OTAN
Outreach and Technical Assistance Network

Technology and Distance Learning
for California Adult Education

Appendix F – Addendum

Annual Report
2020–2021

Prepared for:
Adult Education Office (AEO), Career and College Transition Division (CCTD),
at the California Department of Education (CDE)

Submitted by:

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Appendix F

California Department of Education

WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning
California Update

Program Year 2020–2021

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California Department of Education

WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning California Update

Program Year 2020–2021

Introduction

California adult education providers and educators continue to show reliance, ingenuity, tenacity and grit in their perseverance to provide educational services to adult learners in our state. Recent events and impacts of the worldwide pandemic, and the volatility of frequent policy changes sent teachers and students back and forth from remote teaching and learning to in-person classes on many occasions. This report provides a broad overview of the state of distance learning in Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funded adult schools and colleges in California with recommendations for further research.

There are changes to this report, namely in the scope of the report and a desire to move beyond quantitative analysis into more qualitative evaluation of what, and how, our adult education agencies are serving California. This report references data from prior years, provides comparisons and offers insights into some of the new delivery models, such as HyFlex options, and further defines and provides context of blended distance learning. Further, the report adds a component of agency voice where they were invited to share their agency goals, practices, professional development strategies to ease the burden and stress on teachers pushed into a new delivery model that they may, or may not, be well prepared for, student barriers to learning and how they addressed them, and other issues that rose to the top that provide insight and ideas to potentially improve program delivery through distance and blended offerings to meet the needs of learners.

Statistics and numbers do not always provide a clear picture of what is potentially happening at our schools. This year, the report reflects some of the recommendations made last year to discover what was happening within our adult education programs on a more qualitative level. This is an effort to not only look at the statistics, but to also have meaningful conversations with agencies offering distance and blended programs with learners during the past year. Past enrollments may show a significant increase in reported distance learners, but with over 800,000 learners served within the state, these numbers pale to what is possible with the tools available to our educators, and with our students.

Adult education learners reported a high level of access to the internet, but other barriers were revealed with respect to digital access and online learning for students whose intersectionalities (race, age, socio-economic status, immigration status, culture, gender, etc.) had a negative impact on opportunities to participate in and benefit from program offerings. However, of students

reporting they experienced online learning, over 96% of them reported they wanted to continue this method of learning. It is clear that as learners gained an understanding of digital literacy skills, and the flexibility offered through different instructional models, their desire to continue learning through online resources remained strong. There is still the issue of equitable access for all learners. Although many students reported they had access to the internet and adult education programs, and they clearly understand the benefit, this access is disproportionate due to several factors (urban/rural, immigration status, multigenerational households, socioeconomically disadvantaged families, etc.).

The pandemic pushed education into a new context. And adult education in California as a whole, did a good job managing the rough seas caused by the health and safety requirements mandated by federal, state, and local authorities. As adult education moves away from these restrictions, what will our 'new normal' look like? The genie is out of the bottle regarding the benefits and flexibility of distance education (in all its forms) and it is unlikely, and for many, undesirable to return to 'the way it was before.' The findings here show distance and blended learning are not only beneficial to teachers and students, they also present alternative program delivery options that are scalable and assure that agencies can be flexible to respond to changes in students' needs, teachers' expertise, program capacities, and client demographics.

Future research and development should focus on blended distance learning programs and the effective use of technology, locally driven by agencies and consortia, with support provided by the state via organizations such as OTAN, CASAS and CALPRO. Such use of technology has the potential to extend learning, and leverages the opportunities to integrate and expand the learning process inside and outside of the classroom, serving a growing demographic that flows in and out of learning due to the precarity of employment during the COVID-19 pandemic, or other changes in the lives of our learners that require the flexibility of a multitude of learning models they can choose from. Blended distance learning is a viable alternative and extension to face-to-face Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and English as a Second Language (ESL) program delivery, chiefly because of its flexibility, scalability, and responsiveness.This versatility of blended distance learning has the potential to translate into higher quality, greater satisfaction, more extensive reach, and increased return on investment.

Methodology

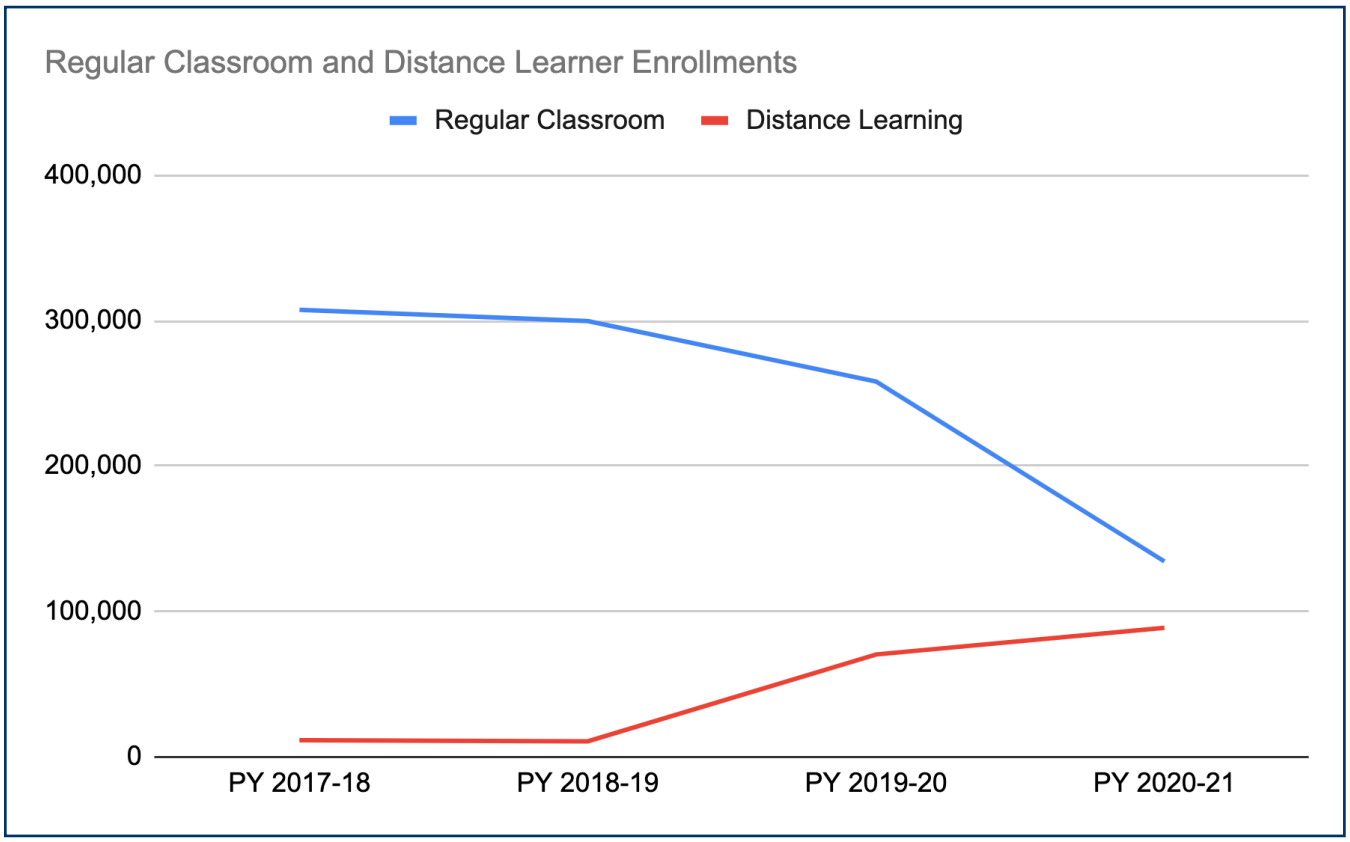
This report presents findings, drawing from data with quantitative and qualitative properties. It draws from data provided by the Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN) and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems, (CASAS), such as the National Reporting System (NRS) Federal Reporting Tables 4 and 4C, the Student Technology Intake Survey and Teacher Self-Assessment (both Continuous Improvement Plan requirements), and the California Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey and focus groups to deepen understandings of experiences with distance learning of WIOA Title II funded agencies and their adult schools. Data generated by the focus groups provided the basis for case study research inspired by a multiple case study design.[1]

1 Robert E. Stake, "Multiple Case Study Analysis," Guilford Publications, 2006.

The focus groups explored agencies' experiences with respect to student persistence, waitlists or program availability, blended and distance program delivery including HyFlex options, program strategies to respond to the limitations to in-person program delivery due to the pandemic, professional development supports, and 'future proofing' for responsive and resilient program delivery. Guiding questions were developed based on the 2020 Distance Learning Plan Update report recommendations and results from the Program Year (PY) 2020–21 Implementation Survey. The case studies section provides additional details.

Findings

In PY 2018–19, the program year before the pandemic, there were 299,720 students in regular classrooms and 10,574 distance learning students (3.5%) reported. The chart and table of Figure 1 display the combined adult student enrollments for regular classroom and distance learning students for the program years from 2017–18 to 2020–21. There were 134,492 students in regular classrooms and 88,749 distance learning students (66%) reported in PY 2020–21. Given the limitations and challenges with respect to in-person program delivery due to the pandemic during PY 2020–21, a decline in regular classroom enrollments and an increase in distance learning enrollments is not surprising. Notable however is that regular classroom enrollments were only reduced by more than half, demonstrating a need for in-person instruction. At the same time, distance learning enrollments increased by more than 8 times, showing the responsiveness and innovation of adult schools by providing remote instruction at a rate many times the distance learning offerings before the pandemic.



REGULAR CLASSROOM VS. DISTANCE LEARNER ENROLLMENTS - DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21
Regular Classroom	307,478	299,720	258,201	134,492
Distance Learning	11,468	10,754	70,483	88,749

Figure 1. *WIA/WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments from PY 2017–18 to PY 2020–21 for Regular Classroom vs. Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Tables 4 and 4C.* (Source: CASAS 2021)

When the California Department of Education (CDE) polled adult schools via the CDE Emergency Situation Impact Survey in the early days of the pandemic in mid-March 2020, responses about administrative disruptions that would impact any WIOA short-term deliverables were varied. Most districts closed schools including adult schools while some anticipated operating with reduced staff or rotating staff, and others stated that, if staff/faculty/administration were directed to work remotely, deliverables would not be completed. Some also reported that they would completely restructure the Spring schedule and that they were looking at how to implement online distance learning. Many were concerned that students without WIFI access would not be able to participate and that remote instruction would be difficult for students without access to computers at home, especially for Literacy Program Students.

When asked how remote instruction and distance learning could be supported by the CDE, responses included: Expectations for reporting instructional hours and other important data, free web-based programs to track student progress, a formula recognizing that PY 2019–20 was a shorter program year, flexibility and guidance regarding all upcoming deliverables, training on creating teacher videos for students, interactive platforms that do not require students to login, guidelines regarding how to handle placement and pre- and post-testing, standardization of attendance for the wide variety of work going on at students homes, information about how to capture attendance for Average Daily Attendance (ADA), and a list of online providers for adult education. Agencies also reported that they appreciated the support of CALPRO, CASAS, and OTAN, specifically the resources shared via social media (Facebook, Twitter).

This section focuses on findings for PY 2020–21, however these need to be viewed in context of the limitations to in-person program delivery that began just before the last quarter of the previous program year. The case studies developed on the basis of focus group interviews with a variety of adult schools take this larger pandemic context into account. Agencies made programmatic shifts and implemented budget changes to address the new realities of an ongoing pandemic, with support of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act or COVID-19 relief funds.

