



**I N F O R M A T I O N
B R I E F**

CERTIFYING ADULT EDUCATION STUDENTS

**A Survey of State Directors of Adult Education
On Certificate Programs In Use**

By Garrett Murphy

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**Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy
1221 Avenue of the Americas – 44th Floor
New York, NY 10020
www.caalusa.org**

FOREWORD

In January and February 2011, CAAL released two reports on certification and credentialing of staff and faculty in adult education. One, *CERTIFYING ADULT EDUCATION STAFF AND FACULTY*, was prepared by Cristine Smith and Ricardo Gomez of the University of Massachusetts as a background paper for a CAAL Roundtable on the topic. The other, *CLOSING THE GAP: The Challenge of Certification & Credentialing in Adult Education*, by Forrest Chisman, was CAAL's final project report. The two papers are available at www.caalusa.org/Closing.pdf and www.caalusa.org/certteach.pdf.

This Brief, *CERTIFYING ADULT EDUCATION STUDENTS: A Survey of State Directors of Adult Education on Certificate Programs in Use*, looks at certification systems in use across the country, as reported by state ABE directors, to validate student attainment in adult education and workforce skills programs. Conducted over six months in 2010, it presents the findings of a simple online questionnaire administered by CAAL senior advisor and policy analyst Garrett Murphy. Mr. Murphy was assisted in the survey's telephone phase by CAAL Research Assistant Bess Heitner.

The purpose of the survey was to gather basic information to help inform planning for a CAAL invitational Roundtable on the topic. By its nature, the results as reported in this Brief should be taken as a partial snapshot of usage at a fixed point in time; in the months since the survey was carried out some of the information has very likely changed. Despite these limits, the findings provide a good beginning for identifying some of the deeper issues in adult education student certification that need consideration. Nearly every finding raises new questions. For starters, *why* are states and programs awarding the certificates they offer, what do they aim to achieve and how do they know what they're achieving, what accounts for the heavy use of WorkKeys as compared to other possible options, and why is there such limited attention to ESL students in this context? CAAL will explore such questions in due course.

CAAL thanks Mr. Murphy for his diligence and sensitivity in bringing this survey to completion. We also extend appreciation to the AT&T Foundation, Dollar General Corporation, the Joyce Foundation, and The McGraw-Hill Companies for their support.

Gail Spangenberg
President, CAAL

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A. INTRODUCTION

A growing practice among adult education programs nationwide is the issuance of certificates, other than the GED, that attest to a certain level of academic attainment. This attainment may be for generic academic achievement or for the application of academic skills to employment settings. In order to learn more about this trend, as part of a larger project on student certification in adult education and workforce skills, the Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) commissioned this survey. It was administered online between June and November 2010 to the state directors of adult education in the 50 states and District of Columbia. The goal was to determine from the state ABE perspective which states were awarding certificates and how they were managing their certificate programs. (Survey questions are listed in Attachment 2.)

This paper reports on the survey findings. The certificates examined are those for which basic and employment standards have been set by valid and independent testing organizations such as those profiled in *A Survey of Selected Work Readiness Certificates*¹ or by state agencies. They are not certificates awarded by proprietary institutions for successful coursework completion.

B. THE SPECIFIC FINDINGS:

This section reports on the findings for each survey question asked.

Questions 1 and 2: Indicate your state, district, or outlying area. Does your state or any of your local providers award certificates such as those described in the survey introduction?

All of the states and the District of Columbia responded to the survey. Twenty-two states reported that they do award certificates; twenty-nine reported that they do not. A look at the National Association of Manufacturers website² and the websites of other certificate systems suggests that either a number of the 29 that reported that they do not award certificates may have begun using the National Career Readiness Certificate series but are not far enough along to report that a system is yet in place, or they may have fully developed systems in place that are managed by agencies other than the state eligible agency for adult education. The states reporting that they do award certificates (22) are: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia (where the state workforce agency actually awards the certificates), Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Question 3: If your state awards certificates, are they (a) general education certificates or (b) certificates for successful completion of programs applying basic skills to workforce settings?

The great majority of respondents reported that their certificates were awarded for application of basic skills to workforce settings. Only one state (Delaware) reported awarding certificates for general education. Four states (Iowa, Maine, Michigan, and Ohio) reported that they do both, using the work-related certificate along with a general certificate.

