



Approaches to Upskilling Programs for Adult Basic Skills Learners: The U.S. Perspective

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Innovation for Resilience-New Approaches to Basic Skills Provision in the Post-COVID Era

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Today's Presentation

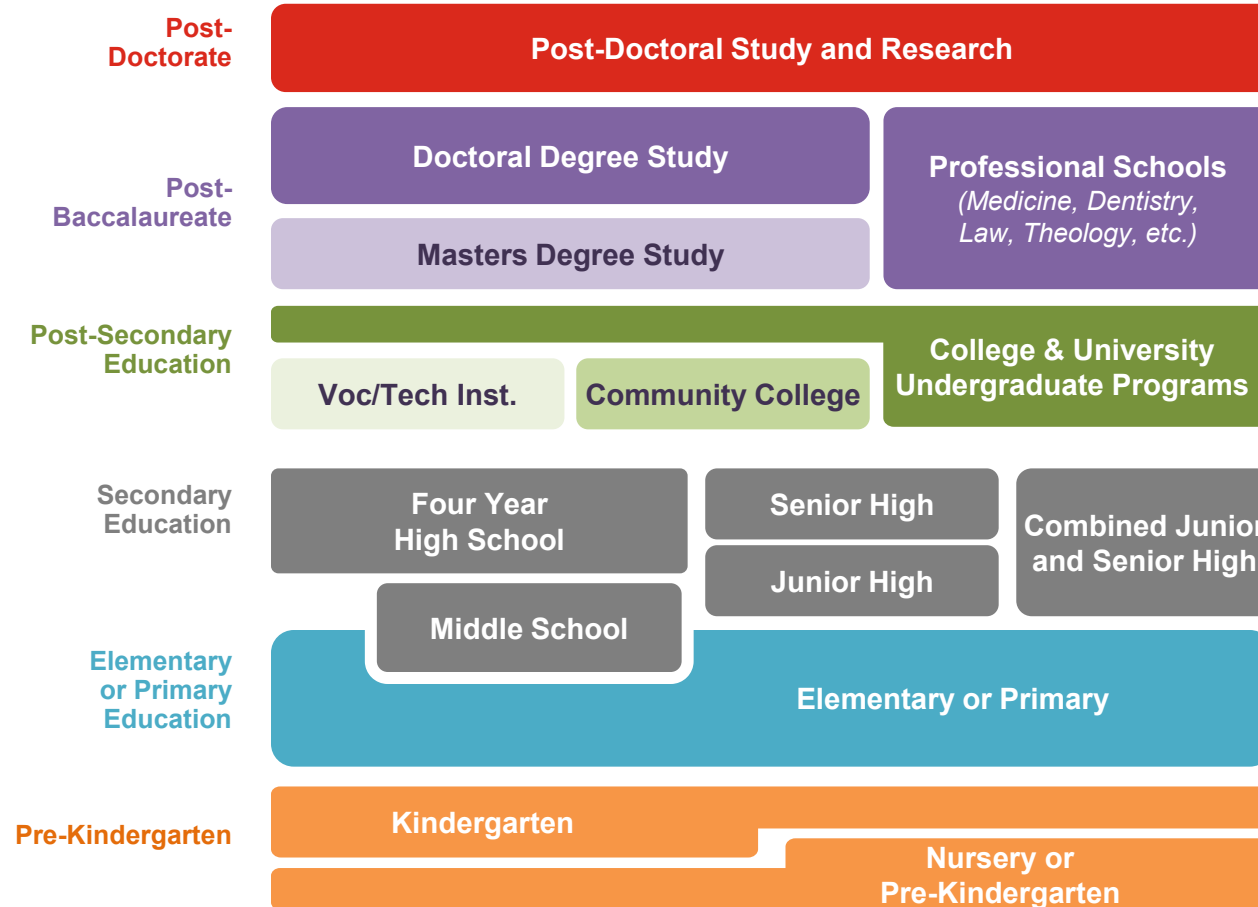


- U.S. context for adult basic skills
- Career pathways approaches and innovative practices for upskilling adults
- Findings from Abt Associates' federally funded research on basic skills bridge and integrated education and training programs
 - Advancing Innovation in Adult Education Project (AI)
 - Evaluation of the Bridges to Career Opportunities Initiative (BCO)
 - Evaluation of Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills Initiative (OPABS)
 - Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE)