Students and Technology for Distance Learning

This section reviews statewide results from the Student Technology Intake Survey from its launch in September 2020 until the end of the 2020–21 program year. The survey is a new

instrument[2] that supports agencies in sharing learner data with legislators, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), and other adult education partners. Agencies are encouraged to have most learners complete the survey at least once a year, surveying one program area, several, or all students. The purpose of the survey is to gather data related to student access and distance learning barriers. Agency-specific and student-level data is only shared with agencies to inform program development, identify gaps in digital access and understand how students use technology in their daily lives.[3]

Of particular interest is students' use of technology for blended and distance learning especially since the start of the pandemic in mid-March 2020, however many agencies' outreach and promotion activities have also taken advantage of technology to reach prospective students since then. Notably, as Figure 2 shows, 29.6% of students participating in the survey heard about the adult school via a website but 62.9% were told about it by family or a friend. It may be of interest to include the role of social media in the Student Technology Intake Survey, especially for outreach and promotion purposes but also for ongoing communication and follow-up with students.

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT OUR SCHOOL?		TOTAL	%
Website	**Yes**	**6,826**	**29.6%**
	No	**16,200**	**70.4%**
Catalog	**Yes**	**1,632**	**7.1%**
	No	**21,394**	**92.9%**
Family or Friend	**Yes**	**14,472**	**62.9%**
	No	**8,554**	**37.1%**
Advertisement	**Yes**	**1,781**	**7.7%**
	No	**21,245**	**92.3%**

Figure 2. *Promotion and outreach of adult school programs. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

2 For online access to the survey visit https://caladulted.org/StudentTechnologyIntakeSurvey

3 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 4-5

Online Learning

When asked if they had ever taken an online class before, 71% said that they had as shown in Figure 3 below. The following Figure 4 illustrates that 93.9% said that they wanted to continue learning online.

HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN A CLASS ONLINE?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	16,352	71.0%
	No	6,674	29.0%

Figure 3. *Students having taken online classes before. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

WHAT IS YOUR FEELING ABOUT LEARNING ONLINE?	TOTAL	%
I will continue to learn online.	21,618	93.9%
I don't think I can learn online right now	1,408	6.1%

Figure 4. *Students' feelings about online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Laptops or computers (76%) are the most common choice of devices used for online learning, followed by cell phones (57.2%) and tablets (23.4%). But Figure 5 also shows that there are 219 respondents (1%) who said they did not have a device at all and the following Figure 6 shows that 9081 respondents (39.4%) said that they had to share their device.

WHICH DEVICE(S) DO YOU OR CAN YOU USE FOR ONLINE LEARNING? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)		TOTAL	%
Cell phone	Yes	13,174	57.2%
	No	9,852	42.8%
Tablet	Yes	5,382	23.4%
	No	17,644	76.6%
Laptop or computer	Yes	17,492	76.0%
	No	5,534	24.0%
None (I don't have a device)	Yes	219	1.0%
	No	22,807	99.0%

Figure 5. *Students' use of devices for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

DO YOU SHARE THIS COMPUTER, LAPTOP, OR OTHER DEVICE WITH OTHERS AT HOME?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	9,081	39.4%
	No	13,945	60.6%

Figure 6. *Students having to share their device used for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

As Figure 7 and Figure 8 show, there are also data limits that keep 4,781 respondents (20.8%) from learning and 2,912 (12.6%) do not have a quiet place to study. Given limited access to in-person services at adult schools and places with public Internet connections during the pandemic, not being able to use a device and connect to the Internet at home as needed means limited access to educational opportunities.

DO YOU HAVE DATA LIMITS AT HOME OR ON YOUR PHONE THAT WOULD KEEP YOU FROM LEARNING?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	4,781	20.8%
	No	13,185	57.3%
	I don't know	5,060	22.0%

Figure 7. *Students' data limits as barriers to online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN)

DO YOU HAVE A QUIET PLACE TO STUDY AT HOME?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	20,114	87.4%
	No	2,912	12.6%

Figure 8. *Students' study space for online learning. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

When asked about what would help them to study online, 12.4% said that they needed a mobile hotspot to get on the Internet. Figure 9 also shows that 35.1% said flexible study times, 25.1% said a device to study online, 21.1% assistance with getting into online textbooks or classes, and technical troubleshooting (14.4%) would be helpful.

PLEASE MARK THE ITEMS BELOW THAT WOULD HELP YOU TO STUDY ONLINE. (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)		TOTAL	%
A device to help me study online	Yes	5,778	25.1%
	No	17,248	74.9%
Help to get on the Internet like a mobile hotspot	Yes	2,864	12.4%
	No	20,162	87.6%
Help getting into my online textbooks and/or classes	Yes	4,847	21.1%
	No	18,179	78.9%

PLEASE MARK THE ITEMS BELOW THAT WOULD HELP YOU TO STUDY ONLINE. (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)		TOTAL	%
Technical help fixing or using online stuff	Yes	3,311	14.4%
	No	19,715	85.6%
Flexible study times	Yes	8,089	35.1%
	No	14,937	64.9%

Figure 9. *Students' online learning needs. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Digital Access

When looking specifically at students' access to email and a smartphone, and how they connect, the Students Technology Intake Survey reveals that 5,040 students (21.9%) do not have access to email at home or at school (see Figure 10). However, 95.7% said that their cell phone is a smartphone (see Figure 11).

DO YOU USE EMAIL AT HOME OR AT SCHOOL?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	17,986	78.1%
	No	5,040	21.9%

Figure 10. *Students' use of email at home. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

IS YOUR CELL PHONE A SMARTPHONE?		TOTAL	%
	Yes	22,038	95.7%
	No	988	4.3%

Figure 11. *Students' access to smartphones. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

When asked how they connected to the internet, Figure 12 illustrates that most (86.9%) use a connection at home but almost a quarter (22.6%) uses their phone to get online.

HOW DO YOU CONNECT TO THE INTERNET?		TOTAL	%
Through my phone	Yes	5,204	22.6%
	No	17,822	77.4%
Wifi/Internet connection in my home	Yes	20,014	86.9%
	No	3,012	13.1%
Personal Hotspot	Yes	1,337	5.8%
	No	21,689	94.2%
WiFi in the community	Yes	718	3.1%
	No	22,308	96.9%

Figure 12. *Students' ways to connect to the internet. Student Technology Intake Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Given the limitations to publicly provided services during the pandemic, such as WIFI in the community, survey results with respect to digital access for the following program years may become more conclusive. However, the current lack of access for some students and a reliance on mobile devices as the main source of connection is notable. This underlines the importance of mobile devices for access to learning and the need for Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) policies at adult schools and free public wifi in the communities they serve.

Teachers and Technology for Distance Learning

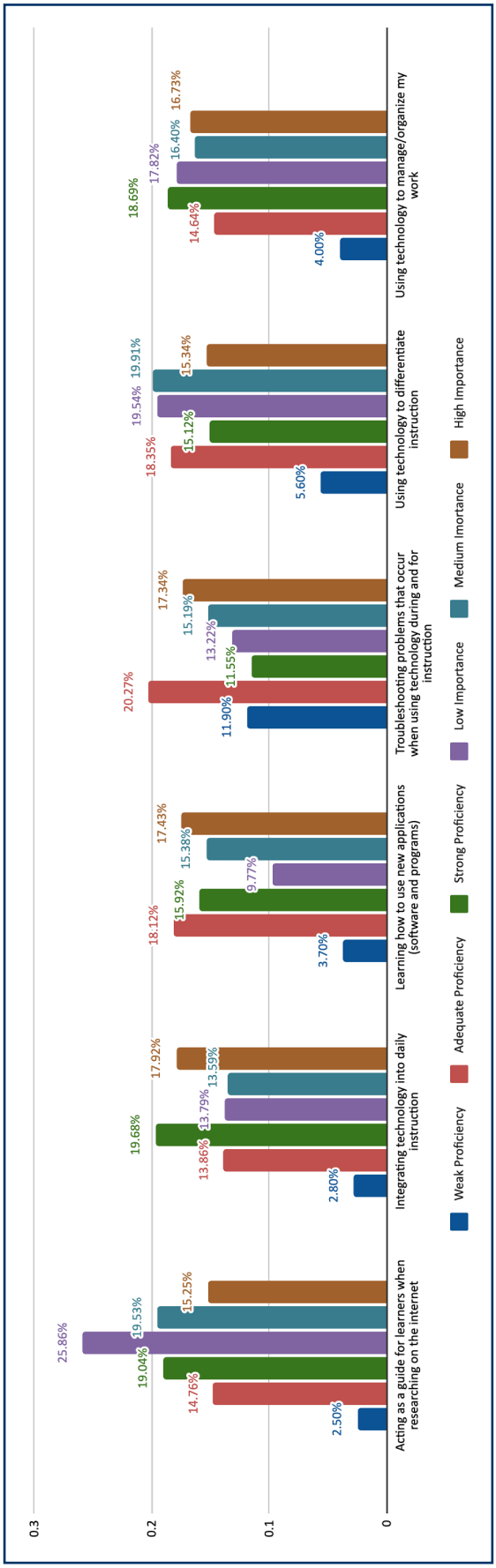
Measuring teacher confidence and competencies in the classroom allows agencies to understand instructors' strengths and identify where they need additional support. The Teacher Self-Assessment must be completed by at least 25% of teachers in each agency as part of the annual Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)[4]. The purpose of this short survey is to understand the technology skills, knowledge, needs of teachers with respect to the general technology use in education, specific technology uses in the classroom, opinions and attitudes on technology integration, and areas of technical needs and improvement. As an agency develops its CIP, OTAN provides training to support the integration of technology into the classroom and program development in blended and distance learning practices. Agencies can participate in the two-year Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC), take training through online webinars, face-to-face classes and online courses, and receive referrals to specific resources that would most benefit program goals.[5]

General Technology Use in Education

In the Distance Learning Updates of previous program years, OTAN reported on teacher self-assessments of their technology skills and their perceived value for instruction based on the ISTE Standards for Teachers to help improve future professional development opportunities through local agencies as well as for services available through the three state leadership projects (OTAN, CASAS, CALPRO). The section on General technology use in education employs a similar approach, asking teachers to rate their skill and the importance they place on each of various tasks. The chart and table in Figure 13 below shows that they rated themselves strongly when Integrating technology into daily instruction (19.7%), Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet (19%), and Using technology to manage/organize their work (18.7%). When asked about the importance placed on tasks, they rated Integrating technology into daily instruction (17.9%), Learning how to use new applications (software and programs) (17.4%), and Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction (17.3%) highest.