Question 4: Indicate the types of programs you offer that lead to certificates. Are they (a) statewide programs, and/or (b) local initiative programs?

Thirteen states operate their certificate programs as statewide initiatives. Five of these (Arizona, California, Connecticut, Mississippi, and North Carolina) allow local providers to negotiate their own arrangements with businesses and One-Stops. Four others (Maine, Michigan, Ohio, and Wyoming) operate statewide programs and allow for local initiatives as well.

Question 5: Is your state part of a regional or national certification initiative? If so, please identify that initiative.

Fourteen of the certificate-awarding states award the National Career Readiness Certificate, designed by ACT (American College Testing) and endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers. They are Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Of these, three (Iowa, Kentucky, and Ohio) award these certificates and add requirements of their own to those of the national certificate. A fifteenth state, Arkansas, uses its home-grown WAGE Career Readiness Certificate.

The National Career Readiness Test allows applicants to be assessed to learn whether or not they qualify to receive one of the certificates. The assessment covers three areas—reading for information, applied mathematics, and locating information, all believed to be crucial to effective job performance. There are four certificate levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. A holder of a Bronze certificate is said to possess employability skills for approximately 30 percent of profiled jobs, a Silver certificate 65 percent, a Gold certificate 90 percent and a Platinum certificate 99 percent. An online instructional program called KeyTrain³ is available to enable applicants to earn a Bronze certificate and/or work toward the more demanding certificates.

Five states indicated that they did not use any nationally or regionally accredited system. They are Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming. Two states (Connecticut and Delaware) did not respond to the question. Three states add their own requirements to the national certificate (Iowa, Kentucky, and Ohio). Ohio policymakers expressed concern that the certificate alone did not offer a clear path to postsecondary education in spite of a belief that one half of new jobs would require a postsecondary

degree or a one-year postsecondary certificate. Ohio initiated a program by which candidates could move through four levels of “Stackable Certificates.”⁴ The first level was to accept candidates with skills as low as sixth-grade level and entails primarily instruction in basic skills. Earning the second-level certificate would provide some postsecondary credit. Some such credit is assured with the receipt of the third-level. One full year’s postsecondary credit is earned upon the receipt of the fourth-level certificate.

Questions 6 and 7: For statewide programs or local initiative programs (item 4 above), check all of the following that apply regarding funding sources: (a) special state funding set aside for these programs, (b) federal Title II WIA funding, (c) employer funding, including release time and in-kind, or union support, and (d) other (please specify).

Only five states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, and Mississippi) did not operate statewide programs, but allowed local initiatives to flower. Connecticut did not respond to the question about kinds of funding used. The other four local initiative states used a variety of funding, but none specifically mentioned WIA Title II funds.

Of the states operating statewide programs, two (Delaware and Iowa) report using only WIA Title II funding, which restricts eligibility for service only to persons eligible for that funding source. Arkansas, North Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia report using only state funds. Wisconsin uses ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) stimulus funds. Wyoming uses WIA Title I funding.

All of the other states operating statewide programs used WIA Title II funds in combination with other sources, such as special state funds, ARRA, and/or employer support. Use of other than WIA Title II funding would be critical to the ability to serve other than adults without a high school diploma, high school graduates unable to function at that level, and adults with limited proficiency in English. Use of these other funding sources enables states to offer the certificate process to high school graduates and, in the case of South Carolina, to high school students from tenth grade up who may earn certificates.

Question 8: Adults may need different lengths of time to earn certificates in competency-based programs. Please estimate the average length of a program in contact hours for which a certificate is awarded.

Because some states may have their certificate candidates prepare for assessments by taking KeyTrain or other lessons online, they may be unaware of the number of hours needed to qualify for a certificate. Even if students do not prepare online they may need various lengths of classroom preparation.

Seven states (Arizona, Connecticut, Georgia, Kansas, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin) did not respond to the question. Five states (California, Kentucky, New Mexico, North Carolina, and West Virginia) responded that they did not know how long their candidates were preparing, or said that the time varied widely.

