning offer ways to make learning more convenient and accessible to many adult learners. They allow the student to continue learning when classroom or site-based attendance is difficult for multiple reasons. They should receive substantially more prominence as a significant intervention strategy. Instead, they are overlooked for the most part.

From the distance learning perspective there is no need to "stop out" from learning if the reasons for the break in learning are not catastrophic in nature. Learning can continue through asynchronous distance lessons that place the learner in charge of the pace of instruction. Research data indicate that distance learning and blended learning can be quite effective in this regard as this report indicates.

Outcomes are usually measured in terms of instructional units completed successfully in distance learning and other non-traditional instruction learning. Increasing learning modality options should help improve student persistence. It should be the basis for providing instructional strategies that accommodate adults' multiple responsibilities impacting their continuing participation and access to learning services.

### The Distance-Learning-Blended Model

In California adult education, the distance learning blended model has a very specific description. It refers to adult schools with Innovation Programs that offer somewhat simultaneous classroom and distance learning courses in which students can dual enroll.[xi] The key considerations are that each course must have its own approved course outline, course number, assigned instructor, separate student roster, and distinctive and different full length course materials. The courses can share the same course outline (A22), meaning the courses cover the same designated competencies, but the course materials must be different, and each course has its own course number.

As a standard practice the distance learning portion of blended learning and distance–learning–only classes are based entirely on learner outcomes. For each unit or module of instruction there is a test or method to demonstrate mastery (usually at about 80 percent correct answers). When a unit of instruction is completed, approved hours of average daily attendance (ADA) are claimed. Any direct teacher contact time is included in the claimed hours, not claimed separately.

To a certain extent, the blended model is a 'ground up' design based on student requests for additional material to study on their own. This is especially the case for students in classes that meet less often. They desire to learn more rapidly than traditional classroom instruction allows.

The blended model has been used almost exclusively with adult education ESL courses, which have not involved elective or other credits towards a high school diploma. For example, it is the policy of the Los Angeles Unified School District Adult and Career Education (LAUSD) that a student can only earn course credits one time when he or she takes a DL course involving credits and also takes the classroom version of that course. Credits cannot be awarded twice when the student completes both courses-only once, no exceptions.

This means that a student, whether blended or distance–learning–only, can only be awarded hours of attendance one time per completed unit of a distance learning course. Once all of the units of a DL course have been completed, the student cannot retake those units and have hours claimed by a school. In a traditional ESL class, a student can retake the same class multiple times and hours can be claimed for each re-taking of the class without limit—assuming the student is appropriately placed in the course multiple times.

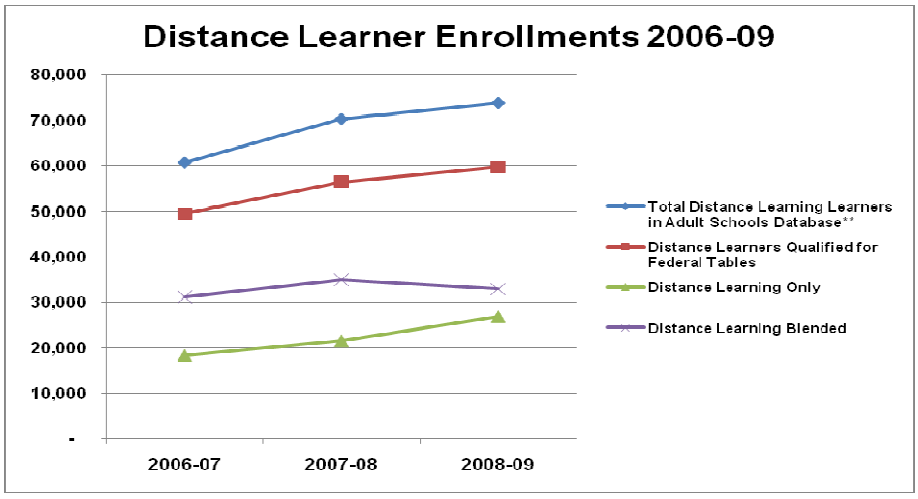
The following charts (Charts 23 – 32) are developed by Dr. Stiles and CASAS staff.[xii] They are based on data from the National Reporting System (NRS – WIA Title II reported data). The data reflects 26,866 distance only learners and 32,918 blended learners except where indicated. They clearly demonstrate the utility of distance learning (a combination of blended and distance–learning–only) and in particular the role of blended learning in producing effective completion, reading and listening gains. This is the fourth year that this data is being reported.