4 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 5

5 California Department of Education Adult Education Office. Continuous Improvement Plan. Program Year: 2021–22, p. 14


0.3
0.2
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0
Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet
Integrating technology into daily instruction
Learning how to use new applications (software and programs)
Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction
Using technology to differentiate instruction
Using technology to manage/organize my work
Weak Proficiency
Adequate Proficiency
Strong Proficiency
Low Importance
Medium Importance
High Importance
2.50%
14.76%
19.04%
25.86%
19.53%
15.25%
2.80%
13.86%
13.79%
19.68%
13.59%
17.92%
3.70%
18.12%
15.92%
9.77%
15.38%
17.43%
11.90%
20.27%
11.55%
13.22%
15.19%
17.34%
5.60%
18.35%
15.12%
19.54%
19.91%
15.34%
4.00%
14.64%
18.69%
17.82%
16.40%
16.73%

GENERAL TECHNOLOGY USE IN EDUCATION - DATA TABLE	PROFICIENCY			IMPORTANCE		
	Weak	Adequate	Strong	Low	Medium	High
Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet	2.5%	14.8%	19.0%	25.9%	19.5%	15.2%
Integrating technology into daily instruction	2.8%	13.9%	19.7%	13.8%	13.6%	17.9%
Learning how to use new applications (software and programs)	3.7%	18.1%	15.9%	9.8%	15.4%	17.4%
Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction	11.9%	20.3%	11.5%	13.2%	15.2%	17.3%
Using technology to differentiate instruction	5.6%	18.4%	15.1%	19.5%	19.9%	15.3
Using technology to manage/ organize my work	4.0%	14.6%	18.7%	17.8%	16.4%	16.7%
Grand Total	30.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 13. *General Technology Use in Education. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

To determine areas where professional development activities may have the most impact, the following Figure 14 illustrates areas of weak proficiency and high importance for teaching. Areas with high percentages in both are areas where teachers feel they need professional development most to use technology for education, such as Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction (11.9% Weak Proficiency and 17.3% High Importance), which tops the list.

AREAS OF WEAK PROFICIENCY AND HIGH IMPORTANCE TO TEACHING	WEAK PROFICIENCY	HIGH IMPORTANCE
Troubleshooting problems that occur when using technology during and for instruction	11.9%	17.3%
Using technology to differentiate instruction	5.6%	15.3%
Using technology to manage/organize my work	4.0%	16.7%
Learning how to use new applications (software and programs)	3.7%	17.4%
Integrating technology into daily instruction	2.8%	17.9%
Acting as a guide for learners when researching on the internet	2.5%	15.2%

Figure 14. *Areas of Weak Proficiency and High Importance to Teaching. General Technology Use in Education. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Specific Technology Use in Education

The use of specific technologies for teaching and learning may vary greatly by the frequency with which they are used. Teachers were asked to rate descriptions of technology uses based on the amount of time they spent working with them. Figure 15 illustrates that 84% responded that Computers in all environments (classroom, remote teaching) were used daily, and 57.6% said the same about Mobile devices (primarily smartphones or feature phones) as did 57.3% about Internet resources for developing lesson plans / ideas (websites, extensions, search tools like Google, Bing). But 62.5% also reported that they never used Assistive Technology hardware (puff sticks, special mouse, large key keyboards, communication boards) and 55% never used Assistive Technology Tools (screen readers, magnifiers, JAWS, Immersive Reader, NVDA).

SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM	NEVER	YEARLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	DAILY
Applications and Internet	%	%	%	%	%
Internet resources for developing lesson plans / ideas (websites, extensions, search tools like Google, Bing)	**1.5%**	**2.1%**	**8.8%**	**30.3%**	**57.3%**
Apps for tablets / mobile devices	**12.8%**	**7.3%**	**18.6%**	**25.8%**	**35.4%**
Assistive Technology Tools (screen readers, magnifiers, JAWS, Immersive Reader, NVDA)	**55.0%**	**13.3%**	**12.4%**	**11.7%**	**7.6%**
Test Preparation (I.E. HSE, Certifications, etc.)	**31.4%**	**15.7%**	**21.9%**	**18.5%**	**12.5%**
Assessment (formative, summative, check for understanding, EL Civics Assessments)	**9.4%**	**6.8%**	**22.7%**	**34.5%**	**26.6%**
Virtual Classroom Design (Website, Learning Management System / LMS, Blogs, etc.)	**18.1%**	**8.0%**	**12.0%**	**19.5%**	**42.3%**
Management programs for student data (I.E. Tops Enterprise Reports, Student Information System, and Launchboard)	**21.3%**	**10.2%**	**19.8%**	**22.0%**	**26.7%**
Hardware	%	%	%	%	%
Computer in all environments (classroom, remote teaching)	**2.1%**	**1.4%**	**2.6%**	**9.9%**	**84.0%**
Active Board (e.g., White Board, SMART board, smart/touch TV's)	**32.8%**	**7.0%**	**9.5%**	**16.9%**	**33.8%**
Mobile devices (primarily smartphones or feature phones)	**11.6%**	**3.7%**	**8.8%**	**18.3%**	**57.6%**
Tablets (e.g., iPads, Microsoft Surface)	**32.3%**	**6.6%**	**11.1%**	**17.0%**	**33.0%**
Digital video cameras (digital display, projectors, presentation devices, and document cameras)	**18.5%**	**8.3%**	**11.9%**	**18.2%**	**43.1%**

SPECIFIC TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM	NEVER	YEARLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	DAILY
Assistive Technology hardware (puff sticks, special mouse, large key keyboards, communication boards)	62.5%	9.6%	7.3%	6.8%	13.8%

Figure 15. *Specific Technology Use in the Classroom. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Opinions and Attitudes on Technology Integration

The role of technology integration in education has been a topic of debate, even more so since the start of the pandemic when many adult schools, teachers, and students were thrust into remote teaching and learning. The survey emphasizes a recognition that not technology but the curriculum drives the use of technology. Technology integration is the use of technology tools in general content areas in education to allow students to apply computer and technology skills to learning and problem-solving.[6] The opinions and attitudes on technology integration of teachers are important factors when creating and employing curriculum.

When asked, 84.9% agreed or strongly agreed that learners created products that showed higher levels of learning and 81.6% agreed or strongly agreed that learners were more motivated when using the Internet. Figure 16 below also shows that 94.3% agreed or strongly agreed that they thought technology had changed their teaching and 76.1% that most technology would improve their ability to teach. Also, 93.3% agreed or strongly agreed that they thought technology was a good tool for collaboration with other teachers. Many also disagreed or strongly disagreed that they thought learners were more knowledgeable than they were when it came to technology (74.4%) and that technology was unreliable (72.7%). But 58% agreed or strongly agreed that they thought that there was too much technological change coming too fast without enough support for teachers and 56.8% that they were expected to learn new technologies without formal training.

OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES ON TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
When using the internet…	%	%	%	%
Learners create products that show higher levels of learning	25.9%	59.0%	13.6%	1.5%
Learners are more motivated	25.1%	56.5%	16.9%	1.5%
Learners are often distracted when online (ads, personal emails, and social media)	15.9%	47.6%	32.4%	4.1%
There is more learner collaboration	14.7%	47.5%	34.0%	3.8%
Plagiarism is a problem	15.8%	42.8%	34.5%	6.9%
There are too many unreliable sources	13.4%	47.2%	35.5%	3.9%

6 California OTAN Teacher Survey for the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), p. 1

OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES ON TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I think…	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Electronic media will replace printed text within five years	**18.1%**	**37.1%**	**37.5%**	**7.3%**
Most technology would improve my ability to teach	**24.4%**	**51.7%**	**21.1%**	**2.9%**
Technology has changed the way that I teach	**47.2%**	**47.1%**	**4.5%**	**1.1%**
Learners are more knowledgeable than I am when it comes to technology	**4.6%**	**21.0%**	**58.1%**	**16.3%**
There is too much technological change coming too fast without enough support for teachers	**16.2%**	**41.8%**	**36.0%**	**6.0%**
We are expected to learn new technologies without formal training	**16.0%**	**40.8%**	**37.1%**	**6.1%**
Technology is a good tool for collaboration with other teachers	**35.0%**	**58.3%**	**5.6%**	**1.1%**
Technology is unreliable	**3.3%**	**23.9%**	**57.1%**	**15.6%**

Figure 16. *Opinion and Attitudes on Technology Integration. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement

Teachers were also asked about the technology support they received and additional technology support they may need in instructional settings to assist with setting priorities for professional development, resources, and infrastructure to support technology integration. Figure 17 shows that 44% reported that they did not receive help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards, for instance, College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency State Standards. Also, around a third of respondents reported that they did not receive many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology (33.7%) or sufficient access to technology tools and resources to integrate into instruction, such as software, paid subscriptions for tools like Quizlet and Kahoot, and a learning management system (30.6%), or they just didn't have enough time to integrate technology into their curriculum (30.1%). But 92.7% said that they received or took technology training when offered by their agency, 84.2% said they had fast internet access or access to it, and 81.8% had received enough technical support from their administration to keep computers and applications running with assigned technical support from the district, school, or volunteers.

AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - WHAT TEACHERS HAVE OR NOT	YES	NO
1a I have received or taken technology training when offered by my agency	**92.7%**	**7.3%**
2a I have enough time to integrate technology into my curriculum	**69.9%**	**30.1%**
3a I receive enough technical support from my administration to keep computers and applications running (assigned technical support from district, school, volunteers etc.)	**81.8%**	**18.2%**

AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - WHAT TEACHERS HAVE OR NOT	YES	NO
4a I receive sufficient access to hardware technology tools to integrate into my instruction (computers, document cameras, smart boards, etc.)	**76.2%**	**23.8%**
5a I receive sufficient access to technology tools/resources to integrate into my instruction (software: paid subscriptions for tools like Quizlet, Kahoot, a learning management system, etc.)	**69.4%**	**30.6%**
6a I have fast internet, or access to fast internet	**84.2%**	**15.8%**
7a I receive many opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology	**66.3%**	**33.7%**
8a I receive many options for professional development in the areas of technology	**73.3%**	**26.7%**
9a I receive help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards (I.E. College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency State Standards)	**56.0%**	**44.0%**

Figure 17. *Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement - What Teachers Have or Not. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

The respondents who reported having technical needs met to some degree were also asked in which areas they needed more improvements. Figure 18 illustrates that almost two thirds agreed or strongly agreed that they needed more time to learn to use applications (62.4%). More than a third indicated that they needed more time to integrate technology into the curriculum (36%) and more options for professional development in the areas of technology (36.2%). Between a quarter and a third reported needing assistance in the remaining areas.