Of the remaining states, Ohio estimates 80 to 100 hours for one of its ABLÉ certificates. Wyoming reports 100 hours for ESL students and 20-30 hours for workforce candidates, followed by Maine at 60 to 90 hours, Arkansas at 60 to 80 hours, Colorado and Delaware both at 60 hours, Iowa at 40 hours, Michigan at 30 hours, and Mississippi at 10 hours. New York did not express its reply in hours, reporting that their average preparation time is 8 weeks.

Question 9: If your state or local programs award certificates for instructional programs that apply basic skills to workforce situations, approximately what percent of enrollments are incumbent workers as contrasted to adults preparing to enter the workforce?

States vary widely in their ability to report what percent of their certificate candidates are incumbent workers. Thirteen states either did not respond to the question or responded that they did not track that information. Of those states that were able to provide information, Michigan led with 70 percent followed by Kansas at 50 percent, Arkansas at 30 to 35 percent, New Mexico at 31.5 percent, Georgia at 22 percent, Maine at 20 percent, and Ohio at about 5 percent. Colorado and West Virginia reported that they have not served incumbent workers. Maine cautioned that as unemployment rises, the percentage of incumbent workers served is likely to decrease.

Question 10: What partners do your state or local programs involve in the planning, operation, or evaluation of your programs? List no more than six.

As might be expected, the nearly ubiquitous partners to adult education agencies operating certificate programs are either the state workforce apparatus or workforce development boards. Of the twenty-one states that replied to the request to list their primary partners, sixteen cited these two entities as partners. The four that did not are Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, and Michigan. Connecticut did not respond, and California indicated that partnership varies by local area.

Eight states (Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, and Vermont) listed some form of postsecondary affiliation, and several other states run their adult education programs out of the state's postsecondary education system. Only four states (Arizona, Arkansas, Iowa, and Kansas) mentioned departments of commerce. Two states (Delaware and Kentucky) listed departments of economic development, and two others (Maine and Wisconsin) listed community-based organizations, as did Colorado, which also listed employers that work with refugees. Arkansas listed local employers and chambers of commerce. Kansas listed its Department of Corrections and its state rehabilitation system. Michigan was the only state to include school districts among its partners.

**Question 11: What benefits do employers offer to work-related certificate holders?
Check all that apply.**

The questionnaire gave four possible benefits, but because different benefits might be available in different industries and in different parts of a state, respondents were allowed to choose as many as applied. They could also add their own if they wanted to do so. The five choices given were:

- (a) enhanced consideration for employment
- (b) certificate is a prerequisite to be considered for employment
- (c) guarantee of continued employment for incumbent workers
- (d) incumbent worker upgrade, and
- (e) other (please specify)

All respondents selected (a) enhanced consideration for employment. New York gave (a) as the only benefit. Additional benefits were indicated by the other respondents as follows: Six states (Arizona, Arkansas, Kansas, Maine, West Virginia, and Wisconsin) listed (b). Four states (Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, and Ohio) listed (b) and (d). Two states (North and South Carolina) responded that benefit (d) also applied. One state (Georgia) replied that benefits (b) and (c) could also be found in the state. Among other benefits cited, Arkansas specified its worker upgrade as receipt of a pay raise, Colorado cited getting and doing well in an interview, and New Mexico reported that it is still working on its WorkKeys assessment and wished to have that in place before beginning to contact employers.

Survey Question 12: Check all certificates that are available in your state. Of the options offered, choose as many as are applicable:

- For successful completion of a program that
- (a) teaches general workforce skills
 - (b) teaches application of basic skills needed in a particular industry
 - (c) teaches application of basic skills needed for a particular job cluster, and/or
 - (d) teaches application of basic skills needed for a particular job.

As mentioned above, the National Career Readiness Certificate has a number of levels, each corresponding to a percentage of jobs that the holder would be able to perform. In addition, the assessments can be geared to measure whether jobs in a specific industry or cluster can be performed—and even functions of particular positions—if those positions have been profiled for the purpose by panels familiar with the requirements.

Nine states (Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, and West Virginia) award only (a) general workforce certificates. Two states (Arizona and Iowa) award them for (b) preparation for a particular industry. Wyoming awards its certificate for (c) job cluster purposes only. Only Maine listed preparation for (a) and (b) and only South Carolina reported (b), (c), and (d). Arkansas

and Michigan award certificates for (a), (b), and (d). Four states (Georgia, Ohio, Vermont, and Wisconsin) award certificates for all four completion purposes. Connecticut did not respond to this question. California reported that it had no data.

