



TO: Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES)
Committee

FROM: Kevin G. Smith 

SUBJECT: Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program

DATE: January 4, 2016

AUTHORIZATION(S):



SUMMARY

Issue for Discussion

To provide the Board of Regents with information on the Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program state budget request.

Reason(s) for Consideration

For Information

Proposed Handling

This item will come before the Board of Regents ACCES Committee at its January 2016 meeting.

Procedural History

At the October 2015 Regents meeting, the Regents discussed a \$10 million Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program for new state funding in 2016-17. The Regents ACCES Committee also received an update on New York State's Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) which requires states to support effective bridge programs and career pathways for federally funded adult education, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation and other core programs.

Background Information

The January Regents ACCES Committee meeting will include a panel presentation providing foundational background in support of the Regents \$10 million

state budget request to support Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program. The following panelists will highlight lighthouse approaches that could be taken to scale across the state:

1. **Dr. Suri Duitch** is the CUNY University Dean for Continuing Education and Workforce Development and Deputy to the Senior University Dean for Academic Affairs. Suri will talk about the range and functions of bridge programs, review key components and CUNY's experience, and highlight the challenges and critical capacity needed for success.
2. **John Hunt** is the Executive Director for Adult Community Learning in the Division of Adult and Continuing Education at LaGuardia Community College (CUNY). John will give an overview of LaGuardia's HSE Bridge to College and Careers Program in Health, Business or Science, including MDRC's evaluation, and showcase LaGuardia's Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (NY-BEST) programs.
3. **Johnny Lozada** is a former student in LaGuardia's Bridge to College and Careers Program. Johnny enrolled in 2011 after dropping out of high school more than fifteen years earlier. A committed student, Johnny attended school in the evenings part-time while balancing the demands of a full-time job in the car service industry and raising his teenage children. He earned his HSE diploma in 2011 and, with support from the Bridge program, Johnny then transitioned into college earning an Associate's Degree at LaGuardia Community College and then a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Psychology at NYU in May 2015.
4. **Susan Diemart** is the Literacy Specialist for Orleans Niagara BOCES Continuing Education Department where she oversees all adult education and integrated workforce development programs. Sue will highlight Orleans Niagara BOCES bridge program for undereducated and underemployed youth and adults in Niagara and Orleans Counties. She will describe key partnerships with Niagara County and Erie Community Colleges and Niagara and Orleans County Departments of Social Services and treatment courts and connecting with and leveraging multiple funding streams.

Bridge programs prepare out of school youth and adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in postsecondary education or training leading to career path employment in high demand, middle- and high-skill occupations. Bridge programs assist students in obtaining the necessary academic, employability and technical skills through at least three components. Bridge programs contextualize programming and instruction to a specific industry sector and have established direct connections to a defined next step on a career ladder.

In July 2014, the WIOA was signed into law. WIOA calls for federally funded workforce development systems and core programs like adult education to make a greater investment in, and support for, bridge programs and career pathways over the next four years. This includes "integrated education and training" (IET) models that

provide instruction with co-teaching or dual enrollment in basic skills and occupational/Career and Technical Education (CTE) training with contextualized curriculum specific to a high demand sector. WIOA also calls for states to develop effective professional development and training to support this new programming.

In addition, states like Massachusetts, Illinois, Washington, Colorado, and Minnesota as well as cities like New York¹ are pursuing bridge program pilots as potential anchors in career pathways initiatives and re-envisioning workforce development. City agencies like NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) and NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) have recently issued concept papers to develop Requests for Proposals to fund and evaluate bridge pilots.

At the heart of the federal, state, and city efforts is the recognition that an alarming number of out-of-school youth and adults do not have the skills that employers and good paying jobs and careers require. Many New Yorkers, especially out of school youth who are disconnected from work and education; adults who lack a high school equivalency and those who cannot speak English well or have limited literacy skills, struggle to find work in today's economy and earn a self-sufficient wage. An estimated 1.9 million New Yorkers between 16 and 24 years of age who are out of school lack a high school diploma or equivalent. Access to jobs with career ladders and family sustaining wages are too often out of reach. In New York City, for example, an estimated 46% of adults age 25 and older lack the post-secondary credentials and skills to fill "middle-skill" jobs. These are jobs that are well paying with the potential for career growth. They require a high school degree and technical training, but not a four year degree. An estimated 44,000 of the one million middle-skill jobs in New York are unfilled today because there are not enough New Yorkers with the right skills and education. Similar skill gaps occur for apprenticeship opportunities.

A review of the policy landscape for "bridge programs" finds a range of definitions, costs, and program models. Generally, bridge programs assist students in obtaining the necessary academic, employability and technical skills through at least three components:

- **Contextualized instruction** that integrates basic reading, math and language skills and industry/occupational skills and knowledge.
- **Career development** that includes career exploration, career planning and understanding the world of work.
- **Transition services** that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial coursework to postsecondary or occupational programs. (Illinois Statewide Definition of Bridge)

¹ "Career Pathways: One City Working Together"

Approaches range from restructuring and integrating these elements into existing adult literacy, English Language and High School Equivalency Instruction to more costly, comprehensive approaches where academic and occupational instruction are co-taught similar to LaGuardia Community College's NY-BEST model or where program components include apprenticeships/internships, job placement, retention and advancement support.

As part of WIOA implementation, ACCES-Adult Education will develop resources critical to successful statewide expansion: pre-training and professional development including lessons learned and a CUNY-developed Teacher Leader Institute on Career Pathways in 2016; sector tool kits to develop curriculum and tailor models to high demand regional needs; designing a strong evaluation study; building instructional resources such as a statewide clearinghouse for curriculum and web-based adult teacher peer review process through www.TeachingtotheCoreNY.org and www.CollectEDNY.org; and, creating a statewide network of bridge programs. ACCES-Adult Education will collaboratively benchmark and share best practice and evaluation results with WIOA state partners, other states and New York City efforts.

The Regents proposal for new 2016-17 state spending for Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program will guide this development as part of New York's implementation of WIOA over the next four years.

Recommendation

Adopt the proposed Bridge to College and Careers Pilot Program in the 2016-17 state budget request.