U.S. Education System



MAINSTREAM EDUCATION AND TRAINING



ADULT EDUCATION & CONTINUING TRAINING

Vocational & Technical Training

- Credit Credentials (Degrees, Certificates)
- Non-Credit Certificates
- Apprenticeship

Overlapping Programs

- Dual Enrollment in Adult Education & Postsecondary Education
- Integrated Education & Training (IET)
- Pre-Apprenticeship
- Work-Based Education



Adult Education & Literacy

- High School Equivalency, High School Completion
- Basic/Foundational Skills
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

U. S. Education System: Adult Education and Literacy



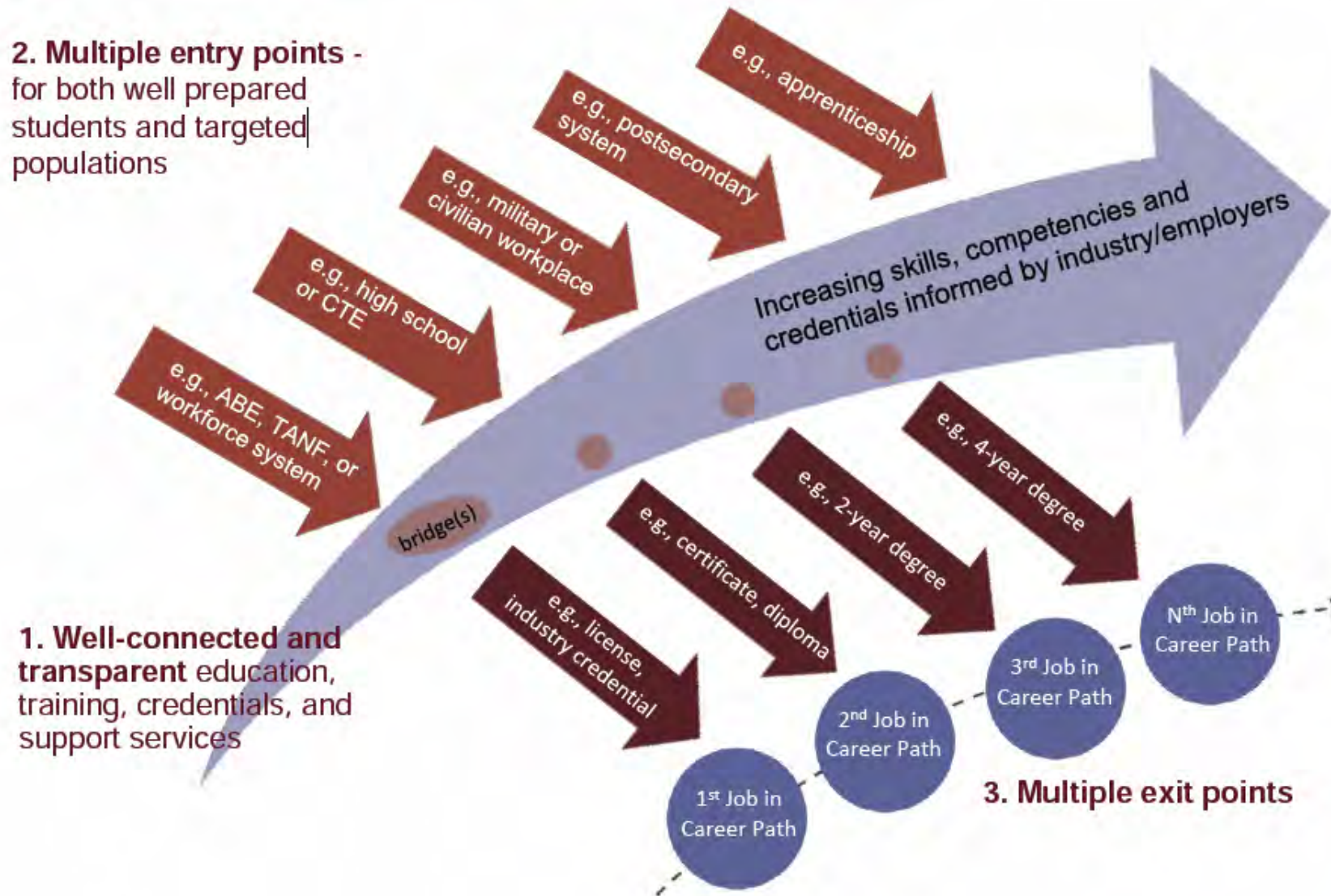
Basic Skills Service Providers

- Local education agencies
- Community colleges
- Community-based organizations
- Correctional facilities, libraries, other organizations

Professional Development & Technical Assistance

- U. S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education-funded activities
- State adult education office staff & contractors
- Private organizations

Core Features of a Career Pathway



Motivation for Focus on Career Pathways