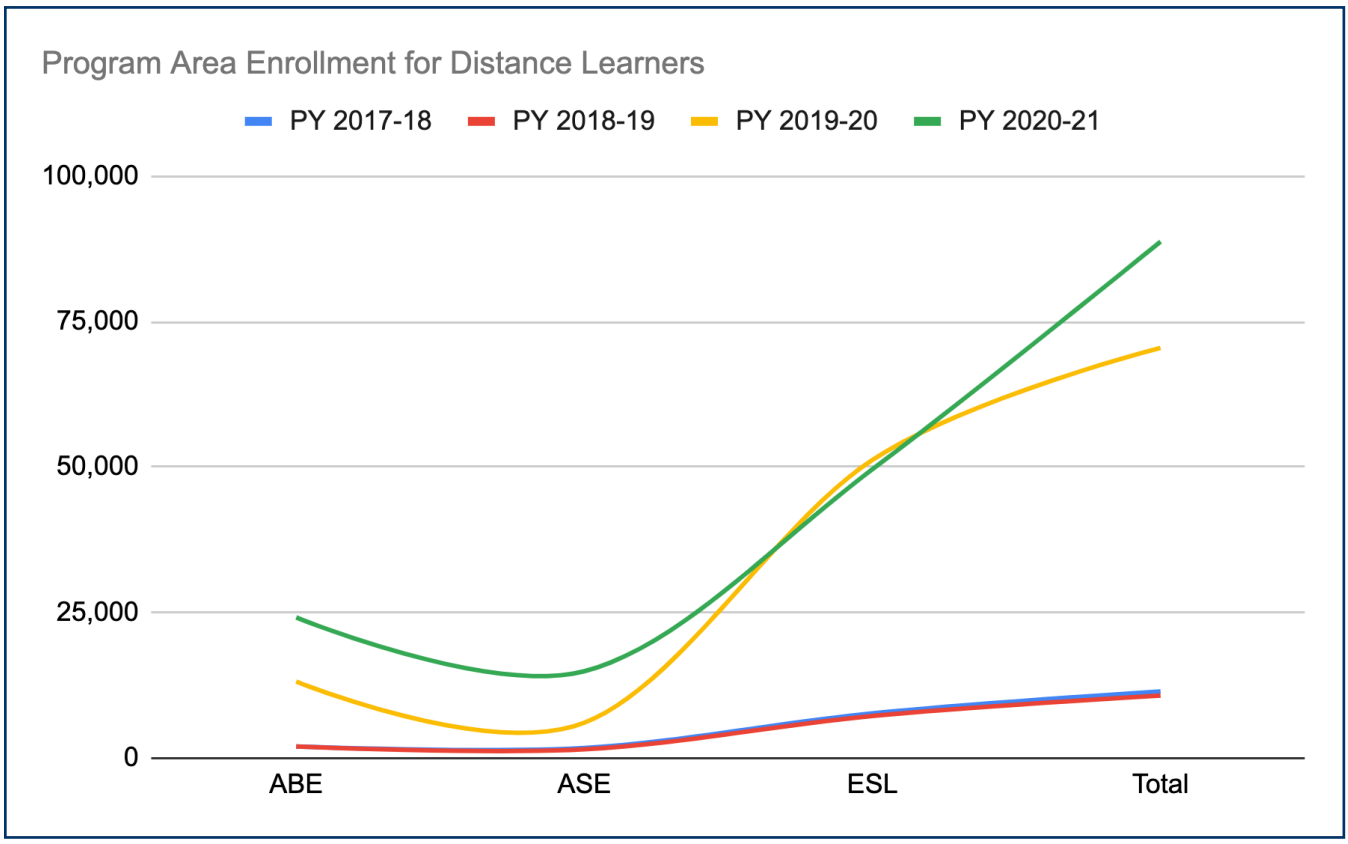
AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - WHAT TEACHERS NEED	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1b I need more time to learn to use applications	**17.8%**	**44.6%**	**26.1%**	**4.2%**
2b I need more time to integrate technology into my curriculum	**7.2%**	**28.8%**	**30.1%**	**3.8%**
3b I need more technical support to keep computers and applications running (assigned technical support from district, school, volunteers etc.)	**6.4%**	**26.7%**	**42.1%**	**6.6%**
4b I need more access to hardware technology tools to integrate into my instruction (computers, document cameras, smart boards, etc.)	**5.6%**	**20.2%**	**42.8%**	**7.6%**
5b I need more access to technology tools / resources to integrate into my instruction (software: paid subscriptions for Quizlet, Kahoot, a Learning management system / LMS, etc.)	**6.2%**	**21.5%**	**35.0%**	**6.6%**
6b I need faster access to the internet or access to fast internet	**11.3%**	**19.4%**	**43.0%**	**10.5%**
7b I need more opportunities to collaborate with colleagues on how to use technology	**6.9%**	**25.8%**	**28.9%**	**4.8%**

AREAS OF TECHNICAL NEEDS AND IMPROVEMENT - WHAT TEACHERS NEED	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
8b I need more options for professional development in the areas of technology	**7.8%**	**28.4%**	**31.5%**	**5.6%**
9b I need more help aligning the integration of technology with the implementation of standards (I.E. College and Career Readiness and / or English Language Proficiency State Standards)	**5.8%**	**24.1%**	**22.7%**	**3.4%**

Figure 18. *Areas of Technical Needs and Improvement - What Teachers Need. CIP Teacher Assessment Survey Results from PY 2020–21* (Source: OTAN 2021)

Distance Learning Enrollments

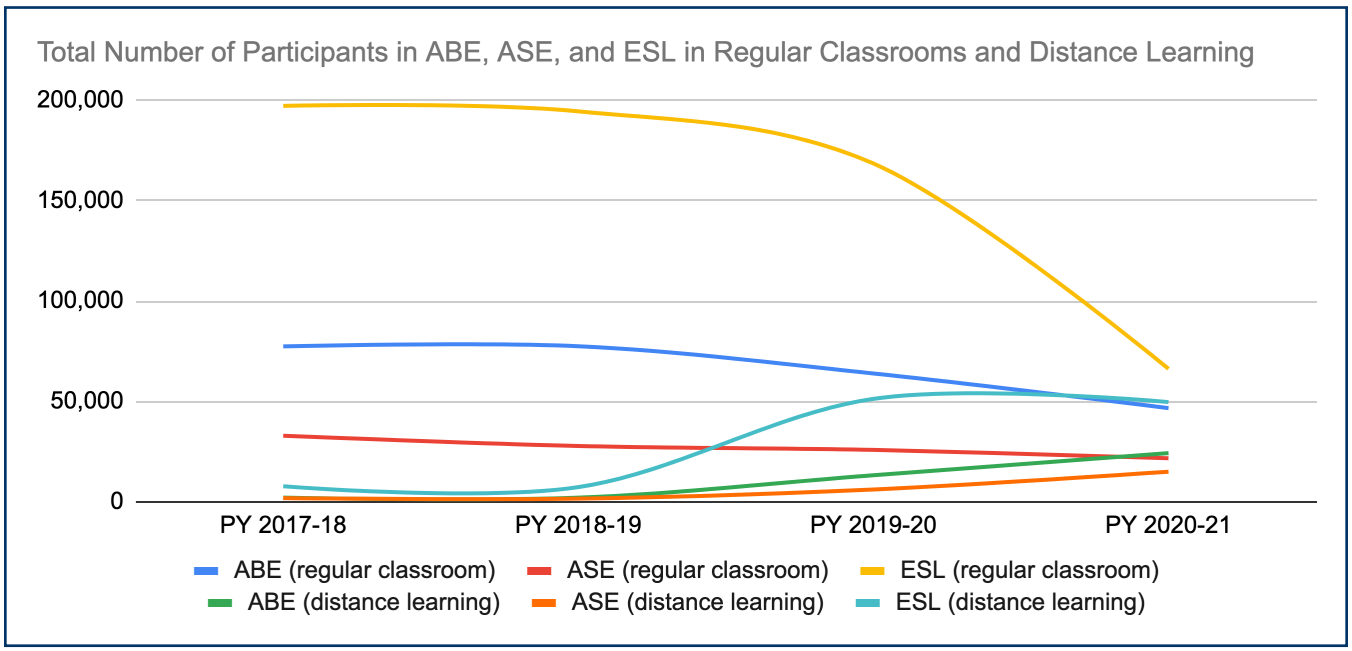
Since ABE, ASE, and ESL programs are federally funded through WIA II/WIOA II funding, provider agencies are required to report program information to the Federal Government following the National Reporting System (NRS) requirements. In program years reported on in the previous Distance Learning Plan Update, diminishing enrollment of distance learning students until PY 2018–19 was reported due to a possible lack of complete reporting of distance learning students. The chart and table in Figure 19 shows the enrollment of distance learning students for ABE, ASE, and ESL in each program year since PY 2017–18, indicating a steep increase to 70,483 with PY 2019–20 and 88,749 distance learners in PY 2020–21.



PROGRAM AREA ENROLLMENT FOR DISTANCE LEARNERS - DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21
ABE	2,014	2,001	13,163	24,175
ASE	1,752	1,511	6,084	14,934
ESL	7,702	7,242	51,236	49,640
Grand Total	**11,468**	**10,754**	**70,483**	**88,749**

Figure 19. *WIA/WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments in ABE, ASE, and ESL from PY 2017–18 to PY 2020–21 for Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Table 4C.* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Comparing ABE, ASE, and ESL distance learners enrollment with regular classroom enrollment during the same periods, the chart and table in Figure 20 below illustrates a steep decline, especially in ESL classes in regular classrooms, from 197,235 students in PY 2017–18 to 66,201 students in PY 2020–21, a decline of 66.4% and certainly due to the restrictions to provide in-person programming during the pandemic. Regular classroom enrollment in ASE classes declined by 32.2% and ABE classes by 39.7%. Over the same period of four program years, distance learner enrollment in ABE classes increased by 12 times from 2,014 to 24,175 students, ASE classes by 8.5 times from 1,752 to 14,934 students, and ESL classes by almost 6.5 times from 7,702 to 49,640 students. While participation of ESL students decreased significantly in regular classrooms and still had a significant increase of distance learner numbers, ASE and ABE classes had relatively fewer losses and more gains.



TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS DATA TABLE	PY 2017-18	PY 2018-19	PY 2019-20	PY 2020-21
ABE (regular classroom)	77,365	77,458	63,881	46,630
ASE (regular classroom)	32,878	27,746	25,787	21,661
ESL (regular classroom)	197,235	194,516	168,533	66,201
ABE (distance learning)	2,014	2,001	13,163	24,175
ASE (distance learning)	1,752	1,511	6,084	14,934
ESL (distance learning)	7,702	7,242	51,236	49,640

Figure 20. *WIA/WIOA, Title II Adult Education Enrollments in ABE, ASE, and ESL from PY 2017–18 to PY 2020–21 for Regular Classroom vs. Distance Learner Enrollments Qualifying for NRS Tables 4 and 4C.* (Source: CASAS 2021)

In the previous Distance Learning Plan Update, agencies reporting enrollment of distance learning students (DL) were few. For PY 2018–2019, only 5 agencies reported more than 700 distance learning students and 15 agencies reported between 100 and 700 distance learning students. As the following figures illustrate, the number of agencies reporting more distance learning students in both categories has grown. The figures use color coding to delineate this categorisation across PY 2020–21, PY 2019–20, and PY 2018–19. Agencies that participated in the Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC) are also color coded.

LEGEND:
>700
100-700
<100
DLAC

Figure 21 shows the categories within which the agencies identifying distance learning enrollments in their adult schools fall. Adult schools with more than 700 distance learning students had a share of 64.9% for PY 2020–21, 67.3% for PY 2019–20, and 48.3% distance learning students. Adult schools with between 100 and 700 distance learning students[7] had a share of 32.7% for PY 2020–21, 30.8% for PY 2019–20, and 39.3% distance learning students. And adult schools with less than 100 distance learning students had a share of 2.4% for PY 2020–21, 2% for PY 2019–20, and 12.4% distance learning students. The total distance learning student enrollment was 88,749 for PY 2020–21, 70,483 for PY 2019–20, and 10,754 for PY 2018–19.

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	64.9%	57,595	67.3%	47,411	48.3%	5,192

7 See Appendix F: WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning Plan Update for Program Year 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 in Annual Report (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) at https://otan.us/about-us/reports/

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools with >100 and <700	32.7%	29,020	30.8%	21,671	39.3%	4,228
Adult Schools with < 100 learners	2.4%	2,134	2.0%	1,401	12.4%	1,334
Total of Identified DL Enrollments	100.0%	88,749	100.0%	70,483	100.0%	10,754

Figure 21. *Overview of enrollment at adult Schools with > 700, 100-700 and < 100 distance learning students for the program years 2020–21, 2019–20, and 2018–2019. Federal NRS Report.* (Source: CASAS 2021)

The following Figure 22 lists all adult schools in the categories of more than 700 distance students and between 100 and 700 distance learning students for the PY 2020–21, PY 2019–20, and PY 2018–2019. The table is sorted by PY 2020–21, however color coding illustrates which categories adult schools fell into in the previous program years.