Question 13: If a certificate is used in combination with another degree or certification measure, please indicate the combined components.

Four states responded that their certificates were awarded in combination with another certification process. Iowa reported that some of its programs are following Washington State's I-BEST model and will have students earning CASAS achievement awards for basic skills as they progress toward a certificate in a vocational area. Maine gives as an example that a WorkReady certificate must sometimes be combined with a 30-hour basic computer certificate. As noted above, Ohio incorporates its certification process into its "Stackable Certificate" program. Wisconsin highlights its Lakeshore Technical College program whereby a student is provided with industrial reading and math leading to automatic admission into college.

Question 14: In preparing your work-related state or local programs, check all elements that you have incorporated:

- SCANS elements
- Workplace Essential Skills
- WorkKeys elements/National Association of Manufacturing endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System⁵
- CASAS workplace readiness elements
- TABE growth measures
- Devised own system without incorporating commercially available elements
- Used a different available system (please explain)

Of the 20 responding to this question (only California and Connecticut did not respond), 17 claimed WorkKeys as a source. Six states had WorkKeys as their sole source-- Georgia, Kansas, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Only Arkansas (SCANS and Workplace Essential Skills), Delaware (TABE), and Maine (CASAS) did not use WorkKeys.

SCANS was selected by five states, Workplace Essential Skills by six, CASAS by six, and TABE by five. Although Arizona is one of the states claiming WorkKeys as their source, they used it as a guide to design their own system.

Questions 15 and 22: How do you involve business, industry, and/or unions in curriculum development? And what strategies have you successfully used?

These items on the questionnaire, which were open-ended, did not elicit a great deal of information. Six states either did not respond or had little information. California, Iowa, and North Carolina replied that the involvement varied from area to area.

However, three primary involvement strategies did surface. The first is direct involvement with business and industry from the outset (indicated by Arizona, Arkansas, and Michigan). The second is working through an advisory committee or task force in which business and industry is involved (Maine and Wisconsin). The third is involving state and local workforce boards and labor department representatives (Delaware and New York).

Ohio stressed the importance of partnerships – especially with the state’s postsecondary institutions. Kentucky is planning a statewide curriculum pilot that will include business and industry participation. South Carolina emphasized the work of job profiling panels. No state mentioned work with unions.

Questions 16, 17, and 18: Approximately how many adults in your state are annually enrolled in and complete certificate programs, including ESL participants?

Because there is no national requirement to maintain a record of enrollments and completions, a number of states could not provide this information. Ten states were able to provide some data. Some could only provide data on certificates awarded but not the number of students enrolled.

Kansas enrolled 10,000 students and awarded 3,000 certificates. Delaware enrolled 5,000 and awarded 2,500 certificates. Arkansas enrolled 3,000 students, of which 750 got certificates. Maine enrolled 497 and gave 460 certificates. In Colorado, 400 were enrolled and 360 were certified. Georgia reported certifying 37 percent of 159,000 unemployed people or nearly 59,000. Mississippi reported that all 1,200 enrollees were awarded certificates “at some level of competency.” Ohio stated that all of its ABLE participants are eligible and 200 certificates were awarded. South Carolina reported that it had awarded 10,000 certificates in one year. North Carolina did not supply figures for enrollment or awards because this information is only known locally, but its chapter in the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium monograph *Adult Education; Supporting the President’s Workforce and American Graduation Initiatives*⁶ asserts that 27,000 certificates have been awarded.

English as a Second Language Percentages. Despite the fact that close to 50 percent of all adult education participants have limited English proficiency, only a small percentage of certificate enrollees are in programs designed for that population. The one major exception is Colorado: 100 percent of its enrollees take ESL instruction. Most states were unaware of their ESL percentage. Of the seven states other than Colorado that reported a percentage, Wisconsin had the next highest percentage at 40, followed by Delaware at 25 percent, Ohio at 15 percent, Arkansas at 10 to 15 percent, Maine at 10 percent, Kansas at 3 percent, and Mississippi at 1 to 2 percent.

Survey Question 19: What percent of your certificate students, if any, receive at least part of their instruction online?