- Emphasis in U.S. legislation—Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-128), Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II)
- Employers' need for skilled employees
- Postsecondary education's need for qualified learners
- Basic Skills Learners' Need to:
 - Bolster their skills to succeed in postsecondary vocational training or academic courses
 - Shorten amount of time they spend in education and training
 - Obtain advice to help them identify a career pathway aligned with their skills, interests, and abilities and that can lead to an industry credential and first job in a career pathway



Career Pathways Approaches for Adult Basic Skills Learners

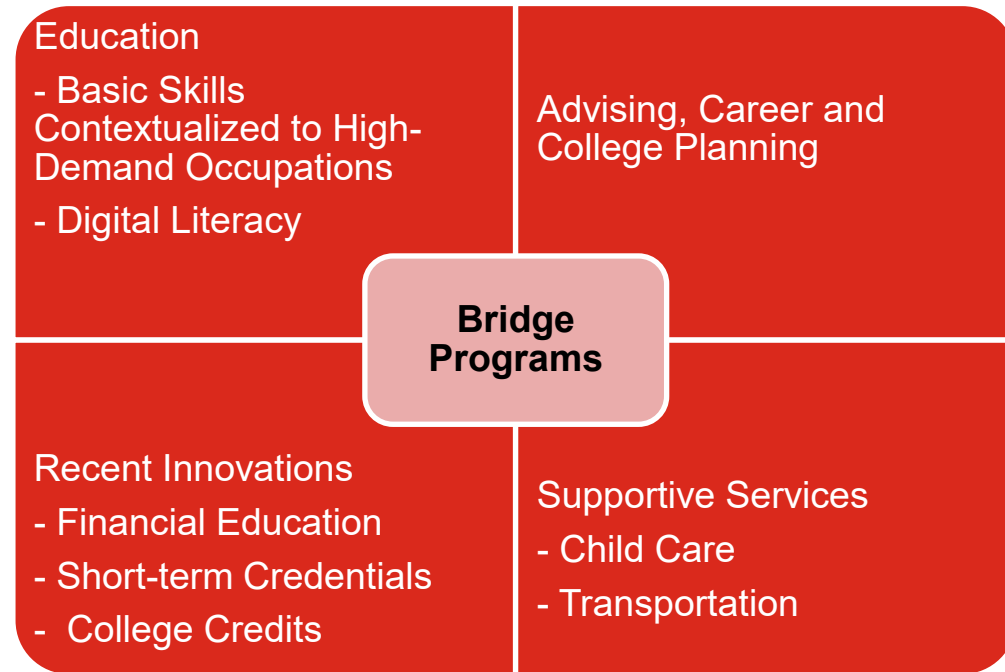


- Bridge Programs
- Integrated Education & Training Models (IET), including Pre-apprenticeship Programs



Bridge Programs

...provide AE learners with foundational basic skills taught in the context of occupations that are in demand locally, as well as career and college awareness, planning, and advising activities that prepare adults to succeed in postsecondary academic or occupational training courses. Some bridge programs also offer college credits as a first step toward a college degree.