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >700 DL LEARNERS	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools >700 DL Learners	64.9%	57,595	67.3%	47,411	48.3%	5,192
Los Angeles Unified School District		19,488		23,180		610
Los Angeles Community College District		2,725		3,660		9
Grossmont Union High School District		1,830		1,484		235
Five Keys School and Programs		1,677		n/a		n/a
Mt. San Antonio Community College District		1,597		1,581		1
MiraCosta Community College District		1,531		571		n/a
Oxnard Union High School District		1,408		177		n/a
Coachella Valley Unified School District		1,389		690		704
Montebello Unified School District		1,362		1,552		19
San Bernardino City Unified School District		1,356		1,157		22
Sweetwater Union High School District		1,285		568		1,538
Stockton Unified School District		1,270		1,422		1,425
San Diego Community College District		1,221		3,800		1
Chaffey Joint Union High School District		1,218		n/a		n/a
Clovis Unified School District		1,134		690		n/a
Huntington Beach Union High School District		1,018		660		789
Garden Grove Unified School District		974		1,314		47
Mt. San Jacinto Community College District		966		946		n/a
Farmworker Institute for Education and Leadership Development		955		934		n/a
Fresno Unified School District		933		211		22
Torrance Unified School District		921		1,101		139
North Orange County Community College District		921		184		n/a
Chino Valley Unified School District		914		n/a		1

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >700 DL LEARNERS	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Salinas Union High School District		910		145		1
Mt. Diablo Unified School District		853		864		66
Hacienda La Puente Unified School District		847		232		5
Lake Elsinore Unified School District		821		506		672
Riverside Unified School District		791		62		7
Corona-Norco Unified School District		782		162		n/a
Campbell Union High School District		778		366		n/a
Ventura Unified School District		766		51		1
Paramount Unified School District		761		82		92
Elk Grove Unified School District		755		65		176
Whittier Union High School District		723		135		1
Pajaro Valley Unified School District		715		10		9

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools with >100 and <700	32.7%	29,020	30.8%	21,671	39.3%	4,228
Visalia Unified School District		690		479		n/a
South Orange County Community College District		678		n/a		n/a
Redondo Beach Unified School District		653		479		4
Burbank Unified School District		631		823		n/a
Sequoia Union High School District		621		729		2
Fremont Unified School District		595		579		291
San Juan Unified School District		574		148		172
Berkeley Unified School District		571		177		107
San Leandro Unified School District		564		551		3
Fontana Unified School District		557		626		351
Covina-Valley Unified School District		556		9		1
Pasadena Area Community College District		554		987		n/a
Hesperia Unified School District		549		n/a		1
Fremont Union High School District		545		n/a		n/a
Cerritos Community College District		544		440		n/a
Vista Unified School District		535		n/a		n/a
Napa Valley Unified School District		511		n/a		n/a
New Opportunities Organization		463		n/a		n/a
West Contra Costa Unified School District		461		312		63
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District		457		569		n/a
Culver City Unified School District		456		585		n/a
Glendale Community College District		452		1,877		n/a
Petaluma Joint Union High School District		434		243		105

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Lynwood Unified School District		432		7		1
Twin Rivers Unified School District		427		8		n/a
Vallejo City Unified School District		426		360		n/a
Hayward Unified School District		422		541		n/a
Folsom Cordova Unified School District		412		70		99
Sutter County Office of Education		397		301		n/a
Redlands Unified School District		393		n/a		n/a
Moreno Valley Unified School District		387		1		6
Porterville Unified School District		376		7		1
New Haven Unified School District		372		192		2
Turlock Unified School District		367		109		38
Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District		366		545		257
Coast Community College District		359		286		n/a
Santa Rosa Junior College		345		420		n/a
Central Unified School District		323		374		135
Oroville Union High School District		320		9		n/a
Sanger Unified School District		317		n/a		n/a
Liberty Union High School District		314		102		78
Jurupa Unified School District		314		n/a		n/a
Manteca Unified School District		309		8		57
Palo Alto Unified School District		306		316		32
San Diego Unified School District		304		n/a		n/a
Jefferson Union High School District		298		88		25
Milpitas Unified School District		290		108		115
Apple Valley Unified School District		282		n/a		n/a
South San Francisco Unified School District		278		n/a		n/a
Tamalpais Union High School District		274		119		57
El Monte Union High School District		273		628		736
Simi Valley Unified School District		263		106		43
Santa Barbara Community College District		263		165		n/a
Pars Equality Center, Los Angeles		255		n/a		n/a
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District		252		24		n/a
Kings Canyon Joint Unified School District		247		2		3
Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District		237		50		136
Madera Unified School District		236		349		453
Five Keys School and Programs (Jail Program)		235		n/a		n/a
Rialto Unified School District		226		n/a		n/a
Pleasanton Unified School District		222		n/a		n/a
Lompoc Unified School District		222		n/a		n/a

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 AND <700	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Inglewood Unified School District		205		n/a		n/a
Elk Grove Unified School District (Jail Program)		203		n/a		n/a
Val Verde Unified School District		199		n/a		n/a
Murrieta Valley Unified School District		199		259		90
Long Beach Unified School District		197		405		5
Monrovia Unified School District		197		n/a		n/a
BPSOS Center for Community Advancement		197		n/a		n/a
El Rancho Unified School District		196		n/a		n/a
Martinez Unified School District		190		165		n/a
Tulare Joint Union High School District		182		12		11
Beaumont Unified School District		172		115		29
Acalanes Union High School District		166		198		n/a
Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District		148		53		n/a
Pittsburg Unified School District		145		564		57
Lucia Mar Unified School District		143		216		39
Rancho Santiago Community College District		132		70		n/a
Vacaville Unified School District		127		n/a		1
Antioch Unified School District		126		n/a		n/a
Desert Community College District		126		n/a		n/a
Placer Union High School District		126		106		n/a
Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District		122		10		1
LearningQuest - Stanislaus Literacy Centers		119		399		1
Gonzales Unified School District		104		73		n/a
East Side Union High School District		103		318		43
Snowline Joint Unified School District		102		35		n/a
Alvord Unified School District		102		n/a		n/a

ADULT SCHOOLS IDENTIFYING DL ENROLLMENTS >100 DL LEARNERS	% 20-21	N 20-21	% 19-20	N 19-20	% 18-19	N 18-19
Adult Schools with < 100 learners	2.4%	2,134	2.0%	1,401	12.4%	1,334
Total of Identified DL Enrollments	100%	88,749	100%	70,483	100%	10,754

Figure 22. *List of adult Schools with enrollment of distance students of > 700, 100-700 and < 100 for the program years 2020–21, 2019–20, and 2018–2019. Federal NRS Report.* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Program Implementation and Distance Learning

This section reviews results related to blended and distance learning from the California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for

the PY 2020–21, in the following areas: Student persistence, waiting lists, distance learning classes, distance learning barriers, and professional development priorities. The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey collects information pertaining to program management, student transitions to post-secondary education, training, employment, budget issues, coordination, planning for professional development, distance learning, and English Literacy & Civics Section 231 and 243 programs. The Survey had been modified to reflect the impact of COVID-19 on the WIOA, Title II: AEFLA program.[8]

Student Persistence

Persistence is a critical factor in the success and goal attainment of adult learners.[9] The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey asked WIOA, Title II funded agencies about the strategies they used in PY 2020–21 to promote and sustain student persistence. Figure 23 shows that 84.9% indicated that their student persistence strategies included blended online and distance learning and that 37.8% also reported that they used other COVID-19 related strategies to support remote student learning. During focus group interviews with selected agencies, these student persistence strategies were further explored. The findings are presented in the Case Studies section of this report.

WHAT STRATEGIES ARE YOU USING TO PROMOTE AND SUSTAIN STUDENT PERSISTENCE? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	%
Students set attainable goals and monitor progress with staff	73.8
Incentives, e.g. attendance awards and certificates, formal recognition, and priority registration	57.8
Effective orientation and accurate level placement	76.4
Student support services, e.g. distance learning, blended online learning, transition specialist, counseling services, child care, bus passes	84.9
Monitoring Attendance	83.6
Managed enrollment	41.8
Other COVID-19 related persistence strategies you are using to support remote student learning.	37.8

Figure 23. *Student persistence. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

8 For more info on the California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for the PY 2021–22 visit https://bit.ly/CAWIOASurvey

9 California WIOA, Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Program Implementation Survey for the PY 2020–21, p. 5

Waiting Lists

At agencies where waiting lists exist, students may not be offered a suitable educational opportunity for various reasons. Last year's Distance Learning Plan Update[10] opened up questions about the role of waitlists that may need to be explored to capture students otherwise not served and to encourage agencies to offer more flexible alternatives to students waiting for a class of any delivery modality: Are students on waiting lists for in-person program options offered blended and distance learning options? Do they retain their spots on the waiting list while participating in blended and distance learning? Can waitlisted students decide to stay in blended or distance learning or decide to return to in-person instruction when a spot in an on-site class is available? The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey does not provide details about students on waiting lists. Identifying potential blended and distance learning students on waitlists is not possible at this time but was explored during the focus groups reported on in the Case Studies section of this report. Also, moving away from collecting student-level data to class-level data does not allow for tracking individual student choices of different program delivery modalities.

AEFLA Program Implementation Survey results for PY 2020–21 show in Figure 24 that only 28% of agencies maintained a waiting list. Previously, about half of agencies maintained waiting lists in PY 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 but 49% of students on waiting lists in 2018–2019 and 81% of students on waiting lists in 2019–2020 were never enrolled in a class.[11] Findings from the focus groups presented in the Case Studies section show that there were various reasons for the decline in students on waiting lists in PY 2020–21 (i.e., waiting lists were not needed due to lower enrollment numbers during the pandemic).

ARE YOU MAINTAINING A WAITING LIST?	%
Yes	28
No	72

Figure 24. *Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

When asked how many students currently[12] were on the waiting list, the snapshot in Figure 25 shows that English Second Language (ESL) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) had the highest and median numbers.

10 See Appendix F: WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning Plan Update for Program Year 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 in Annual Report (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) at https://otan.us/about-us/reports/

11 Ibid.

12 The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey for PY 2020–21 had to be completed by April 30, 2021.

IF YES, HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE CURRENTLY ON THE LIST?	LOWEST	HIGHEST	MEDIAN
ABE	1	43	11
ASE	1	265	15
ESL	3	573	20

Figure 25. *Students on Waiting Lists. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Figure 26 suggests that almost half of ESL students in the agency with the highest numbers were able to take a class eventually but that ESL students were even less likely to take a class at a later time than Adult Basic Education (ABE) and ASE students, among students on waiting lists overall.

HOW MANY STUDENTS WERE NEVER ABLE TO TAKE A CLASS?	LOWEST	HIGHEST	MEDIAN
ABE	5	43	10
ASE	2	265	15
ESL	5	280	35

Figure 26. *Students on Waiting Lists not Taking a Class. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Distance Learning Classes

The previous Distance Learning Update covering PY 2019–2020, concluded that agencies that actively adopted and adapted technology for blended and distance learning program delivery were better prepared to respond to the discontinuation of face-to-face program delivery due to the COVID-19 outbreak since mid-March 2020,[13] although separate statistics for the period immediately after were not available. The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey results for PY 2020–21 now show in Figure 27 that agencies that used an online format did so for 83.3% of their students from July 2020 onwards.