Blended learning in most cases and most importantly in ESL beginning through intermediate levels has the highest completion rates. Completion means that a student has completed a learning level (e.g. ESL beginning literacy).

Chart 26A shows that three-year growth of distance learning enrollment reported in state programs, as well as total distance learners and distance-learning-only learners reported in the NRS. Chart 26B contrasts the rates of qualifying for inclusion in the WIA Title II Federal Tables of distance learners with regular classroom learners. Innovation Programs have a greater percentage of complete and accurate data sets compared to regular programs.

**Chart 26A**

**Adult School WIA Title II Distance Learning Enrollment 2006-09**

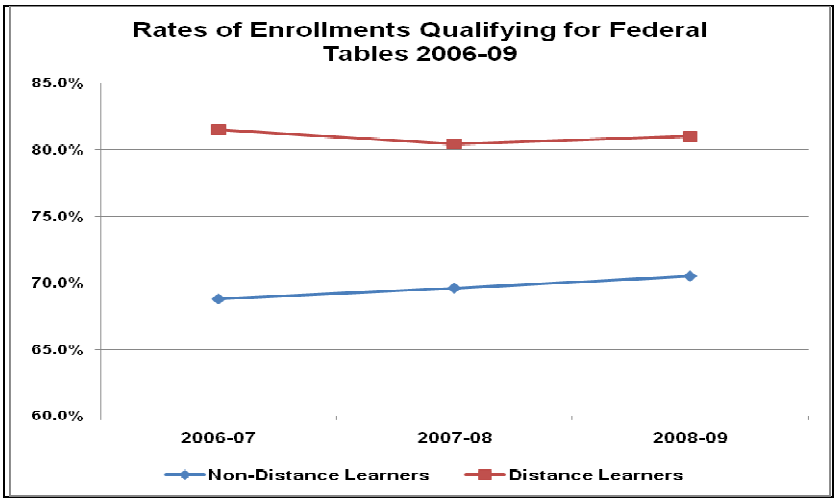



*Source: CASAS 2009*

** = Distance learners in the state database (See Table 1)

**Chart 26B**

**Rates of Distance and Regular Learner Enrollments Qualifying for Federal Tables 2006-09**

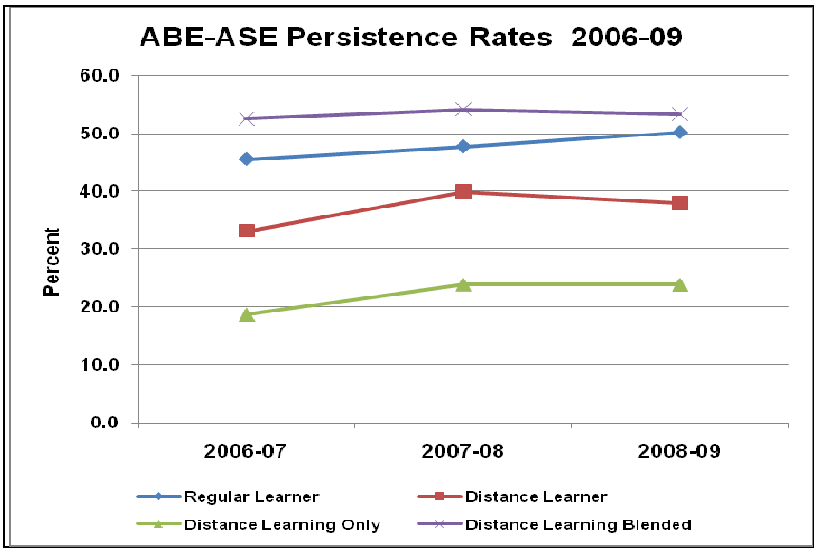



*Source: CASAS 2009*

The three-year comparisons of student persistence indicate that blended learning students perform the best, followed by classroom learners. Distance-learning-only students have the lowest persistence rates. Remember that CASAS defines persistence as completing a pre- and post- test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction. (See Chart 27)