Given the popularity of WorkKeys, more use of its companion KeyTrain would be expected—an online source of “gap training” to prepare for an assessment. Maine and West Virginia both require 100 percent of their instruction to be online, but many state education offices appear to be unaware of the extent to which local programs may be using online instruction. Eleven states either did not respond to the question or indicated they were unaware of the percentage. Four states (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, and Mississippi) reported zero participation. Wisconsin reported 40 percent, Kansas 10, and Delaware 5. New York gave no percentage but said that eight weeks of units titled “New York State Career and Job Zone” are presented online. Wyoming reported that online instruction is available in the classroom but not in homes.

Survey Questions 20 and 21: Do you have any problems reporting your certificate effort to the federal National Reporting System (NRS)? If you have NRS reporting problems, what are the major reasons?

Ten states replied that they have had problems reporting their certificate efforts to the NRS. They are Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, South Carolina, and West Virginia. Four states did not respond (California, Connecticut, Delaware, and North Carolina). The other eight states indicated that they have no NRS reporting difficulties.

To satisfy NRS requirements, states would have to measure educational gain for each participant—as determined by the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) or other system approved by the U.S. Department of Education. And they would have to serve only participants who meet the eligibility requirements of Title II of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The states that have problems reporting their certificate efforts to NRS generally fall into two main categories. Six (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Michigan, Mississippi, and West Virginia) indicated that NRS gave them no opportunity to report this information because there was no table available to record certificate efforts. A second category had to do with eligibility. Maine and South Carolina observed that eligibility for certificates in some states far exceed the eligibility requirements for WIA Title II. In South Carolina, for example, high school students in 10th grade are eligible. In some states, people with high school diplomas are also eligible. In Kentucky, a program may enroll both those eligible for WIA Title II programs and some who are not eligible, with data for only the eligibles reported to NRS.

In addition, Kansas noted that it does not use WorkKeys to measure educational gain. Arizona indicates that certificate programs can involve students in courses of study “that run past the NRS reporting deadlines.” New York said that it intends to modify its state accountability system to track certificate programs.

C. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This survey was designed to ascertain the roles of the states (via state directors of adult education) in the provision of certificates and the operation of associated preparation programs. All 50 states contacted plus the District of Columbia responded to the survey.

However, at least three variables constrained the responses obtained. First, 29 states reported no certificate use at present, although certificate programs are in development in some of them. Second, the survey was administered only to adult education agencies, and in some states other entities operate certificate programs and are known to have fully developed programs. And third, there are great differences in the amount of control the state education agency exercises over the award of certificates, the preparation programs leading to those awards, and the information collected on use and progress. Some state agencies allocate funds to local adult education programs with the expectation that the local agency will report enrollment and progress, while others allow various funding sources for operation of certificate programs with no expectation that the local agency will send in any progress report. California is such a state, rendering it unable to respond to most of the questions in the survey.

Twenty-two states reported use of certificates. The key features of their use are summarized below:

- *All but one of the states awarding certificates offer them for work-related purposes.* The most commonly offered work-related certificate is “good for general work,” but several states selected “preparation for work in a particular industry,” and four offer all of the work-related options given in the survey.
- *The majority of the states (13) operate certificate programs as statewide initiatives and tend to adopt or adapt existing commercially-available certificate assessments. The program most chosen for adoption or adaptation was ACT’s National Career Readiness Test.*
- *The states fund their certificate programs from a number of sources—e.g., special state funding, WIA Titles I and II, ARRA, and employer funding. Only two states use only WIA Title II funding. Use of funds other than Title II allows some states to enroll participants ineligible for Title II service, such as high school students or adults who have a high school diploma.*
- *The states vary widely in their estimates of how long a participant needs to prepare for an assessment. The estimates range from 30 to 100 hours. Preparation time would be affected by the ability of participants at entry. Some states declined to submit an estimate, claiming that the number of hours varies too much from person to person.*
- *Only nine of the 22 states provided information on service to incumbent workers. Two of these said that they do not serve incumbent workers; the other seven*

reported percentages that range between 5 percent (Ohio) and 70 percent (Michigan) of the total population served.