IF YOU ARE USING ONLINE FORMATS FOR REMOTE LEARNING, WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR STUDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO THIS FORMAT?	%
Average	83.3

Figure 27. *Students Accessing Distance Learning . California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Figure 28 shows that ESL (89.8%), ASE (84.4%), and ABE (79.6%) classes were most commonly provided in a remote learning format but Career & Technical Education (CTE) (60.9%) and

13 See Appendix F: WIOA Title II: Technology and Distance Learning Plan Update for Program Year 2018–2019 and 2019–2020 in Annual Report (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020) at https://otan.us/about-us/reports/

Integrated EL Civics (IELCE) and Integrated Education & Training (IET) (40.4%) were offered online despite challenges related to providing instruction at a distance.

WHAT CLASSES ARE YOU ABLE TO NOW PROVIDE IN A REMOTE LEARNING FORMAT? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	%
ABE	79.6
ASE	84.4
ESL	89.8
IELCE/IET	40.4
CTE	60.9
Other	11.1

Figure 28. *Distance Learning Classes. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Distance Learning Barriers

In the three program years before the start of the pandemic, results showed that barriers related to the availability of technology to students at home, staffing, costs, and lack of demand had decreased.[14] In PY 2020–21, results are now more differentiated due to the design of the AEFLA Program Implementation Survey. As Figure 29 illustrates, the main barrier remains the availability of technology to students at home (78.2%), however due to the move to remote instruction during the first year of the pandemic the difficulties associated with pre- and post-testing students 75.6% was also a huge barrier. Difficulties implementing (30.2%) and in maintaining (20.9%) blended and distance learning were also notable barriers. Staffing (30.2%) and cost (24%) were understandably more than twice the barriers they were in the program year prior, however the lack of student demand (25.3%) also more than doubled. The findings from the focus groups make some reference to these developments in the Case Studies section of this report.

PLEASE INDICATE ANY BARRIERS TO YOUR AGENCY IN OFFERING DISTANCE/BLENDED LEARNING. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	%
Staffing	30.2
Cost	24.0
Availability of technology to student at home	78.2
Availability of technology at your agency	20.0
Tracking attendance/recordkeeping	23.1
Difficulty in implementing	30.2
Difficulty in maintaining	20.9
Difficulty in pre- and post-testing students	75.6

14 Ibid.

PLEASE INDICATE ANY BARRIERS TO YOUR AGENCY IN OFFERING DISTANCE/BLENDED LEARNING. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	%
Lack of information about online learning programs	9.3
Lack of student demand	25.3
Other	17.8

Figure 29. *Distance Learning Barriers. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Professional Development Priorities

The AEFLA Program Implementation Survey also collects information about training needed by administrators and coordinators, and by instructors. Agencies are asked to indicate whether they have no need (do not need or want any professional development now), a basic need (need or want some professional development, but not of the highest priority), or an advanced need (need professional development in this area, and need to receive it soon) for each of the priorities in the current program year.

Figure 30 shows that agencies reported a basic or advanced need for administrators and coordinators in the following areas related to blended and distance program delivery: Transitioning to remote online learning (58.7%) and Transitioning to remote testing (53.3%).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND COORDINATORS.	NO NEED (%)	BASIC NEED (%)	ADVANCED NEED (%)	NONE (%)
WIOA, Title II Data Collection requirements	20.0	55.1	20.4	4.4
CAEP Data Collection requirements	27.6	52.0	13.8	6.7
Using TOPSpro Enterprise data to manage and improve programs	14.2	54.7	27.1	4.0
Using TOPSpro Enterprise data and assessment to inform instruction	16.9	48.4	29.8	4.9
NRS goals/performance	21.3	55.6	17.8	5.3
Establishing a Professional Learning Community (PLC)	48.9	34.2	8.0	8.9
ABE/ASE programs and instructions	36.0	46.2	8.9	8.9
ESL Programs and instruction, including EL Civics implementation	27.1	51.6	14.7	6.7
CTE/Workforce Preparation programs and instruction	19.6	55.1	16.9	8.4
Integrated Education and Training	18.2	52.4	22.2	7.1
Improving learner enrollment, attendance, and persistence	15.6	47.1	29.8	7.6
Budget/fiscal issues	36.4	41.8	12.4	9.3
Managed enrollment	51.1	31.6	6.2	11.1
Staff Development and management	29.8	51.6	7.6	11.1

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND COORDINATORS.	NO NEED (%)	BASIC NEED (%)	ADVANCED NEED (%)	NONE (%)
Student transitions to employment and career training	13.3	56.0	22.7	8.0
Student transitions to college and education opportunities	18.2	56.9	18.2	6.7
Student counseling and wraparound services	8.4	15.1	53.3	23.1
Equity in Adult Education	16.9	58.2	14.7	10.2
Transitioning to remote testing	**37.3**	**36.0**	**17.3**	**9.3**
Transitioning to remote online learning	**32.4**	**42.7**	**16.0**	**8.9**
Working in Collaborative Teams	32.4	49.8	8.0	9.8

Figure 30. *Professional Development Priorities for Administrators and Coordinators. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Figure 31 shows that agencies reported similarly with respect to professional development needs for instructors: Slightly more (65.8%) had a basic or advanced need for Transitioning to remote online learning and about the same (52.9%) for Transitioning to remote testing. Additionally, 80.5% of agencies indicated that Integration of Technology was a basic or advanced professional development need for instructors.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR INSTRUCTORS.	NO NEED (%)	BASIC NEED (%)	ADVANCED NEED (%)	NONE (%)
Curriculum development, improvement and/or revision	12.9	65.8	14.7	6.7
Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)	25.3	55.6	12.0	7.1
Course outlines and lesson plans	26.2	58.2	7.6	8.0
Computer-based instructional strategies/ curriculum	13.8	51.1	30.2	4.9
College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education implementation	15.1	55.6	22.7	6.7
Learner persistence	11.6	52.9	30.2	5.3
Integration of technology	**13.8**	**52.9**	**27.6**	**5.8**
English Language Proficiency Standards implementation	20.4	56.0	17.3	6.2
Instruction for adults with learning disabilities	17.8	57.3	16.9	8.0
Evidence-based instructional practices	17.8	62.2	12.9	7.1
Learner needs assessment	18.7	61.3	10.7	9.3
Multi-level classes	26.2	52.4	14.7	6.7
Instructional strategies for specific program areas	20.4	58.7	11.6	9.3
Transitions into postsecondary education and the workforce	12.4	61.3	19.6	6.7

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES FOR INSTRUCTORS.	NO NEED (%)	BASIC NEED (%)	ADVANCED NEED (%)	NONE (%)
Contextualized workforce education	18.2	50.7	23.6	7.6
Learner goal setting	18.2	59.6	15.1	7.1
Integrated Education and Training	18.7	52.4	19.1	7.1
Equity in Adult Education	15.1	59.6	16.4	8.9
Transitioning to remote testing	**38.7**	**35.6**	**17.3**	**8.4**
Transitioning to remote online learning	**26.2**	**50.7**	**15.1**	**8.0**
Working in Collaborative Teams	28.9	52.0	9.8	9.3

Figure 31. *Professional Development Priorities for Instructors. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Agencies were also asked to indicate the resources provided by OTAN that supported them in PY 2020–21. As Figure 32 illustrates, online training at 193 instances tops the list, followed by conference presentations, workshops, and events (179), California Adult Education Professional Development events on caadultedtraining.org (156), and OTAN's video resources on the OTAN website and on YouTube (155). Notably, the COVID-19 Field Support Resources were mentioned 108 times and Face-to-face training only 16 times. Additionally, agencies also mentioned that several presentations about resources for teaching adults with disabilities were very helpful, that OTAN organized a meeting to discuss hybrid learning strategies, and that staff participated in OTAN's office hours and Moodle office hours (Focus group findings in the Case Studies section also include details on these.) Other agencies indicated that they used OTAN's webinars and online videos, and COABE workshops. The faculty of some agencies attended and presented at CATESOL and OTAN's Technology and Distance Learning Symposium (TDLS).

PLEASE INDICATE THE OTAN SUPPORT RESOURCES YOUR AGENCY USED DURING THE CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	N
Online training	**193**
Conference presentations, workshops, and events	**179**
California Adult Education Professional Development events (www.caadultedtraining.org)	**156**
OTAN's video resources (OTAN website and YouTube)	**155**
Email Notifications	**133**
Technology and Distance Learning Symposium (TDLS)	**118**
Technology workshops, mentoring, technical assistance	**116**
Newsletters	**111**
COVID-19 Field Support Resources	**108**
Online, self-guided modules (e.g., Moodle, Canvas)	**101**
Web-based Articles	**100**
Teaching with Technology	**76**
Social Media (Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook)	**59**
Digest	**46**

PLEASE INDICATE THE OTAN SUPPORT RESOURCES YOUR AGENCY USED DURING THE CURRENT PROGRAM YEAR. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)	N
Peer-mentoring professional development (Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC)	24
Online curriculum pilot projects	20
Face-to-face training	16
Shared Courses	13
Other	9

Figure 32. *OTAN Support Resources used by Agencies. California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey Results from 2020–21* (Source: CASAS 2021)

Case Studies

The agencies invited to participate in focus groups for the case studies were selected using a combination of varied criteria. Based on distance learning student enrollment numbers in the program years from 2017 to 2021, and participation in any of the three cohorts of the two-year Digital Leadership Academy (DLAC) between 2016 and 2022, seven agencies were invited to participate in six focus groups. As Figure 33 below illustrates, agencies were chosen from three categories of distance learner enrollment established by CASAS: More than 700, between 100 and 700, and less than 100 distance learners per program year. The selection included one alternate agency, which was not needed.

Other criteria in the selection of agencies are also illustrated in the following Figure 34. Two agencies reported that their adult school had an increase in distance learning enrollment and five reported a decrease. Given the sudden move to remote program delivery due to the pandemic, a larger percentage of focus group participants were expected to shed light on challenges. Four out of the seven selected agencies and ultimately of the six agencies had participated in the DLAC in the past and were expected to report on the benefits of prior use of distance learning with respect to preparedness to pivot to remote instruction.

FOCUS GROUP AGENCY SELECTION	
> 700 DL students	3
100-700 DL students	2
<100 DL students	2
Student # increase	2
Student # decrease	5
DLAC 1 (2016–2018)	2
DLAC 2 (2018–2020)	1
DLAC 3 (2020–2022)	1
no DLAC participation	3

Figure 33. *Focus group agency selection table.*

SELECTED AGENCIES	>700	100-700	<100	STUDENT # INCREASE	STUDENT # DECREASE	DLAC 1	DLAC 2	DLAC 3	NO DLAC
Agency A	X			X					X
Agency B	X				X	X			
Agency C	X				X			X	
Agency D		X		X					X
Agency E		X			X		X		
Agency F			X		X				X
Agency G			X		X	X			

Figure 34. *Focus group agency selection matrix.*

Questions for the focus groups were developed based on selected questions in the AEFLA Program Implementation Survey (see Appendix C). The survey results from each agency selected for the focus groups were available to inform the focus groups and treated confidentially as are the names of focus group participants and their respective agencies. Guiding questions were sent to all participants before the focus groups sessions. In this section, three case studies summarize the results of the six focus groups by the categories of more than 700, between 100 and 700, and less than 100 distance learners.

More than 700 DL students

35 agencies recorded an enrollment of more than 700 DL learners in PY 2020–2021. In the year before, 13 also had an enrollment of greater than 700 DL students, 14 recorded between 100 and 700 DL students, and 5 had less than 100 DL students enrolled. In PY 2019–2020, 4 had an enrollment greater than 700 DL students, 5 had between 100 and 700 DL students enrolled, and 15 had less than 100 DL students enrolled. The remaining agencies did not report any DL students. For the focus groups of agencies with an enrollment of more than 700 DL students in PY 2020–2021, we chose two agencies that had participated in the DLAC, one in the first cohort from 2016 to 2018 and another in the third cohort from 2020 to 2022 - a third agency that had not participated in DLAC was also selected. Two of the three agencies showed fluctuation in DL student enrollment over the three program years while one reported a remarkable increase despite the pandemic.

Results from the Student Intake Survey for PY 2020–2021 show that there were 1,086 students surveyed by the three agencies participating in this focus group. When asked if they had taken an online class before 81.5% said that they had, 94.4% wanted to continue learning online, and 86.9% had a quiet place to study at home. They preferred learning with a laptop (80.7%), a tablet (24.6%), or a cell phone (51.2%) - 96.7% said that they had a smartphone but 39.6% revealed that they had to share the device they wanted to use for online learning and 20.8% said that they had data limits that would keep them from learning online - another 24.4% weren't sure if it would. When asked if they needed additional help to study online, 32.6 said that flexible study times would help, 20.6% would benefit from a loaned device, 18.6% would need help getting into their online textbooks and classes, 13.4% would require troubleshooting assistance, and for

10.6% a mobile hotspot would help to get on the Internet. 31.4% said they looked at the agency's web site to find out more about the program of their agency and 66.4% heard about it from family or friends.

Online registration was an important tool for two of three agencies. In one, students were given an orientation and testing date during online registration. All students who wanted HSE/GED did a reading goals test, came to the center to see a counselor to go over scores, decide what classes they needed, and to look at transcripts. Agencies relied heavily on in-person onboarding when the program made the switch to online, providing orientations for email, Zoom, and Canvas, and how to get support by phone. Students could attend informational meetings online and they were also able to come to the center to get help, check out Chromebooks, or get packet work. One agency reported that it became pretty obvious that their orientation program had to be strengthened and that it would have an impact on student persistence. The primary administrative goal to increase persistence was to help students feel connected to campus and increase their opportunities to have access to services, counseling and community outreach. An in-person orientation to use Zoom for DL students was mandatory and done at the same time as the CASAS pre-test. There was language support by providing orientation slides in other languages and there were two language liaisons available. Agencies had no waitlists, because the number of students was lower due to the pandemic or because the registrar was able to drop non-attending students using an online attendance tracking system.

Devices were provided to students and there was support available to use them. One program provided 40-50 Chromebooks to ESL students at every level. Teachers had PD every week at the school to learn about Chromebooks before practicing and learning with students how to use them for instruction. Written notes were provided to help teachers and students. Liaison support staff were available to assist with technology issues in Spanish and Vietnamese - if needed they could ask a network technician and a help desk. Another program acquired 800 laptops and 400 hotspots for students to use at home. Teachers provided technology assistance to students and addressed their concerns in one-on-one and small group meetings by phone and zoom during scheduled office hours and informational sessions online.

One agency put all programs online, including CTE even though it had to be paused at one point because some skills could not be certified at a distance. Teachers supported the move to online program delivery because of increased access for students but also saw barriers. Over a period of more than a year, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed collaboratively, agreed upon and approved by the Board to allow for the implementation of HyFlex learning for any teacher who wants to use it. Another agency also implemented HyFLex and one teacher found that the OWL cameras and external monitors had allowed him to get up and interact with face-to-face students and with students on Zoom at the same time seamlessly. Yet another agency offered CTE in a blended format, with some portions online and in-person elements to cover skills not suitable to train for online in-person. As a result, enrollment was limited to allow for adequate physical distancing. The delivery modalities of other classes were determined based on if instruction needed to be done in person or if instruction could be delivered synchronously on Zoom and if assignments could be completed asynchronously on Canvas. ESL and academic classes were all delivered by remote instruction and online learning with limited face-to-face opportunities. In this case, there was no need or desire for HyFlex for most students and teachers, blended and distance learning classes met most needs.

Professional development was available to teachers on a weekly basis in one program, usually teacher-led. They made continuous use of the OTAN COVID-19 resource web page and attended the webinars before getting together to share. This agency also developed its own PD, met as a group at different levels, and provided staff with multiple digital links for teachers and students. Teachers were trained on different virtual learning and meeting platforms, and a catalog of videos for students and teachers was put together by a very active team of teachers in coordination with the administration. Students were then given access to training on how to use ESL textbooks using Ventures, access a virtual classroom on Google Classroom, and participate in virtual meetings in Zoom. Another agency used a team planning approach across different schools to reach consensus and set standards for expectations about student learning and outcomes. OTAN, district personnel, and curricula partners provided training. The program transitioned to free e-books to supplement the purchased tested and true products. Teachers remarked that "[they] wouldn't have gotten through without OTAN."

One program specified how many hours of formal and informal professional development teachers received to make the transition to blended and distance learning: 6 hours per teacher plus up to 20 hours curriculum writing (Topics included Zoom, Google, DL community building, and Key Elements for Student Engagement in Canvas) and 3 hours each for 8 sessions in Professional Learning Series (Topics focused on equity, outcomes, backward design). All participants used Canvas as students and experienced it from a student perspective. There were peer "visits" to Canvas courses for up to 2 hours included in school business time and weekly Canvas Q&A sessions open to all teachers covered by preparation time or school business time. There was also monthly PLC time and additional preparation time built into instructional hours. Weekly built in professional development time provided by administration helped "massage the fears away" for instructors and program leaders. Support from the administration in the form of extra hours to make the transition to blended and distance learning was essential. It saved many teachers of at least one agency from quitting. In some cases, teachers were given additional hours to help other teachers-turned-students through the difficulties of teaching from home and using technology. Instead of summer school, teachers got trained and prepared their classes for the fall in some instances.

Another challenge was how to develop equitable formulas for class loads when it came to the asynchronous parts of classes as some required, and some did not require, additional work on the part of the teacher. Some class elements were designed for students to complete independently while others involved interacting with the teacher or reviewing student work. One agency also worked with teachers to set healthy boundaries with respect to communications with students as some students emailed or messaged to obtain immediate assistance or when teachers felt that they needed to reply immediately. Teacher workload has been an important issue to consider moving to more distance and blended program delivery models, especially where HyFlex is concerned.

Going forward, agencies felt that they had more confidence in having resources for their teachers and learners to provide more flexible program delivery modalities. But district requirements for teachers to be present on-site were challenges for some. Inviting students back for in-person instruction has hampered further development of truly flexible and responsive programs. One agency suggested that teachers should be reminded to continue to use virtual meeting and online learning platforms to keep supporting students in different ways. Another agency pointed out that

different types of activities and accessible programming has contributed to student persistence and that's why both in-person and virtual instruction has been offered so that students continue to have options of how they access learning. All in-person activities are placed into Google classrooms for students to access and review. This reinforces learning and if students miss a class they know they can review materials. Another agency continues to explore ways to ensure students have basic competence to use Zoom and Canvas before starting a blended class so that teachers are not burdened with providing basic training for large numbers of students at varying levels during class time.

Ongoing professional development for teachers about successful blended and distance learning approaches is needed. Lack of guidance and current definitions of ADA, proxy hours, independent study versus distance learning, etc. have created confusion about digital skills and competencies needed by teachers and students. There needs to be more conversations about different modalities and which serve teachers and students well. Onboarding new teachers for in-person and remote program delivery is a closely-related issue of concern for the future. Even if job descriptions remain unchanged, one agency pointed out that job interviews have provided opportunities to evaluate candidates' expertise in and adaptability to flexible program delivery. These new teachers "push the wave of technology in learning." Another agency stated that more training is needed as there are still a lot of teachers who do not have the skills for blended and distance instruction. Training has to be contextual and personalized, one-size-fits all training often does not address specific needs.

One agency summed up their experiences with blended and distance learning: "We are now capable of teaching anything, from anywhere, anytime." Developing a MOU in collaboration between teachers and management has created opportunities to build out norms for the future by providing a layer of clarity and protection while figuring out what works and making processes permanent based on solid evidence. Speaking of blended and distance learning in general and HyFlex specifically, the agency stated: "We know it works. We know it supports teachers and supports students." There is no mandate to use blended and distance learning but teachers are encouraged, supported and protected as a result of the MOU. There is an expectation that HyFlex will be the norm for program delivery by the time the MOU expires in a year and a half.

Between 100-700 DL students

68 agencies recorded an enrollment between 100 and 700 DL learners in PY 2020–2021. In the year before, 4 had an enrollment of greater than 700 DL students, 39 were in the same bracket, and 18 had less than 100 DL students enrolled. In PY 2019–2020, one had an enrollment greater than 700 DL students, nine were in the same bracket, and 29 had less than 100 DL students enrolled. The remaining agencies did not report any DL students. For the focus groups of agencies with an enrollment between 100 and 700 DL students in PY 2020–2021, we chose the one agency that had participated in the second DLAC cohort from 2018 to 2020 and recorded decreasing numbers of DL students. The other agency we selected showed a small but steady increase in DL enrollment in each PY but had not participated in DLAC.

Results from the Student Intake Survey for PY 2020–2021 show that there were 353 students surveyed by the two agencies participating in this focus group. When asked if they had taken an online class before, 74% said that they had, 97.5% wanted to continue learning online, and

87.9% had a quiet place to study at home. They preferred learning with a laptop (81.8%), a tablet (18.8%), or a cell phone (51.6%) - 97.6% said that they had a smartphone but 44.6% revealed that they had to share the device they wanted to use for online learning and 21.4% said that they had data limits that would keep them from learning online - another 23.4% weren't sure if it would. When asked if they needed additional help to study online, 37.5% said that flexible study times would help, 22.7% would benefit from a loaned device, 30% would need help getting into their online textbooks and classes, 20.5% would require troubleshooting assistance, and for 13.8% a mobile hotspot would help to get on the Internet. 30.1% said they looked at the agency's web site to find out more about the program of their agency and 74.1% heard about it from family or friends.

At one agency, prospective students received a registration email with information and questions to find out what kind of assistance they needed. They were then put on a waitlist for an appropriate class. When students came to the center for an assessment, they filled out a form including writing samples and placement questions, and they were asked if they wanted to attend in-person or online. They were also informed about how DL worked and provided with a flyer about the technology requirements. Teachers had different ways to select students for distance learning. DL students were directly contacted by phone calls or texts. During the first appointment, some teachers had to do basic technology training. There was a lot of work orienting students for two weeks on average working with students, which was about the same time it took to get textbooks. There was no specific orientation for new students, teachers did the onboarding which was hardest for the pre-literacy teachers. One of the teachers was able to get materials translated into other languages.

At the other agency, online registration was the main way for student intake and it continued that way even after in-person instruction was reestablished. There were virtual counseling sessions via Google Meet or on the phone, virtual assessments, enrollment at a distance, remote CASAS testing, and remote student support workshops in partnership with community colleges. With the online registration piece in place, the program incrementally moved registration toward that option. Now students are notified for test dates and appointment calendars are set up online - being able to see all available appointments for assessments provides more choices and a better turnout as a result. Registration is now open for several weeks at a time, allowing people to trickle in and then communicate with them via email. This strategy also helped the agency to adhere to COVID-19 protocols. Doing things in an efficient manner without too many students at the center at the same time made for a better flow of activities that were less stressful for staff and students.

Teacher training and supports were important elements to pivot to remote and blended program delivery for both agencies. At one agency, a conscious effort was made to decide about what kind of training teachers needed and students wanted after the end of the 2019–2020 PY. Summer school was closed so that teachers could get training and prepare for the fall without knowing what would happen. Staff members were trained on Moodle so that there was consistency across the school. For ESL, videos and listening exercises were added to Moodle. When in-person instruction resumed, Moodle remained a part of program delivery although not all functionalities were used anymore.

A consortium learning group provided opportunities to explore alternative learning modalities and to share practices about what works and what to continue using going forward - secure funding was judged as extremely important for future alternative program delivery modalities. The district's re-opening task force included adult education in the discussion. District-wide communication was inclusive so it was easier to understand who needed support and provided immediate reporting as decisions were made by the district regarding opening and closing of the program. OTAN's technology workshop and office hours were useful resources. A Moodle course to train teachers was created that remains accessible to teachers. For one agency, participation in DLAC provided a good foundation to integrate Moodle, Zoom, and Google, and teachers learned about the best practices for distance learning, team building, and leadership skills.

Students were supported by way of an online check out system for textbooks, virtual practice and testing, and assistance with Gmail. There were efforts to provide JetPacks to assist with connectivity issues but there was not much support with Internet access from the district. Students were provided with resources about Internet carriers. One agency did not have any equipment to loan to students, but any extra equipment received was distributed to staff since they were working from home. Students were encouraged to use their own devices. The other agency had Chromebooks loaners and not many students asked for them. Teachers provided tech support to students. They helped students who had technical issues or were not familiar with technology to be comfortable and stay in class. In one agency, individual support was also provided - connecting with individual students and building a sense of community was important. Instructions were produced in other languages and distributed as paper copies and as emails.

One agency offered blended learning before the pandemic and has been pushing more for blended delivery. "It's about trying to help students who want to be in the classroom as well as those who want to be online, but for small schools funding is a huge issue as low student numbers often do not justify investment in technology." While one agency's district has preferred instruction to be on-site, another agency's administration has been 100% supportive, asking for what is needed to support technology integration. There were three-hour meetings on Mondays to support teachers and a full staff PD day on the first day of the semester for additional teacher support. There also was a PLC in ESL, HS, and CTE, and meetings once a month. Lead teachers were also there for additional support. ESL lower level classes were in-person while higher level classes could use an online or blended model. Experiences with both suggested that the online students were more persistent than in-person learners. Teacher load for blended delivery was also a major concern, so HyFlex courses were distributed evenly. The goal has been to offer every course in a blended format and in face-to-face format as well. The flexible class schedules during the pandemic were kept in place to emphasize the importance of allowing students to change schedules as needed.

Taking the summer of 2020 to create curriculum and digitize classes was worth the effort because they are now on a virtual platform. Teachers are more comfortable with technology and their attitudes about using it have improved. "We went through it already, they know they've done it before, they know now it's possible." A group of teachers who were brought back are not as familiar with technology, but they do not need to create any curriculum because all courses are already online. And as students were reporting that virtual learning was more convenient for them, a blended option is here to stay.

For the other agency, the main challenge at the beginning of the pandemic was that some teachers did not know what they needed to teach from home but many are more prepared now. CASAS remote testing was difficult - despite a lot of time and effort devoted to make it work, the numbers were not great. Some students and teachers who were online liked being online but there were many students lost because they couldn't participate online. Emails were sent to all students who dropped out early in the pandemic to encourage them to return when the program would be in-person again and some have started to come back since.

Less than 100 DL Students

88 agencies recorded less than 100 DL students in PY 2020–2021 but 8 of these had an enrollment between 100 and 700 DL students in PY 2019–2020. Seven of these also had less than 100 DL students in PY 2018–2019, the remaining agencies did not report any DL students. For the focus group of less than 100 DL student agencies in PY 2020–2021, we chose one representative agency and one that also participated in the first DLAC cohort from 2016 to 2018 to better understand the challenges some agencies have experienced transitioning to remote instruction and flexible delivery modes in the last quarter of PY 2019–2020 after the pandemic began and PY 2020–2021 when distance student enrollment decreased.

Results from the Student Intake Survey for PY 2020–2021 show that there were 289 students surveyed. When asked if they had taken an online class before 68.9% said that they had and 85.8% wanted to continue learning online and 82.7% had a quiet place to study at home. They preferred learning with a laptop (73%), a tablet (24.6%), or a cell phone (58.5%) - 95.2% said that they had a smartphone but 27% revealed that they had to share the device they wanted to use for online learning and 15.9% said that they had data limits that would keep them from learning online - another 23.9% weren't sure if it would. When asked if they needed additional help to study online, 28.7 said that flexible study times would help, 15.2% would benefit from a loaned device, 14.2% would need help getting into their online textbooks and classes, 10% would require troubleshooting assistance, and for 12.5% a mobile hotspot would help to get on the Internet. 23.9% said they looked at the agency's web site to find out more about the program of their agency and 70.2% heard about it from family or friends.

On the date for registration at one agency, students registered first come, first served - some slept in their cars from 4:30 am to be first in line when the office opened at 8:00 am. The agency offered a digital registration but without much success because it took too much time for staff to check. At the start of the pandemic, program delivery was provided online by teachers working from home and later on in the program year, under mandate from the district, teachers had to come into the center and teach online from the classrooms and students remained at home. All teachers received laptops and a loaner program distributed laptops and a few hotspots among students. Many teachers and students had difficulties getting child care. There was no waiting list for students who wanted an in-person, blended, or remote option when classes were full, only for those who qualified for CTE classes.

Some teachers had issues with technology. The program manager met with teachers to train them on Moodle, sometimes one-on-one. In the summer of 2020 after the first wave of the pandemic, teachers were paid to get trained and set up classes online - the program closed the

following summer to recover these hours. A participant in DLAC created video segments and his own online course. Most teachers and the manager sought support via the OTAN Moodle office hours.

During remote instruction, teachers were online on WebEX for the same 3 hour long classes they would have been teaching in-person. Some teachers had to switch from Moodle to Google classroom, as required by the COE (County Occupational Education). All classes were set up online, including CTE classes, which proved difficult for skill development. When it was possible again for a limited number of students to come to the center, classrooms were set up with plastic partitions, desks were positioned 6 feet apart, students' temperatures were taken, and attestations of the absence of COVID-19 symptoms were required. The school district has preferred teachers and students to return to in-person instruction as much as possible since, so any type of blended delivery or HyFlex model has not been encouraged.

Testing was another challenge that was difficult to resolve, especially during the first wave of the pandemic. Only 5 students could be tested in a lab of 20 computers, this forced a testing schedule onto the program that required a lot of additional resources. When pre- and post-test hours were not available for some students, proxy hours were used in some cases and in others students were brought over into the next PY or test scores from before the pandemic were used. Approval for remote testing was received but only used once or twice - the district is not interested in remote testing in the future.

Despite challenges, teachers are now able to quickly move from in-person to remote instruction, if needed. There is a good system in place for following up with students, including contact tracing. However, the agency has not provided support for students who cannot make it to the center in-person. There were also issues with teachers who did not want to teach in-person again so soon. Training on Google Classroom, CIP, student persistence, and measurement of skills gains would be beneficial as would be emphasizing HSD as the program is not graduating many students. The manager continues to advocate for an OWL system to implement HyFlex as long as there are COVID-19 cases in in-person classes.

Summary and Recommendations

Agency data provides a statistical snapshot of the work done at a school site. How many learners, what type of demographics are represented, how many learners are assigned as distance learners, and much more. The focus group participants who agreed to contribute to this report provided needed insight into some of those statistical trends and how they impacted their own practice at their level. In each case the conversations allowed for a standard set of questions and the results of those questions were incorporated into the case studies provided. However, when looking at their answers as a whole, several areas lend themselves to additional consideration and research in the future. California adult education is a rich source of data that can inform program development and instruction not only within our state, but to our adult education providers across the nation.

As we emerge from the constraints of the pandemic, there are several key factors that are recommended for future research and/or reporting. They are identified into the following key areas.

Future Proofing: Capacity Building and Risk Management

- Continued support for teachers and administrators to continue local professional development to ensure flexibility when teaching situations change.
- Funding reinforcement for learner technology support (i.e. CARES Act, WIOA funding, and other support through local partnerships).
- Consideration of local plans for disruption of services and continuous program delivery. Perhaps beyond a district plan, as there can be unintentional impacts on adult schools within K–12 districts because adult schools do not have the flexibility to create or implement their own. As students express their desire to continue learning online and/or at a distance, districts could make a flexible local plan to better serve learner needs while at the same time providing the ability for teachers to choose their teaching environment. As more demands are made on teachers to flex to these changing needs to serve students, there should be a more flexible option for teachers to meet those needs.
- Alternative blended, online, and distance program delivery strategies built into contingency plans and risk management to allow adult schools to respond to changing circumstances while minimizing the negative effects on staff and clients.

OTAN Supports: Professional Development and On-demand

- Provision of early teacher training and support on new tools, and continued support for all teachers learning to teach using effective technology, from a distance, or via blended learning options.
- Explore and introduce the field to new technologies as appropriate to program needs (i.e. virtual reality)
- Continue to be responsive to the field (i.e. OTAN Office Hours, Moodle support) and flexible enough to offer assistance whenever and wherever needed.
- Professional development academies (DLAC, TIMAC and others) have an impact directly on program development and teacher confidence. Could additional activities or programs offer more support through co-collaboration and delivery with other leadership projects?

Policy Development: Flexible Program Delivery Supports

- Definitions of Delivery Modalities: What is distance, independent learning, hyflex, lowflex and the implementation guidelines of each; partner with sister organizations in these efforts, especially as related to data collection and reporting. This issue could be addressed through continued work with state leader partners and the Federal Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE)
- Arbitrary criteria (e.g. 50% = distance, independent study vs distance) agencies need guidance with consistent definitions and practices. This will provide better data reporting through CASAS.

- Waiting lists: Case study findings show that waiting lists are maintained sporadically and students on them are not offered blended and distance learning options as an alternative to in-person program delivery. Students on waiting lists could be offered alternative options while waiting for face-to-face classes and may join a face-to-face class or choose to remain in a blended or distance learning mode.

Appendix

Appendix A: Student Technology Intake Survey

File attachment: https://bit.ly/CA_StudentSurvey

Appendix B: Continuous Improvement Plan Teacher Assessment

File attachment: https://bit.ly/CACIP_TeacherSurvey
This resource was not produced and are not the property of OTAN; therefore, OTAN cannot verify the accessibility of the resource.

Appendix C: AEFLA Program Implementation Survey

File attachment: https://bit.ly/CA_ImplementationSurvey
This resource was not produced and are not the property of OTAN; therefore, OTAN cannot verify the accessibility of the resource.

Appendix D: Focus Group Questions for Case Studies

File attachment: https://bit.ly/Questions_CaseStudies