U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education. (2011). *Promoting college and career readiness: Bridge programs for low-skilled adults*. Washington, DC: Author.

Profile of Connections 101 Bridge Program (Great Falls, Montana)



Partners: Career and College Readiness Center & Great Falls College
Montana State University, and Department of Industry

Target Population

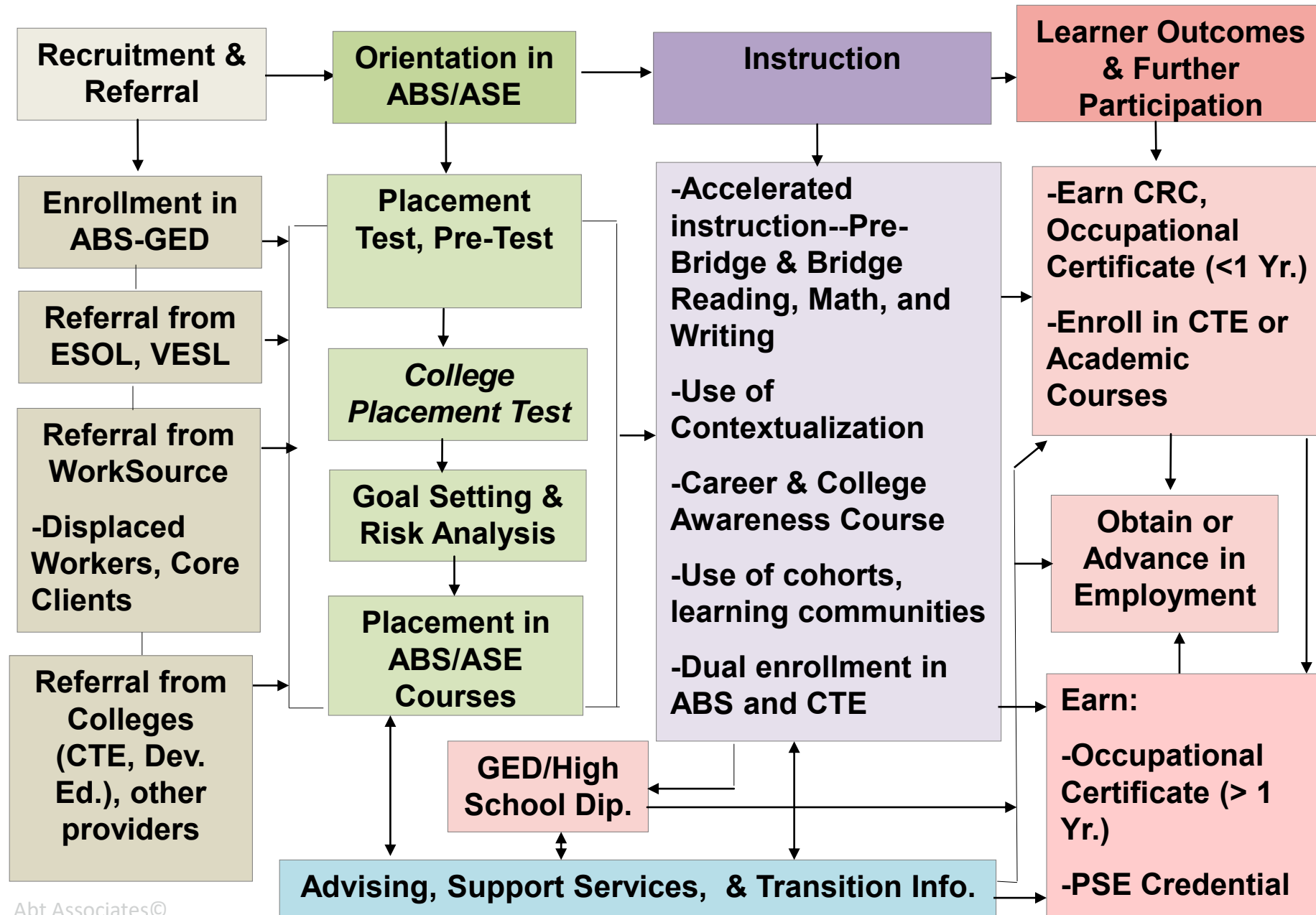
- Adults with reading skills at approximately 7th grade equivalent and higher
- Willing to commit to 14-week program and its requirements

Key Components

- Math and Writing Instruction Aligned to College-entry Requirements
- College Success and Work Ethics Course
- Industry Connections Course
- Financial Incentive for Continuing to Great Falls College
- Ability to earn credits for college



Oregon's Adult Basic Skills (ABS) Career Pathways Bridge Model



Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs



Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), 2014 requires that:

“Adult education and literacy services be delivered concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advance.” (WIOA, Section 203(11) and 34 C.F.R.)

Key Conditions:

- Basic skills instruction is:
 - Contextualized to vocational area
 - Concurrent or simultaneous with vocational training
- Includes workforce preparation activities

Profile of Career Pathways Integrated Education and Training Program (Redondo Beach, CA)

Partners: South Bay Adult School (SBAS) and El Camino College

Target Population: ABE and ELL learners at any skill level

Career Pathways Programs: Construction Technology, Machine Tool Technology, CISCO Networking Administration, Emergency Medical Technician, and Child Development

Key Components

- Recruitment and Intake by SBAS and El Camino College (co-enrollment)
- Academic Bridge Course (Support Lab)
- IET Course Sequence at El Camino College
- Short-term Credential and Other Course Work
- Intensive Support Services (Provided by Adult School Instructors)
- Instructional, Counseling, and Administrative Team Meetings

Bridge & IET Programs: Cross-Cutting Strategies



- Basic skills taught in context of occupations (Bridge) or combined with occupational training (IET)
- Career and college awareness, planning, and advising to facilitate learners' identification of a career pathway and further education or training
- Short-term vocational certificates and/or college credits awarded as incentive to further education or employment
- Holistic approach that includes supportive services to address range of learners' needs, barriers to completion
- Collaboration of basic skills, postsecondary, employer, workforce development partners is critical to ensure well-implemented services

Key Services to Support Basic Skills Bridge and IET Programs



Key Research Findings



- Holistic approach with multiple service components and supports enables learners to complete Bridge/IET program; or enter college/training; or earn initial vocational certificate and obtain employment (AI, BCO, PACE)
- Completion of a College and Career course is associated with college enrollment for learners who enter basic skills without college as a goal and who completed a Bridge Math course (OPABS)
- Extent to which learners increase their wages after earning a certificate depends on type of certificate and labor market (PACE)

Lessons from Implementation of Bridge and IET Programs



Basic Skills Program Systems

- Coordination and leveraging of services with partners is the foundation of multi-component Bridge and IET programs
- Holistic approach to service delivery includes supportive services that are critical for learners' persistence and completion
- Range of academic supports are needed to help learners succeed
- Incentives (free tuition, earning credits that transfer to college) can facilitate learners' participation beyond secondary education
- For IET, appropriate partner and explicit process is needed for learners' job placement

Basic Skills Staff

- Staff need time and assistance to understand local labor markets, postsecondary education and training opportunities, connections with supportive services
- Clarity of staff roles facilitates coordination within basic skills and with partners

Resources



Alamprese, J. & Cheng, I-F (September 2020). Compendium of Innovative Practices: Secondary Credentialing Programs. Bethesda, MD: Manhattan Strategy Group; and Rockville, MD: Abt Associates.

<https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/compendium-innovative-practices-secondary-credentialing.pdf>



Alamprese, J. & Cheng, I-F (February 2021). Compendium of Innovative Practices: Adult Education Bridge Programs and Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs. Bethesda, MD: Manhattan Strategy Group; and Rockville, MD: Abt Associates

<https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/compendium-of-innovative-practices-ae-bridge-iet-programs.pdf>



Alamprese, J. & Cheng, I-F (August 2021). Compendium of Innovative Practices: Holistic Approach to Adult Education Services. Bethesda, MD: Manhattan Strategy Group; and Rockville, MD: Abt Associates.

<https://lincs.ed.gov/sites/default/files/holistic-approach-adult-education-services.pdf>.



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