- *In all cases, certificate programs are offered in collaboration with partner agencies.* (These entities may offer such benefits as funding, a pool of clients, affirmation of the certificate's value, further educational opportunities, job placement, and support services.) The partner most indicated was either a state workforce agency or a workforce investment board. Next were postsecondary institutions, chosen by agencies that were not themselves postsecondary institutions.
- *Only four of the states currently award their certificates in tandem with another program.* Three integrate the certificate process into some sort of postsecondary program, one simply has added a computer course.
- *WorkKeys is the program most used by the 22 states (17 of them) to fashion their certificate programs.* SCANS, Workplace Essential Skills, TABE, and CASAS were also listed. A number of states used several or all of these.
- *The 16 states that work with business and industry on curricular matters reported three main forms of involvement (six did not respond or had little information): (1) direct involvement from the outset, (2) working through advisory committees, and (3) involvement with the state labor department or state workforce development system.*
- *Enrollment and success data from the 22 states are very mixed.* Some programs are relatively new and do not yet have a track record and some have been around several years. Programs that enroll lowest level participants have the lowest completion percentage. The largest enrolled populations tend to be in states that admit a wider range of participants than those eligible under WIA Title II.
- *Although nearly half of program participants have limited English proficiency, only a small percentage of certificate enrollees are in programs designed for that population.* The one exception is Colorado, where 100 percent of the enrollees take English instruction. Most states did not know what percent of their enrollment was made up of limited-English students. Of the few states able to report, the percentages ranged from 1-2 percent to 40 percent.
- *Online participation in the certificate programs is minimal.* Most states either did not respond to the question on the extent to which participants in their certificate programs receive instruction online, or they reported zero participation. Maine and West Virginia reported 100 percent online instruction. Only three other states reported online instruction—ranging from 5 to 40 percent.
- *Slightly more than half the 22 states indicated problems reporting to the National Reporting System.* They either could not find a suitable table in which to enter

their information or were serving participants who did not meet WIA Title II eligibility requirements (using other funds to support such service). However, nearly half of the responding states have no problem reporting their certificate efforts to the NRS. These states have adhered to the participant eligibility requirements of Title II and have tested and reported educational gain for these participants.

D. CONCLUSION

Certification programs have a significant potential for growth across the country, but lack of data may be a major impediment.

Some states collect and maintain essential data; many do not. Critical audiences for that data, in addition to the President and Congress, could be local and state executives and legislators whose support is needed for funding. Data may also be needed to demonstrate return on investment to businesses, chambers of commerce, and workforce investment boards—to show the value of hiring certificated potential and incumbent workers. Data on instructional approaches could result in improved practice. Data on the populations already served could lead to appropriate targeting.

The U.S. Department of Education could collect better information on the numbers and kinds of certificates awarded—expanding eligibility, in effect, by changing the law to include adults age sixteen or older with high school diplomas, while retaining the exclusion of in-school youth.

Finally, it should be noted that President Obama⁷ has set a goal of postsecondary education for all. Proponents of certificate programs will have to discern how preparation for and award of certificates can fit in with programs designed to move adults to postsecondary education and job training by providing, in either sequential or concurrent programs, the basic skills upgrading necessary for that.

ATTACHMENT 1

ENDNOTES

¹ N. Rey-Alicea and G. Scott, *A Survey of Selected Work Readiness Certificates*, Jobs For The Future for Skill Up Rhode Island, a project of United Way Rhode Island, 2007, page 4.

² http://institute.nam.org/page/edu_workforce_skills_cert_implementation_by_state.

³ KeyTrains is a system for improving the basic skills measured by the WorkKeys Assessment System. It can be used to assess a potential WorkKeys score, to review topics in each WorkKeys skill area, and to practice problems similar to those in an the WorkKeys assessment. For more information: www.keytrain.com/keytrain/ktn_over.asp

⁴ *Ohio Stackable Certificates: Models for Success*, prepared for Columbus State Community College Business and Industry Division with funding from the Ohio Board of Regents, 2008.

⁵ The survey erred in listing WorkKeys and National Manufacturers Skills Certification Program as separate options when in fact they are the same thing. Thus, responses to either of these options are counted as belonging to WorkKeys.