**Chart 27**

**Persistence Rates of CA WIA Title II ABE/ASE Learners 2006–09**



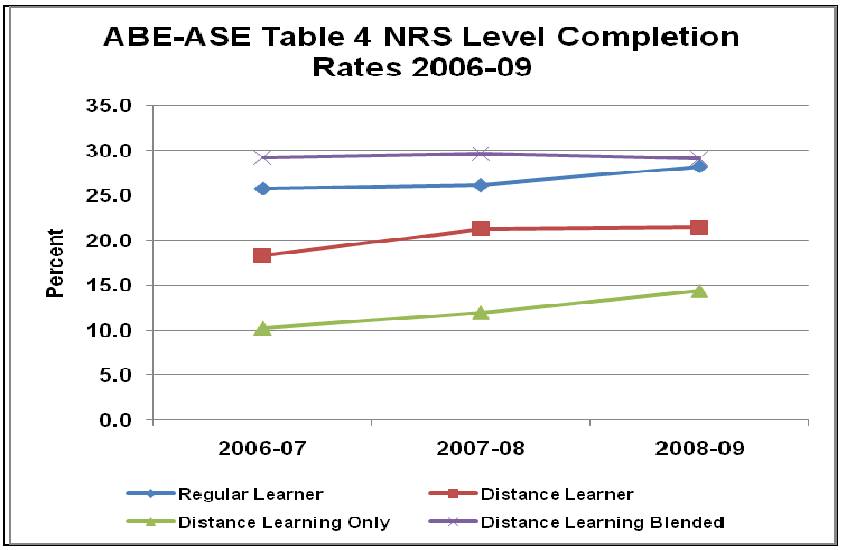

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Chart 28 displays the relative ABE/ASE level completion rates of the four learning interventions. Blended and classroom learners perform the best.

The percent of ABE to ASE learners completing an instructional level are roughly the same for blended learning and classroom learning in 2008-09. All learning interventions show increases in level completion over time.

**Chart 28**

**Table 4 NRS Level Completion Rates of CA WIA Title II ABE/ASE Learners 2006-09**

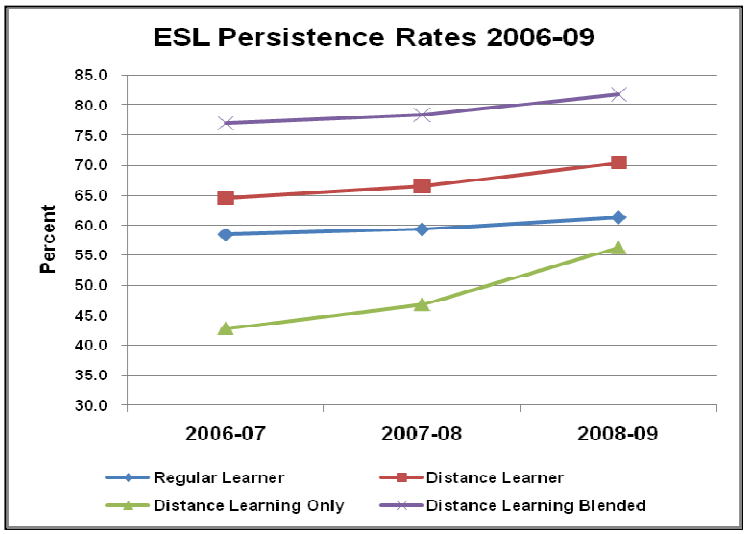



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Blended learning has significantly higher persistence rates than either 'regular learning' or 'distance learning only'. Obtaining complete data sets (pre- and post-test data) from learners in the distance learning mode only remains problematic. However, salient gains were made in 2008-09.Persistence means that a student has completed a pre- and post- test, which usually equates to 70 hours or more of instruction.

**Chart 29**

**Persistence Rates of CA WIA Title II ESL Learners 2006–09**

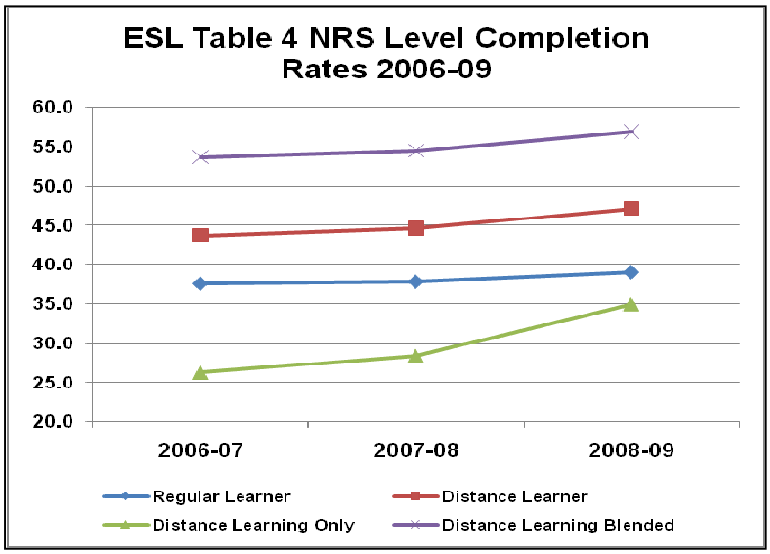



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Blended learning in most cases and most importantly in ESL beginning through intermediate levels has the highest completion rates. Completion means that a student has completed a learning level (e.g. ESL beginning literacy). All learning interventions have improved over time.

**Chart 30**

**Table 4 NRS Level Completion Rates of CA WIA Title II ESL Learners 2006–09**

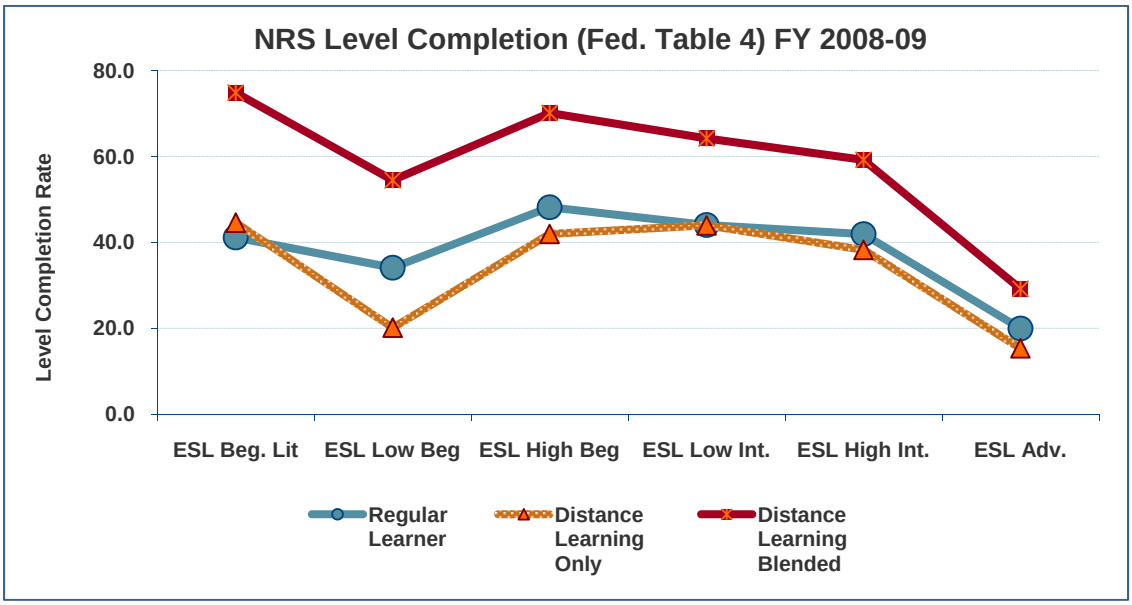



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Completion rates for ESL beginning literacy, low-beginning, low-intermediate, and high-intermediate are impressive, especially for distance-learning-only. (Chart 31)

**Chart 31**

**Completion Rates in Federal Table 4: ESL Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular Learners – FY 2008–09**



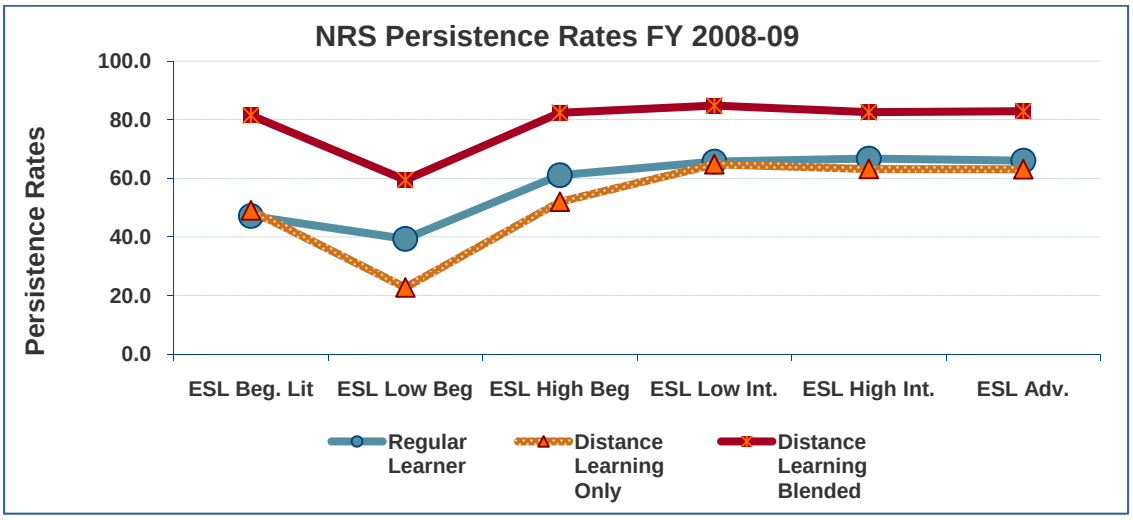

*Source: CASAS 2009*

Blended learning shows higher persistence rates with the federally reported WIA Title II learners (Chart 32). In this chart, the CASAS definition of persistence is used – completing a CASAS pre- and post-test. For the ESL low-beginning learner, distance-learning-only as an intervention performs poorly in comparison to classroom and blended learning. However, with the other learning levels distance–

learning–only performs very well. Again, it is the blended model that enables the distance learning approach to show results that surpass classroom results.

**Chart 32**

**Distance Learners Contrasted with Regular and Blended Learners 2008–09**

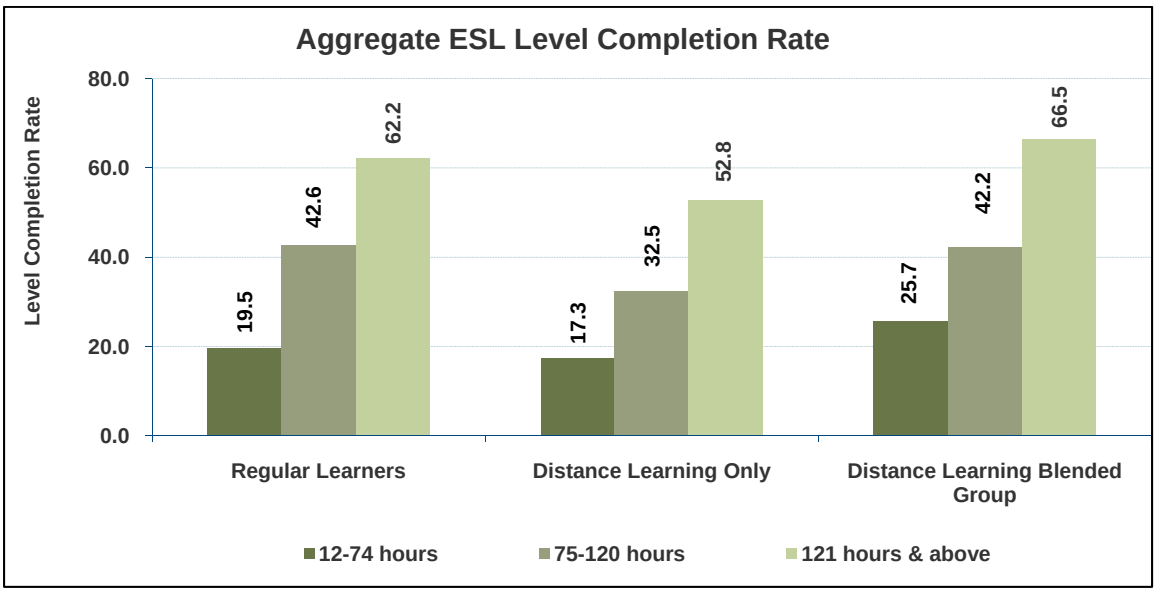



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Chart 33 shows a comparison of the reading gains for WIA II learners in 2008-09 for the two distance learning interventions with regular classroom instruction. It indicates that blended learners perform the best followed by regular learners and then distance-learning-only.

**Chart 33**

**National Reporting System ESL Level Reading Gains by Hours of Instruction: ESL Distance Learners contrasted with ESL Regular Learners 2008–09**

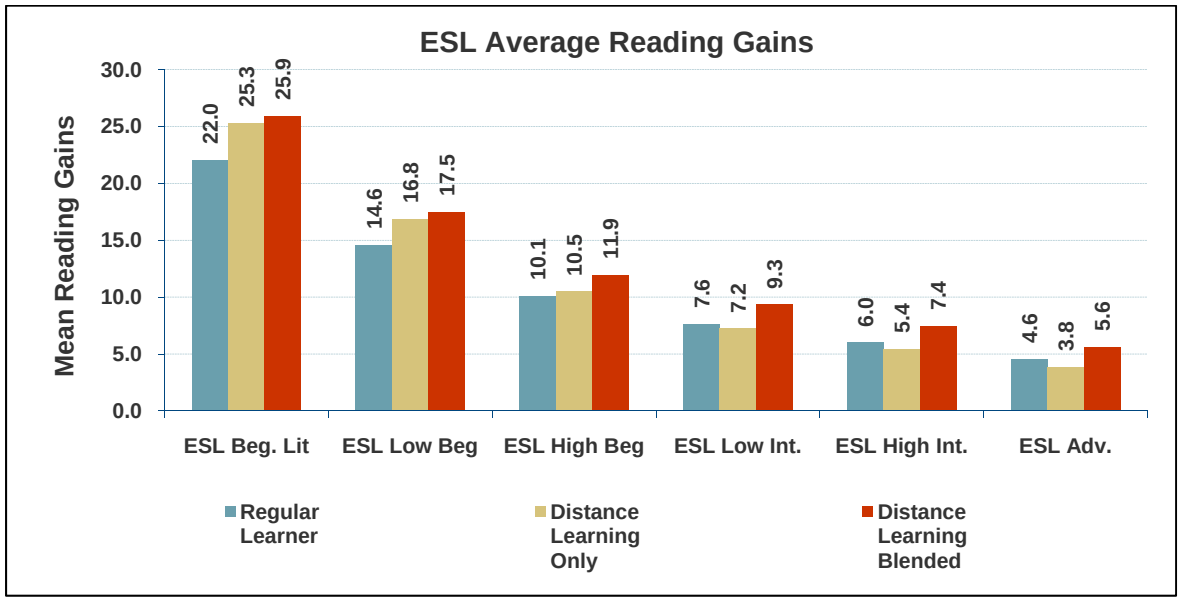



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Chart 34 describes relative ESL average reading gain scores. Both distance learning interventions perform comparatively well for the ESL beginning literacy through the ESL low-intermediate segments, while blended learning again performs the best at each NRS level.

**Chart 34**

**ESL Comparative Reading Gain Scores by NRS ESL Functional Instructional Levels 2008–09**

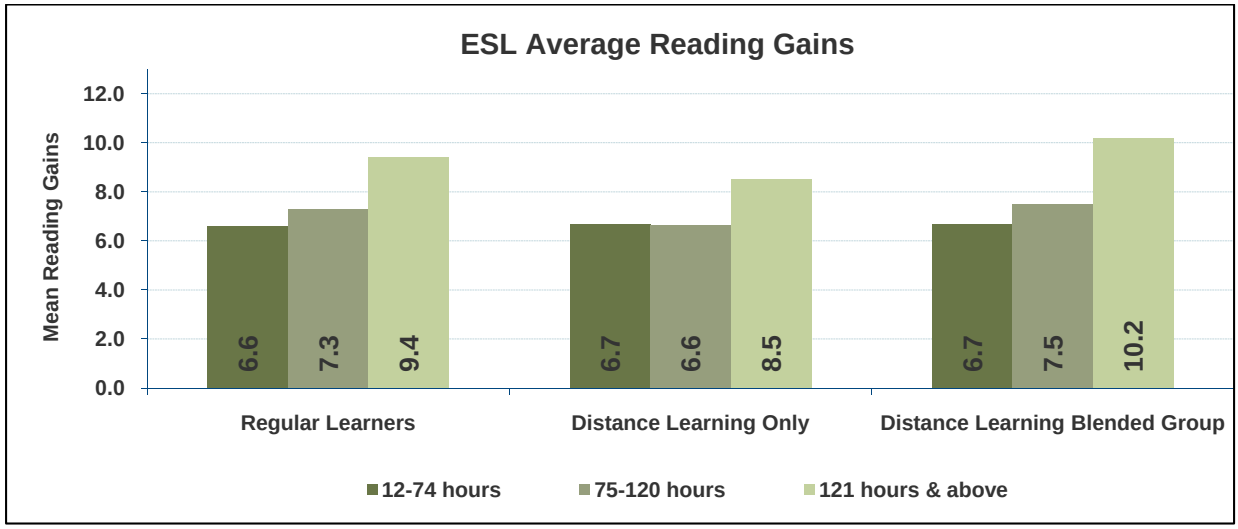



*Source: CASAS 2009*

Chart 35 presents a comparison of reading gains based on mode of delivery and hours of instruction. All modes and hours of delivery show better gains that reflect the historical norm, in that learner reading gains increase with increases of instructional time. Blended learning performs the best, followed by classroom only instruction and distance-learning-only instruction.

**Chart 35**

**Mean Reading Gains: ESL Distance Learners contrasted with ESL Regular Learners by Hours of Instruction 2008–09**




*Source: CASAS 2009*

The researcher's ability to examine and compare key outcomes data provides a better view of how distance-learning-only instruction performs in comparison to the classroom only and blended learning modes. Common sense tells us that the blended learning instruction, where two curricula are provided, and the resultant interventions are more substantive, would produce the best results.

## Conclusions

Over the last 16 years, the California Innovation Program and distance learning have become well accepted and vital parts of adult basic education. The data reported here indicates that the original goal of increasing access to learning opportunities continues to be addressed. The program has increased access to a variety of learners who would have a difficult time attending traditional in-classroom courses or who might not progress at the same rate in a traditional program.

The role of blended learning as an effective method to serve the adult basic education student, especially the ESL student, is firmly documented. Of special note, the distance-learning-only modality holds up very well compared with the other two modes of instruction when considering that "no instruction" would likely reveal a "zero" gain in reading and listening; whereas learners in the distance-learning-only continue to make gains independent of face-to-face instructional intervention and sometimes comparable to the results attained through regular classroom instruction. This finding has important statewide and national implications.

The Innovation Program Initiative continues to provide significant and meaningful alternatives for adults who:

- Need more practice of skills to achieve mastery
- Have work and family obligations that make attending a regular class time difficult
- Lack the full confidence to participate in a large classroom setting in front of other students
- Want the participation, assistance, and support of their families in their learning
- Live in locations without convenient access to traditional classes
- Live in areas where there is no space in traditional classes
- Learn more effectively from video, audio, and Web–based media when moving at their own pace
- Cannot access traditional classroom programs on a regular basis

When comparing classroom completion and persistence data with the Innovation Programs, it is clear that the distance learning programs, especially blended learning, are particularly successful in providing ESL learning opportunities. Local research data on student persistence and retention has supported these findings. The availability of engaging life skills instructional materials is, in all likelihood, a key factor.

The Innovation Programs continue to meet the three crucial benefit-cost criteria often used to evaluate the utility of a program intervention. They are:

**Effectiveness** — CASAS pre- post-test data indicate that the Innovation Programs' ESL program participants, on average, show substantial learning increases in reading and listening. Much of this is attributed to the results of the blended learning model. The ABE/ASE participants show learning gains consistent with historical data.

**Efficiency** — Participant and program cost data indicate that the Innovation Programs are cost effective. Common sense tells us that the programs would not be offered if they are not cost effective.

**Equity** — Reported years in school, primary language, reading and listening scores on entry, and ethnic data indicate that lower level, often hard-to-serve learners are the primary participants in the Innovation Programs.

This is the eighth year that similar research conclusions have been reached. However, they are now supported by a closer look at comparative classroom, blended learning, and distance-learning-only data.

The Innovation Programs follow the same accountability requirements as class-based apportionment programs. Over the past nine years, the Innovation Programs have been successful in standardizing their reporting procedures, while still maintaining alternative instructional delivery methods. While not required, all Innovation Program students are expected to be tracked in the TOPSpro system.

All programs are using a standardized format for both program applications and annual evaluation. This format makes gathering data and program monitoring more substantive and meaningful. Pre- and post-testing is more difficult than in traditional settings. It is not standardized for programs other than ESL, ABE and GED/ASE. In general, the Innovation Programs collect more program documentation and learner progress information than do the classroom programs.

This rich data provides the most detailed comparative examination of adult basic education learning interventions that are available in the United States. It results from a statewide data system, standardized testing and assessment, and the foresight of California legislators to permit school districts to use distance learning as an instructional intervention.

## References

[i] The research papers can be found on the OTAN Project Web site under the online research documents. Click on Distance Education or go to http://www.otan.dni.us/browse/index.cfm?count=1&fuseaction=view&catid=2687&sort=3

[ii] In the fall of 2008 Assembly Bill 1163 was passed authorizing school districts to claim and expend up to five percent of their adult block entitlement for those innovation programs and more than five percent but no more than fifteen percent of its adult block entitlement if the program is approved by the Superintendent under the bill. The bill requires a school district to maintain specified accountability mechanisms for those programs, including maintaining documentation of the hours of student attendance required for apportionment purposes.

The legislation amended Education Code Section 52522. It includes a specific definition of distance learning as follows:

"'Distance learning" means instruction in which the pupil and instructor are in different locations and interact through the use of computer and communications technology. Distance learning may include video or audio instruction in which the primary mode of communication between pupil and instructor is instructional television, video, telecourses, or any other instruction that relies on computer or communications technology."

The authorization began in January 2009, but there is little indication that it changed the nature of program participation for the 2008–09 fiscal year.

[iii] The research and data collection for this paper are funded by Federal P.L., 105-220, Section 223, from the Adult Education Office, Secondary, Postsecondary, and Adult Leadership Division, California Department of Education. However, the conclusions and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of that department or the U.S. Department of Education.

[iv] The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) is a nonprofit organization that "partners with a national consortium of state and local agencies to provide valid competency and standards–based assessment systems, research services, and professional development. CASAS also provides alternative high school credentialing options through the National External Diploma Program." See https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm.

[v] The worksite – workplace learning skills focus has proven unattractive to adult schools, and the test of alternative reimbursement approaches poses very difficult policy and program issues. This leaves the distance learning and off–site instructional approaches as the primary foci. They are essentially the same.

[vi] This is due to the asynchronous nature of most instruction. Each learner interacts with the learning materials and the instructor on an individualized basis.

[vii] Tables 1 – 9 display data from the FY 2008-09 applications. All the tables and charts in this report utilize data from FY 2008-09.

[viii] Adults with disabilities were left off the table. There were only 31 persons served via distance learning in 2008-09.

[ix] Programs utilizing federal adult education funds must test all learners. Participants in state apportionment programs are not required to pre- and post–test learners using standardized tests, although it is strongly recommended.

[x] Comings, J.P. Parella ,A. & Socione, L., 1999. Persistence among adult basic education students in pre-GED classes. National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, Cambridge, MA., p.3. Retrieved June 7, 2010 from http://www.ncsall.net/?id=29 - report 12.

[xi] The enrollments are simultaneous in the sense that a student will enroll in either a classroom or a distance learning program and subsequently enroll in the other. Sometimes students enroll in distance learning because of a classroom waiting list but remain in the distance learning class even after they are admitted to a face-to-face class.

[xii] Stiles, R., 2004. The Relationship of California Adult ESL and ESL–Citizenship Reading Performance to Amount of Instructional Time. *California Adult Education: Research Brief, 2*, San Diego: CASAS. Retrieved June 10, 2010, from https://www.casas.org/home/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showContent&MapID=1562