⁶ <http://www.naepdc.org/State%20Alignment%20Initiatives%20-%20FINAL%202.2.10.pdf>

⁷ <http://collegepuzzle.stanford.edu/?p=146>

ATTACHMENT 2

CAAL Certificate Survey

Administered June 2010 – November 2010

INTRODUCTION: The Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (parent organization of the National Commission for Adult Literacy) has observed that certain eligible agencies and eligible providers are awarding various forms of certificates to adult students -- in recognition of their having either mastered some incremental portion of a basic educational curriculum (other than a GED) or successfully completed a course of study in which certain basic skills were applied to workforce settings. Most certificate activity is in the workforce arena.

CAAL asked Senior Advisor Garrett Murphy (former NYS adult education director, policy analyst for NAEPDC) to survey state adult education directors on certificate activity in the States. He was assisted in this effort by Bess Heitner, CAAL Research Assistant. State ABE directors in the States and the District of Columbia were asked to respond to the following questions, presented online. Response boxes (not shown below in most cases) followed the questions and could accommodate differing response lengths.

1. Please indicate your State, District, or outlying area:

2. Does your State or do any of your local providers award certificates such as those described in the introduction.

3. If you replied "Yes" to item 2 please indicate the type of program below. Check all that apply:

- General education certificates
- Certificates for successful completion of programs applying basic skills to workforce settings

4. Please indicate below the types of programs leading to certificates. Check all that apply:

- Statewide programs
- Local initiative programs

5. Is your state part of a regional or national certification initiative? If so, please identify that initiative:

6. If you chose Statewide programs in item 4 above, check all that apply:

- special state funding set aside for these programs
- Federal Title II WIA funding
- Employer funding, including release time and in-kind
- Other (please specify)

7. If you chose "local initiative programs" in item 4, what kinds of funding is used? Check all that apply:

- State funds
- WIA Title II funds
- Employer or union support
- Other (please specify)

8. Acknowledging that adults may need different lengths of time to earn certificates in competency-based programs, please estimate the average length of a program in contact hours for which a certificate is awarded:

9. If your state or local programs awards certificates for instructional programs that apply basic skills to workforce situations, approximately what percent of enrollments are incumbent workers as opposed to adults preparing to enter the workforce?

10. What partners do your state or local programs involve in the planning, operation or evaluation of your programs? Please list no more than six:

11. What benefits do employers offer to work-related certificate holders? Check all that apply:

- Enhanced consideration for employment
- Certificate is a prerequisite to be considered for employment
- Guarantee of continued employment for incumbent workers
- Incumbent worker upgrade
- Other (please specify)

12. Certificates are available in my state – check all that apply:

- For successful completion of a program that taught general workforce skills
- For successful completion of a program that taught application of basic skills needed in a particular industry
- For successful completion of a program that taught application of basic skills needed for a particular job cluster
- For successful completion of a program that taught application of basic skills needed for a particular job
- Certificate is used in combination with another degree of certification measures

13. If certificate is in combination, what are the combined components?

14. In preparing our work related programs our state or local programs - Check all that apply:

- Incorporated SCANS elements
- Incorporated Workplace Essential Skills
- Incorporated Work Keys elements
- Incorporated National Association of Manufacturing endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System
- Incorporated CASAS workplace readiness elements
- Used TABE growth measures
- Devised own system without incorporating commercially available elements
- Used a different available system – Please explain

15. How do you involve business, industry, and/or unions in curriculum development?

16. Approximately how many adults in your State are enrolled annually in certificate programs?

17. Of these, approximately how many are awarded certificates?

18. What percent, if any, of your certificate enrollment is comprised of English as a second language students?

19. What percent, if any, of your certificate students are receiving at least part of their instruction online?

20. Do you have any problems in reporting your certificate effort to NRS?

- Yes
- No

21. If you answered yes to question 20, what are major reasons that a percentage, if any, of this effort is not reportable?

22. What have been successful strategies to motivate businesses and unions to become involved in certificate programs and to value their output?

23. If you have an EXISTING write-up of your certificate efforts, please include it here:

*Please be advised that I already have access to the state by state workforce report that is on the NAEPCDC web page, so please don't include your section of that report.

24. Please include any additional comments you would like to share with CAAL here:

25. Survey respondent information:

Survey respondent Name:

Organization:

State:

Email Address:

Phone Number: