



# From Basic Skills to Good Jobs: A Strategy for Connecting D.C.'s Adult Learners to Career Pathways

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## Executive Summary

To reduce unemployment and narrow the gap between rich and poor, the District must help more residents build basic skills required by the city's economy. This policy brief proposes that the District's leaders develop and implement a citywide initiative to ensure that every adult learner in a District-funded basic skills program has access to a career pathway by 2020.

The District is home to one of the most highly skilled labor markets in the nation.<sup>1</sup> Yet over 60,000 residents lack a high school degree<sup>2</sup> and an even larger number likely lack the basic reading, writing, math, English language, and problem solving skills necessary to succeed in training, postsecondary education, and the workplace.<sup>3</sup> Many of these adults also lack the digital literacy skills needed to succeed in a technology-rich environment. This skills gap contributes to the District's high unemployment rate, income inequality, and intergenerational poverty. By helping more adult residents get basic skills, the District could also improve educational outcomes for school children, expand its tax base, and reduce spending on social services.

The District's current investments in adult basic skills are not sufficient. For one, the number of adults in need of basic skills upgrades far exceeds the number being served by publicly funded programs, many of which have waiting lists. Moreover, the District does not make the best use of its limited resources because it does not coordinate its investments across agencies. District adult learners consistently have higher attrition rates and lower levels of educational gains compared to adults nationally. This fact is of particular concern since on average low basic skills are more common in the U.S. than other OECD comparison countries.<sup>4</sup> If the District is going to truly tackle its unemployment problem and close the economic divide for this generation and the next, it must do a better job helping adult learners succeed in basic skills programs that connect to careers.

"Career pathways" offer a promising approach for helping adult learners increase their basic skills and successfully transition to postsecondary training, education, and work. Basic skills programs provided in the career pathways framework integrate basic skills and career content and facilitate and accelerate learners' transition to the next level of education and training. Rigorous research shows that adult learners in these types of programs are more likely to pass the GED, transition to college, and earn college credits and certificates than those in traditional basic skills programs.<sup>5</sup> To connect D.C.'s basic skills programs to career pathways, the District must build a system that bridges adult education and workforce development.

### Basic Skills:

- The reading, writing, math, English language, and problem solving skills that adults need to succeed in a job, occupational training, or postsecondary education.
- Proxied by a high school degree or equivalent, but adults with a high school degree may also lack basic skills.

### Career Pathways Working Definition:

- An approach to connecting progressive levels of basic skills and postsecondary education, training, and supportive services in specific sectors or cross-sector occupations in a way that optimizes the progress and success of individuals – including those with limited education, English skills, and/or work experience – in securing marketable credentials, family-supporting employment, and further education and employment opportunities. (Beta definition from the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways).

The District can pursue a citywide initiative to connect basic skills programs to career pathways by:

- Convening a cross-agency task force to develop and implement a strategic plan;
- Creating an innovation fund to build program capacity by piloting, evaluating, and scaling evidence-based practices;
- Helping lower-level learners get the support needed to advance in career pathways; and
- Increasing professional development opportunities to help more basic skills programs adopt best practices and continuously provide skill-building opportunities to staff and volunteers.

The District can jumpstart this effort by making a \$2.5 million investment in Fiscal Year 2015. This investment would help the District make significant progress toward closing the skills gap. And it would strengthen the city's other investments in workforce development, the community college, and the PreK-12 system.

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## I. Effective Adult Basic Skills Programs Are Essential to Prepare D.C. Residents for Jobs and to Create a Thriving, Inclusive City

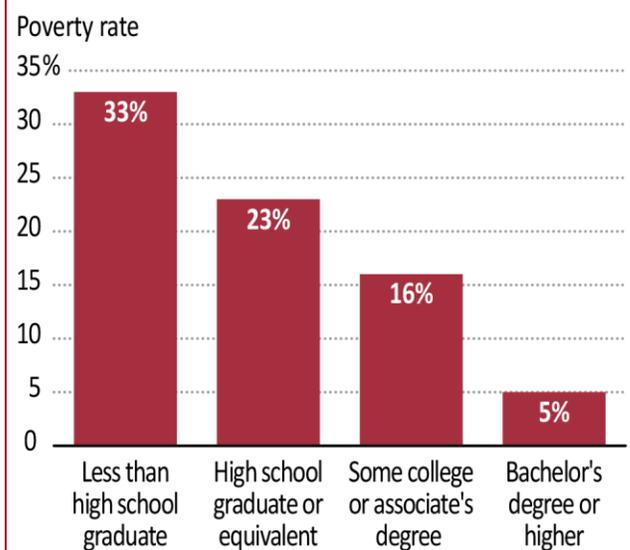
### The District suffers from a skills mismatch.

Economists project that in just four years, 72 percent of all jobs in D.C. will require some postsecondary education – a higher proportion than any of the 50 states.<sup>6</sup> Yet over 60,000 D.C. residents lack a high school degree or its equivalent.<sup>7</sup> Seventy-five percent of these residents are of working age, between 18 and 64 years old, and 85 percent are 25 or older – beyond the age requirement for youth services.<sup>8</sup> Among those 25 and older, approximately 80 percent speak only English at home<sup>9</sup> – indicating that most of these residents' basic skills needs are not due to a language barrier. Without basic reading, writing, math, English language, and problem solving skills, these residents will have a hard time succeeding in occupational training programs, attending community college, or finding work.

### Education and skills disparities contribute to the District's income inequality.

The gap between rich and poor in the District is the fourth largest among the nation's 50 largest cities.<sup>10</sup> The gap is in part a result of education and skills disparities. The 24 percent unemployment rate of D.C. residents without a high school degree is one-and-a-half times that of residents with some college or an associate's degree and six times that of residents with a bachelor's degree or more.<sup>11</sup> The difference in poverty rates between these groups is similar.<sup>12</sup>

Poverty Rates Are Highest Among D.C. Residents Without a High School Degree



Source: American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 2010-2012

Note: Includes individuals ages 25 or older. Differences in poverty rate between those with less than a high school degree and others are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

The income gap is also an issue among working families. The Working Poor Families project found that the income gap between the most and least affluent working families in D.C. is higher than the national gap and higher than that of any other state.<sup>13</sup> A significant portion of residents heading working poor families need basic skills to advance to higher-skilled jobs and become economically secure. According to the Working Poor Families Project, parents in one of three working poor families in D.C. lack a high school degree or GED.<sup>14</sup>

The District government itself has recognized this crisis. The D.C. Workforce Development Strategic Plan for 2012-2016 states, “[g]iven the increasing skill

and credential demands in the District's labor market, it is likely that individuals at lower levels of literacy (both in terms of basic literacy and language proficiency) will be increasingly marginalized from employment, or stuck in low-paying jobs, unless steps are taken to increase access to adult education and related services."<sup>15</sup>

Unless the District makes a concerted and coordinated effort to close the skills gap, it could contribute to income inequality among the next generation of D.C. residents. An Urban Institute study showed that more than other factors, parents' education affects whether children born into poverty stay poor.<sup>16</sup> Those who are persistently poor as children are much more likely to be poor as adults.<sup>17</sup>

### **Closing the skills gap is critical to meeting the District's other key priorities.**

In addition to preparing more D.C. residents for jobs and reducing income inequality, closing the skills gap among adults will yield benefits for children and the District as a whole:

- **Improve school outcomes for children.** Parents with more education are better positioned to help their children study and succeed at school. A 2010 study found that a mother's reading scores had a larger effect on a child's reading achievement than any of the other socioeconomic factor tested, including family income, family nonhousing assets, neighborhood median family income, and mother's years of schooling.<sup>18</sup> Another recent study found that young adults whose parents have education beyond high school are more likely to complete high school themselves compared to those whose parents lack a diploma.<sup>19</sup> Others have found a link between participation in educational activities among mothers receiving public assistance and improvements in children's school readiness, as well as reductions in special education placements.<sup>20</sup>
- **Grow the District's tax base and reduce social service costs.** Postsecondary credentials help adults get jobs, earn more, and pay taxes. A recent analysis found that in 2009, the average total tax payment of a full-time worker with some college was nearly twice the tax payment of a full-time worker without a high school degree.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, households with higher levels of education rely less

on social programs and public assistance. The same analysis found a savings of \$26,600 in lifetime social program spending per person for black women with some college compared to a high school diploma.<sup>22</sup> The savings was \$14,500 for white women and \$18,100 for Hispanic women.<sup>23</sup>

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## **II. The District's Current Basic Skills Investments Are Not Sufficient**

### **The number of adults in need of basic skills upgrades far exceeds the number being served by publicly-funded programs.**

At least five different agencies administer major publicly-funded adult basic skills programs (see Table on page 4).<sup>24</sup> The services provided or supported by these agencies vary greatly, from tutoring and provision of the GED practice test to full-time school programs. Together, these agencies served *at most* roughly 8,000 residents in FY 2013. The number of adults without a high school degree is nearly eight times the number being served. Of the 8,000 served, it is unclear how many are making skills gains, moving into employment, or increasing earnings because only one of the five agencies administering programs has publicly reported data on outcomes.

### **The District lacks a cross-agency framework for coordinating its investments and sharing information on outcomes.**

The District is not strategically leveraging its adult education resources toward a common goal. The District's leadership has recognized the importance of having a citywide strategy for adult literacy, but has not taken action or provided sufficient funding to create one. In 2011, the District passed a law requiring the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education to submit to the Mayor and D.C. Council an annual report on the state of adult literacy.<sup>25</sup> To our knowledge, this requirement has not been fulfilled. Under the federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA),<sup>26</sup> the District developed a five-year state plan for adult education and literacy in 2000, and the Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) submits state plan extensions each year in accordance with federal law. However, this state plan only addresses strategies for AEFLA-funded

## Different Agencies Administered Major Publicly-Funded Adult Basic Skills Programs in FY 2013

Agency	Number of Enrolled Slots, FY 2013	Total Public Funding, FY 2013
<b>Office of the State Superintendent for Education, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs:</b> adult basic education, secondary education, workplace literacy, English language, and family literacy. <sup>a</sup>	3,356	\$2,684,370
<b>D.C. Public Schools, Ballou, Roosevelt, and Spingarn STAYS:</b> high school diplomas, external diplomas, GED preparation, and career and technical education. <sup>b</sup>	1,377	\$5,784,308
<b>D.C. Public Charter Schools with Adult Enrollments:</b> High school diplomas, GED preparation, career preparation, computer skills, English language, and civics. <sup>c</sup>	2,773	\$18,975,639
<b>University of the District of Columbia Community College Workforce Development Program:</b> GED preparation, Accuplacer preparation, language arts and math preparation. <sup>d</sup>	663	\$575,000
<b>D.C. Public Library Literacy Resources:</b> Referrals to tutors and educational resources; GED practice test. <sup>e</sup>	Not Applicable	\$540,372

Notes: This table only captures major sources of funding for adult basic skills. Information was reported by or verified with each individual agency. More detailed information is included in the appendix.

Some agencies may fund the same program (for example OSSE may fund an adult public charter school). For this reason, the same student may be counted more than once in "enrolled slots."

a. The OSSE funding figure only includes federal and local funds used to provide AEFLA grants. OSSE's Adult and Family Education division receives additional AEFLA federal funding for state leadership activities, as well as other local funds.

b. The STAY schools funding figure is based on total FY 2013 submitted budgets for the three schools and does not include additional support that STAY schools receive from the DCPS Central Office nor does it reflect adjustments made to school budgets after the 2012-2013 enrollment audit. Spingarn STAY closed in July 2013.

c. The adult public charter school funding figure is the product of the FY 2013 adult per pupil expenditure of \$6,843 and the number of DCPCS adult students in the enrollment audit. It does not include additional funding that schools receive under the UPSFF for adult students who are English Language Learners or Special Education students. It does not include funding charter schools receive for students not classified as adults, nor does it include facility allowances.

d. Reported by UDC-CC Workforce Development Program. The UDC-CC number of enrolled slots and funding figure only represents select courses described, not all UDC-CC Workforce Development Program courses. The same student may be enrolled in multiple counted courses and therefore double-counted in "enrolled slots."

e. Adult literacy resource center receives federal funds from the State Library Administrative Agencies Grant, as well as local funds.

programs, and thus does not set an explicit citywide goal for adult education; it also has not been significantly revisited since it was drafted 14 years ago.

While some District agencies collect the same outcomes data, they do not seem to share this information to coordinate basic skills policies and programs across agencies. OSSE's Adult and Family Education Division, D.C. Public Charter Schools (DCPCS) and the University of the District of Columbia Community College's (UDC-CC) workforce development programs collect the same set of outcome measures. However, OSSE's Adult and Family Education division is the only agency that publicly reports these outcomes on an annual basis (as required by the AEFLA).<sup>27</sup> The DCPCS Board recently adopted a new Performance Management Framework for Adult Education Public Charter Schools and will begin to publicly report on the same outcomes as OSSE for the 2013-2014 school year.<sup>28</sup>

Without a common goal, joint strategy, and information sharing across agencies, the District cannot be sure that it is investing its limited resources in a way that maximizes basic skills gains and successful transitions to postsecondary training, education, and work.

### Outcome Measures Collected by OSSE, Adult D.C. Public Charter Schools, and UDC-CC's Workforce Development Program:

- Completion and Gains in Educational Functioning Levels (Equivalent to grade level ranges)
- Attainment of GED or Secondary School Diploma
- Employment Placement and Retention
- Entrance into Postsecondary Education or Training

## Highlight on Local Programs

### Academy of Hope's Bridge and Dual Enrollment Programs

The Academy of Hope Public Charter School helps adult learners obtain skills that lead not only to a high school credential but also to postsecondary credentials and careers that pay a living wage. Academy of Hope created its bridge level courses to help its students who earn a GED or diploma successfully transition to postsecondary education and training.

Academy of Hope's bridge courses intend to tackle the skills challenges that many GED recipients face once they enter college. Academy of Hope recognized that many GED graduates who enter college spend a year or more in developmental basic skills courses, and fail to complete their degree. To ensure that its students don't spend time in developmental courses once they enter college, Academy of Hope's 13-week bridge level courses help students gain the reading, writing, and math skills necessary to pass entrance exams and enter college taking credit-bearing courses. They also prepare students for college-level work by teaching students how to study, meet deadlines, and write a research paper. Academy of Hope additionally counsels learners enrolled in these courses to ensure that their area of planned study is aligned with their career goals and provides support on critical needs like applying for college admission and financial aid. In 2013, 86 percent of those who completed bridge courses applied and were accepted into postsecondary institutions, and 100 percent of those accepted have or will have enrolled in credit-bearing courses within one year.

Students who complete Academy of Hope's College Preparation and Success course receive one credit that articulates to the University of the District of Columbia's community college. Students can also take Academy of Hope's Internet Computing Core certification, which articulates for 3 credits at UDC's community college.

Academy of Hope also has a dual enrollment program with The Graduate School USA in allied health. That program allows students to start credit-bearing coursework that is not math-dependent at The Graduate School while students build their math skills at Academy of Hope. Academy of Hope also helps students who want to pursue this track gain the science skills required for program entry through a pre-science course developed in alignment with The Graduate School's requirements.

### Over half of D.C. learners enrolled in AEFLA-funded adult education programs do not have the basic skills required to qualify for key occupational training programs.

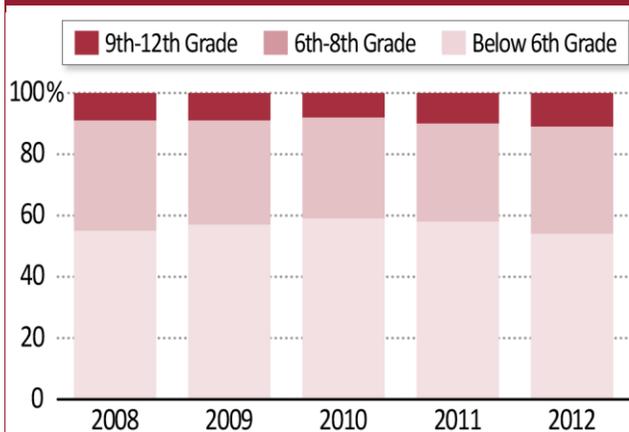
As previously mentioned, multi-year standard outcomes data is only available for adult learners in programs funded through AEFLA. OSSE's Adult and Family Education division administers the AEFLA by providing grants to 19 community-based providers. These providers offer "adult basic education" to those with skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, "adult secondary education" to those with skills at or above the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, and English language (ESL)

programs, which are classified as below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level.<sup>29</sup>

OSSE typically supports between 3,000 and 4,000 adult learners annually in these programs.<sup>30</sup> In the most recent program year for which data are available (2012), 52 percent of adult learners were in adult education programs while 48 percent were in ESL programs.<sup>31</sup> In each of the past five program years, 9 out of 10 learners in adult education (non-ESL) programs had basic skills below the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, and over half had basic skills below the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level.<sup>32</sup> Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-funded occupational training programs require skills

at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level or above<sup>33</sup> and most UDC-CC workforce development training programs require skills at or above the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level.<sup>34</sup> This means that most of the learners participating in adult education programs do not yet have the basic skills required for key D.C. occupational training opportunities. D.C. adult education providers have indicated that some adult learners, particularly those at lower skills levels, may have undiagnosed learning disabilities.<sup>35</sup>

### Only 10 Percent of D.C. Learners in AEFLA-Funded Adult Education Programs Have Skills at or Above the 9th Grade Level



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education National Reporting System for Program Years 2008-2012.

Note: Graph only includes those in non ESL-programs. Grade levels are classified in accordance with NRS Educational Functioning Levels to CASAS Scale Scores and Grade Levels.

### Educational outcomes for D.C. adult learners consistently lag outcomes for adult learners nationally.

For the past five program years, District learners in AEFLA-funded programs consistently had higher attrition rates and lower levels of educational gains than adult learners nationally. In each year since PY 2008, half or more of adult learners in AEFLA-funded programs left the program before making an educational gain compared to only one-third nationally.<sup>36</sup> Those who remain in programs for a certain length of time (only about 60 percent of D.C.'s adult learners)<sup>37</sup> are pre- and post-tested so that any gains in their educational functioning level can be determined. The percentage of pre- and post-tested District learners in AEFLA-funded programs making an educational gain(s) is consistently lower than the national rate. In each year since PY 2008, just over

half of pre/post-tested D.C. learners completed an educational functioning level compared to two-thirds of learners nationally.<sup>38</sup>

### Educational Outcomes for D.C. Adult Learners Lag National Outcomes

#### 2012 Statistics



Adult learners leaving programs before making an educational gain <sup>a</sup>	<b>51%</b>	34%
Pre/post-tested adult learners making an educational gain <sup>b</sup>	<b>55%</b>	69%
GED exam pass rate <sup>c</sup>	<b>55%</b>	69%

Sources: a. and b. U.S.DOE, OVAE National Reporting System; c. GED Testing Service.

The percentage of D.C. residents who pass the GED it is also consistently lower than the national pass rate.<sup>39</sup> In each of the past five years, D.C.'s GED pass rate was below 65 percent.<sup>40</sup> While not all D.C. GED test takers enroll in adult basic skills programs, most programs have as a goal preparing learners to take the GED. This low pass rate is particularly troubling given the GED will be more academically rigorous beginning this year.<sup>41</sup> These data indicate that the District must do a better job helping adult learners stay in and succeed in basic skills programs.

### Several factors must be addressed to help adult learners increase their basic skills and successfully transition to postsecondary training, education, and work.

National research has identified several individual and programmatic factors that can affect an adult learner's persistence and success<sup>42</sup>:

- **Low skills levels:** As already discussed, over half of D.C.'s adult learners in AEFLA-funded adult education programs have skills levels below the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and may have significant deficits in reading, writing, and math and/or undiagnosed learning disabilities.
- **Persistent life challenges:** Many adult learners live in poverty and issues with child care, health or housing crises, transportation, or changes in work schedules can interrupt program participation.

### The So Others Might Eat (SOME) Center for Employment Training (CET)

SOME CET prepares low-income D.C. residents for living wage careers as medical administrative assistants, building maintenance service technicians, and electronic health records specialists. Although most of SOME CET's students have a high school diploma or GED, many do not have the basic skills necessary to succeed in their career field. On average, SOME CET's 2013-2014 students had math skills at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level and reading scores at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade level.

Historically, SOME CET helped its occupational training students gain basic skills through one-on-one tutoring and periodic volunteer-taught math and reading classes. In 2012, SOME CET more fully integrated basic skills into its occupational training by hiring a full-time basic skills instructor to co-plan and co-teach lessons with industry instructors based on Washington State's I-BEST model. SOME CET made this change because of I-BEST's success in helping students earn credentials. SOME CET also believed its students would be more engaged in basic skills lessons if those skills were taught in the context of a real job -- for example, teaching geometry by calculating measurements for connecting a pipe system. A year after launching its integrated basic skills-occupational team teaching model, SOME saw a 15 percent increase in educational gains among pre/post-tested learners. In 2013, SOME CET served 187 students; 106 have graduated and 70 are still in training. Among those who graduated, 85 percent found jobs at an average wage of \$12.95 an hour.

SOME CET cites three critical factors that have contributed to their new model's success:

- Strong relationships between the basic skills and industry instructors, and sufficient time during the work day for them to co-plan curriculum and lessons;
- Full-time, paid instructors who are professionally trained in their respective areas of expertise;
- Use of materials and terminology that are authentic to the occupation being taught.

In addition to providing integrated basic skills and career training, SOME CET supports students' persistence in their program and their transition to living wage employment. Each student works with an Employment Retention Specialist to identify goals, address support needs (like housing and transportation), and succeed at externships. Students also participate in weekly "Shop Talk" sessions with each other to discuss on-the-job issues and problem solve around issues like time management. Finally, SOME CET has a licensed social worker on staff to provide more intensive counseling as necessary. Graduating students attend coaching sessions, complete mock interviews, and participate in supported job search activities. Students receive support from their Employment Retention Specialist for a year after finding work to help them stay in and succeed at the job. SOME CET regularly recognizes its graduates' work achievements during that year, and provides financial incentives for graduates who keep a full-time job for a full year after graduating.

- **Program financial constraints:** Community-based organizations that provide adult basic skills programs often do not have the financial resources required to educate adults with skill deficits. For example, in FY 2013, OSSE provided grants on average of \$800 per student to AEFLA-funded programs<sup>43</sup> – \$6,000 less than the uniform per pupil formula expenditure of \$6,843 for adults in DCPS and public charter schools.
- **Limited professional development for instructors:** Many adult education programs are staffed by part-time and volunteer instructors with little support for professional development.
- **Instructional content and pedagogy that is separated from learners’ career goals:** Many programs have curricula geared toward GED or test preparation and few integrate basic skills and career content in a way that helps learners connect their classroom experience to career goals.

These factors likely influence D.C. adult learners’ persistence and success, though we do not know the extent of their influence or how they vary by program. The District should promote practices that address these factors and help adults succeed in basic skills programs and transition to postsecondary education or training. According to the Working Poor Families Project, only 2.4 percent of D.C. learners in AEFLA-funded programs set postsecondary education or training as a goal at the time they enter adult basic education – one of the lowest rates among states in the U.S.<sup>44</sup>

To change this, the District must move beyond operating siloed programs and build a system that intentionally bridges adult education and workforce development and supports evidence-based practices. As the most recent report on adult basic skills in the U.S. explains, “[s]ustained improvement depends on policy coherence. Interventions need to be carefully coordinated across agencies, avoiding duplication and ensuring the most cost-effective blend of interventions.”<sup>45</sup>

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### III. Career Pathways: A Promising Approach for Adult Basic Skills Programs

#### Career pathway approaches connect adult learners to training and education that leads to high-demand careers.

Policymakers and practitioners are increasingly using “career pathway” approaches to connect adult learners to training and education that leads to high-demand careers. The Alliance for Quality Career Pathways has a “beta” or working definition of career pathways as “an approach to connecting progressive levels of basic skills and postsecondary education, training, and supportive services in specific sectors or cross-sector occupations in a way that optimizes the progress and success of individuals – including those with limited education, English, skills, and/or work experience – in securing marketable credentials, family-supporting employment, and further education and employment opportunities.”<sup>46</sup>

The U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services are encouraging states and jurisdictions to use career pathway approaches to align workforce development, education, and social service systems, and have developed funding pools to support these approaches.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, several national foundations have launched the “Accelerating Opportunity” initiative to support career pathway programs that begin with adult basic skills and continue to a one-year, college level certificate or beyond.<sup>48</sup>

While the scope of career pathways approaches go beyond basic skills, basic skills programs provided in the career pathways framework integrate basic skills and career content and facilitate and accelerate learners’ transition to postsecondary training and education. They do this by:<sup>49</sup>

- Identifying career pathways from adult education to postsecondary education and training with achievable milestones in between;
- Using curricula and professional, qualified instruction teams to integrate basic skills and career content;

- Providing guidance and counseling on career options and necessary transitions to the next step of the pathway;
- Engaging employers in program design;
- Ensuring that basic skills program standards prepare students for the entry requirements of the next step of the pathway – advanced adult basic skills, college or postsecondary training;
- Partnering with community colleges and postsecondary training providers to concurrently enroll students in occupational courses while they complete their GED or National External Diploma; and
- Providing access to critical social supports like child care, transportation, and public assistance.

Strategies like integrating basic skills and career content, concurrent enrollment, and transition planning have shown promise for learners with basic skills at or above the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level.<sup>50</sup> Additional support is necessary to help lower-level learners successfully advance in career pathways.

### Some states have adopted a career pathway approach to basic skills.

The Joyce Foundation’s Shifting Gears Initiative worked with six states to improve education and skills development systems for adult learners. These states intentionally changed policies, regulations, and funding to create a system for integrating adult education and workforce development. An evaluation of the initiative found that states that successfully adopted a career pathways approach to basic skills had the following characteristics:<sup>51</sup>

- Focused their work on a specific innovative strategy;
- Used cross-agency teams to identify a policy agenda and a plan to achieve it;
- Obtained expressed buy-in from senior leadership;
- Changed administrative policies and regulations to support innovative strategies; and
- Used pilot projects to engage service providers in the field of practice.

The evaluation also found that these state efforts would have been further strengthened by better use of data analysis.

### Washington State’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST)<sup>52</sup>

This program, offered at Washington State Community and Technical Colleges, pairs basic skills instructors and occupational instructors together to team teach occupational courses that integrate basic skills content. Students receive college-level credit for their occupational coursework and the programs are part of a career pathway in high-demand occupational fields like nursing, allied health, and computer technology. The evaluation reviewed results for students who initially enrolled in adult basic education, ESL, or GED preparation. I-BEST serves students with median reading and math skills at the 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. A rigorous evaluation of the program found that “students who attended colleges with I-BEST after the program was implemented were 7.5 percentage points more likely to earn a certificate within three years and almost 10 percentage points more likely to earn some college credits, relative to students who were not exposed to I-BEST.”

### LaGuardia Community College’s GED Bridge To Health and Business Program<sup>53</sup>

This program, offered at LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY), teaches basic skills required to pass the GED exam through the use of content specific to the health care or business career fields. The program also prepares students for college by setting expectations and assignments like a college course. Students in the program receive individual and group advisement to explore career interests and related educational options. Half of the study participants had basic skills at the 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. A rigorous evaluation of the program found that compared to students in the traditional GED prep course, students in the bridge program were 21.7 percentage points more likely to complete the GED course, 30.4 percentage points more likely to pass the GED exam, and 17 percentage points likely to enroll in college.

## Career pathway programs for basic skill students are effective.

While there are several career pathway programs for basic skills students that demonstrate promising approaches, two – Washington State’s I-BEST and LaGuardia Community College’s GED Bridge to Health and Business program – have been rigorously evaluated.<sup>54</sup> These evaluations provide evidence that the programs themselves – rather than characteristics of participants – caused outcomes. Given the impact of these programs, the OECD has recommended that the U.S. set policies that support approaches for integrating basic skills improvement with career preparation and work-based learning.<sup>55</sup>

## Additional support is necessary to help lower-level learners successfully advance in career pathways.

Learners with skills below the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level may need to build their basic skills in order to advance in career pathways models. Programs for lower-level learners should ensure that students get the foundational skills necessary to advance in career pathways, and that learners are connected to career pathways as they master lower-level skills.

To ensure that lower-level learners gain strong foundational skills, some practitioners have:

- Adapted evidence-based elementary education reading and math interventions to adult education settings;
- More thoroughly assessed learners for skills deficits and learning disabilities; and
- Trained instructors to teach adults with significant skills deficits and learning disabilities.

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## IV. Recommendations

To close the skills gap, the District should develop and implement a citywide initiative to provide every adult learner in a District-funded basic skills program with access to a career pathway by 2020. Doing so will require the District to build a system that intentionally links adult basic skills programs to career pathways. Some District-funded programs have taken steps on their own to provide basic skills in the context of careers. In FY 2014, OSSE, through

an MOU with the D.C. Department of Employment Services (DOES) and the D.C. Department of Human Services (DHS), will support occupational literacy through grants to its existing adult education providers. While this is a critical start, the career pathway approach to basic skills development is not yet a standard in the District. We recommend that the District take the following steps to jumpstart action toward this goal.

### *1) Create a cross-agency task force to develop and implement a strategic plan for connecting basic skills programs to career pathways.*

A cross-agency task force would develop a vision for connecting basic skills programs to career pathways, set shared, citywide priorities, and identify opportunities for alignment and collaboration between the District’s education, workforce, and human services providers. It would also create a core leadership team within the District government on basic skills and career pathway issues.

We recommend that the Workforce Investment Council (WIC) convene this task force, and a WIC staff member manage the team’s activities. We believe the WIC is the appropriate “home” for this task force because it is best positioned to connect adult education and workforce development. In fact, the WIC has already identified connecting adult basic skills programs to career pathways as part of the District’s five-year workforce development strategy.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, the WIC is a neutral convener and broker and several of the relevant agencies, as well as D.C. Council members and employers, already have a seat on the WIC.

The task force should include staff from other relevant agencies, such as OSSE, the D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), the DCPCS Board, UDC-CC, the D.C. Public Library, DOES, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and the Department of Human Service’s Economic Security Administration (DHS ESA), as well as adult education and workforce development providers. Additionally, an experienced technical consultant should provide the task force with guidance and assistance in developing a strategic plan. The plan should identify:

- A vision and goal for connecting basic skills programs to career pathways;

- Milestone outcomes that demonstrate progress toward the citywide goal;
- Evidence-based approaches for helping adult learners with different needs and skills levels move from basic skills to careers, with special attention paid to helping lower-level learners and those with learning disabilities build the skills necessary to access career pathways;
- Changes in policy and funding streams to implement and support those approaches;
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency;
- Professional development needs for adult basic skills instructors; and
- A common performance and accountability framework for tracking progress and outcomes.

After issuing the strategic plan, the task force should continue to meet regularly to implement that plan and provide progress reports.

Precedents for this recommendation include the Workforce Intermediary Task Force<sup>57</sup> and the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Task Force.<sup>58</sup> The Workforce Intermediary Task Force provided recommendations for the WIC to create programs in the hospitality and construction industries, which are now being implemented. Similarly, the CTE task force created a cross-agency strategic plan and OSSE, DCPS, and the DCPCS Board are now working together to pilot “Career Academies.”<sup>59</sup>

◆ **Budget Impact:** \$175,000. Fund one FTE in the FY 2015 budget to staff the task force (\$135,000) and provide funding for a technical assistance consultant (\$40,000).

## 2) Create an innovation fund so the task force can pilot, evaluate, and scale evidence-based approaches for connecting adult basic skills programs to career pathways, as identified by the strategic plan.

Few adult education and workforce providers in D.C. operate career pathway programs for basic skills students. To implement evidence-based approaches, the District will need to support new program development and capacity building among adult education and workforce practitioners.

Accordingly, we recommend that the District create a \$2 million innovation fund to pilot career pathway

programs for basic skills students. The fund should build on the foundation laid by existing efforts in order to expand the capacity of the District’s adult basic skills programs, and increase the number of adult learners who connect to career pathways. The fund should increase the implementation of evidence-based approaches by supporting new program development, technical assistance, and partnerships among different practitioners. In doing so, such a fund would help translate approaches identified by the task force into action on the ground. It would also help the District learn which practices work best for D.C. residents and providers. Finally, it would support formative evaluations to help the District identify changes that need to be made to public policies, regulations, and funding streams in order to support and scale promising practices.

Of the \$2 million, \$1.5 million should be used to award program development and implementation grants in support of *at least* five pilots while the remainder should be used to provide technical assistance to awardees and to conduct formative evaluations. To ensure that pilots are supportive of the citywide initiative, as effective as possible, and can be scaled, we recommend that the Fund be guided by the following principles:

- The task force should oversee the Fund by designing the Request for Applications (RFA) for pilots, selecting winning proposals, and determining how to scale successful pilots. The WIC should administer the RFA process.
- The RFA should set clear and explicit pilot program design requirements that draw from evidence-based practices like those reviewed in this brief. These include practices that define basic skills within a career pathway, integrate basic skills and career content, and accelerate learners’ transition to the next step of the pathway. Program designs should include paid instructors and transition counselors. Grantees should be able to use a portion of grants to help with program design and capacity building, such as curriculum development and articulation agreements.
- Organizations receiving grants should be required to participate in professional development, including a peer sharing network and formative evaluations, which would be supported through technical assistance funds. The organization providing this technical assistance should be selected by the task force and should have strong experience in supporting career pathway programs for basic skills students in other communities.

## Highlight on Local Programs

### Washington Literacy Center

Founded in 1963, the Washington Literacy Center (WLC) improves basic reading skills for adults who struggle to read. The majority of WLC's 100 students read on a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade level. In 2012, WLC reformed its program to better help students prepare for a GED preparation program, a job training program or employment. WLC's new program model includes intensive student assessment, a new instructional approach, and case management services. Since making these program changes, WLC has increased students' persistence, educational gains, and transitions to the next step of their education.

#### Student Assessment

WLC conducts two assessments to ensure that students' skills levels are appropriate for their program. In addition to the CASAS test (the main standard assessment used to measure basic skills in D.C.), WLC also uses the Wilson Reading System's Word Identification and Spelling Test. This test helps WLC evaluate learners' specific reading strengths and deficits in more detail. Once a student has been accepted into WLC's program, their reading skills are further assessed using the norm-referenced Woodcock Johnson reading test. This assessment helps WLC provide appropriate, targeted remediation to its students.

#### New Instructional Approach

Since there is little evidence on basic reading interventions that work for adults, WLC turned to what's worked for elementary school children with reading deficits and diagnosed learning disabilities. WLC provides small group instruction using the Wilson Reading System, which uses explicit instruction – such as requiring students to practice with word cards, read aloud, and repeat what they have read in their own words. There is a learning objective for each student cohort, and lessons are taught in an organized sequence. The cohort must demonstrate that they've mastered material before moving onto the next lesson. WLC also restructured its program to provide two-hour classes four days a week so each student receives over 250 hours of instruction a year, which improves the effectiveness of remediation. Finally, WLC moved from an instructional model that relied on volunteers to one that uses paid, professional instructors. WLC instructors are trained to use the Wilson Reading System and are taught techniques for instructing adults with learning disabilities.

#### Case Management

WLC has a full-time case manager who works with each student to identify his/her education and employment goals and review progress toward those goals. With input from instructors, the case manager helps students create a transition plan to move from WLC to the "next step" toward their goal, such as a GED preparation or job training program. The case manager also works with students to address potential barriers to attending class like transportation or housing issues. When students enter another program after WLC, WLC continues to provide tutoring support.

#### Improved Outcomes

Since implementing its new program model, WLC has improved its students' persistence and success. Over the past six months, 50 percent of WLC's enrolled students attended regularly enough to receive a post-test compared to 38 percent of enrolled students in the two years prior to program reform. Before WLC made program changes, less than 40 percent of students who were pre- and post-tested made an educational gain. By contrast, in the past six months, 50 percent made an educational gain. WLC is also increasing the number of students that transition to the "next step" of their education, and is on track to transition 24 students in PY 2013. In fact, WLC has already started to offer a class at Academy of Hope to help students who read at elementary grade level advance more quickly to GED preparation.

## Develop and Scale Promising Practices



Basic Skills to Careers Task Force

## Support and Evaluate



Technical Assistance Provider

## Innovate



Pilot Programs

In adopting this approach, the District would be joining the federal government and other states that have used planning and implementation grants to promote innovation and build capacity around evidence-based approaches. For example, the federal Department of Labor recently launched the “Workforce Innovation Fund” to support innovative new approaches to the design and delivery of employment and training services.<sup>60</sup> Workforce Innovation Fund grantees are required to undergo evaluation so lessons learned can be translated more broadly to the field, and technical assistance is provided to help with program implementation.

Similarly, the State of Maryland is issuing \$4.5 million in competitive planning and implementation grants to support the development and implementation of strategic industry employer and workforce development partnerships under its new Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) initiative.<sup>61</sup> Modest planning grants were made in December 2013 to help partnerships build capacity and develop workforce training plans, and implementation grants will be awarded in June 2014. Since federal and philanthropic programs are increasingly encouraging a career pathways approach to adult basic skills, the District may be able to use an innovation fund to compete for and attract additional outside dollars.

◆ **Budget Impact:** \$2 million. Fund at least 5 multi-year pilot programs (\$1,500,000) and provide funding for a technical assistance and formative evaluation consultant (\$500,000).

### 3) Help lower-level learners get support needed to advance in career pathways.

More work must be done to identify promising practices for helping adult learners with skills below the 6<sup>th</sup> grade level build their basic skills to advance in career pathways. The task force should explicitly aim to address this issue.

Additionally, research suggests that programs for lower-level adult learners need increased resources to diagnose and support students with learning disabilities.<sup>62</sup> Adults with learning disabilities need a properly documented diagnosis to receive extra test time, adaptive technology, and other appropriate accommodations that would help them build their skills and advance along a career pathway.

To address this issue immediately, the District can fund OSSE to contract directly with an assessment provider who can evaluate adult learners for learning disabilities. The provider can:

- Conduct assessments for adult learners at the site of their basic skills program;
- Provide the appropriate documentation of a learning disability required to receive extra test time and other accommodations; and

- Help adult basic skills teachers and counselors understand and respond to students’ assessment results and learning disability diagnoses.

◆ **Budget Impact:** \$340,000. Fund OSSE to contract with an assessment provider to assess 200 adult learners at \$1,700 per learner.

**4. Increase professional development opportunities to help more basic skills programs adopt best practices and increase skill-building opportunities for staff and volunteers.**

Research shows that teacher preparation and training is critical to student achievement, and suggests that adult education instructors benefit from ongoing, intensive, and consistent professional development that allows them to learn together and connect that learning to their classroom context.<sup>63</sup> To professionalize instructors in the adult education field, OSSE currently helps fund an adult education graduate certificate at UDC’s Center for Urban Education. OSSE is also working with UDC to design a Master of Arts degree for adult educators and professional development modules and workshops, all of which it plans to make available in 2014.<sup>64</sup> In addition to the formal certificate and Master’s programs, OSSE, UDC, and other agencies should consider ways to develop a continuous professional development and peer-sharing network for adult education instructors and volunteers.

**Conclusion:**

From a growing community college to a workforce intermediary, the District has invested in several new initiatives to help more D.C. residents prepare for careers. While critical, these initiatives on their own will not be enough to prepare D.C. residents for the city’s growing economy because many lack basic reading, writing, math, English language and problem solving skills. The District can help residents build the basic skills they need to succeed in occupational training, postsecondary education, and the workplace by ensuring that adult learners in basic skills programs have the opportunity to enter career pathways. If adopted in Fiscal Year 2015, the strategies and investments proposed in this brief will

help the District achieve that goal. Increased, strategic investment in adult basic skills will also help the District address some of its toughest challenges – unemployment, income inequality, and intergenerational poverty – and help the District become a thriving, inclusive city.

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DC Appleseed solves problems affecting the daily lives of those who live and work in the National Capital area. We work with volunteer attorneys, business leaders, and community experts to identify pressing challenges, conduct research and analysis, make specific recommendations for reform, and implement effective solutions.

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## Appendix

Table 1 OSSE Adult and Family Education Provider Sub-Grantees, Fiscal Year 2013

OSSE Adult and Family Education Program Providers	Ward	No. of DC Residents	Federal	Local	Total	Services Provided
Academy of Hope	5	510	\$122,500.00	\$112,500.00	\$235,000.00	ABE/GED/NEDP/WPL
Anacostia Community Outreach Center	5	93	\$43,750.00	\$33,750.00	\$77,500.00	ABE/GED
Booker T. Washington PCS - Virtual Enterprise	1	63	\$100,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$190,000.00	ABE/GED/NEDP
Congress Heights Community Training & Dev. Corp.	8	142	\$60,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$110,000.00	ABE
Covenant House Washington	8	127	\$75,162.70	\$65,162.71	\$140,325.41	ABE/GED
The Ethiopian Community Center, Inc.	4	103	\$95,785.01	\$67,621.01	\$163,406.02	ESL
The Family Place	1	105	\$86,057.65	\$77,894.10	\$163,951.75	ESL/Family Literacy
Language, ETC	2	942	\$85,798.10	\$77,634.10	\$163,432.20	ABE/ESL
Literacy Volunteers and Advocates	5	99	\$46,058.50	\$36,058.50	\$82,117.00	ABE
Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Institute of Catholic Charities	5	52	\$77,500.00	\$67,500.00	\$145,000.00	ABE
Marshall Heights Community Development Org.	5	22	\$30,473.87	\$36,450.00	\$66,923.87	
Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care	1	447	\$98,298.10	\$90,134.10	\$188,432.20	ESL/Family Literacy
Natl Org. Concerned Black Men	8	62	\$30,445.74	\$36,475.32	\$66,921.06	ABE/GED
Opportunities Industrialization Center	8	126	\$55,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$145,000.00	ABE/WPL
Perry School Community Services Center, Inc.	6	82	\$32,500.00	\$45,000.00	\$77,500.00	ABE/GED
So Others May Eat (SOME)	8	122	\$122,500.00	\$112,500.00	\$235,000.00	ABE/GED/WPL
Southeast Ministry	8	61	\$50,350.98	\$48,509.65	\$98,860.63	ABE/GED
Washington Literacy Council	1	87	\$77,500.00	\$67,500.00	\$145,000.00	ABE
YWCA	1	111	\$100,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$190,000.00	ABE/GED
<b>Totals</b>		<b>3356</b>	<b>\$1,389,680.65</b>	<b>\$1,294,689.49</b>	<b>\$2,684,370.14</b>	

Service Legend	Grade Level Equivalency - Reading	Grade Level Equivalency - Math
Adult Basics Education (ABE)	1 - 8	1-8
Adult Secondary Education (ASE) includes GED & NEDP	9-13+	9-13+
English Language (ESL)	1-8	1-8
General Educational Development (GED)	N/A	N/A
National External Diploma Program (NEDP)	N/A	N/A
Workplace Literacy (WPL)	N/A	N/A

Source: Information provided by OSSE Adult and Family Education Division.

Table 2 Public Charter Schools Serving Adults, FY 2013

Public Charter School	School Mission	Grades Served	No. Adults Enrolled	Total Students Enrolled	% Adults	Total Per Pupil Expenditure for Adults
Booker T. Washington PCS	To educate students in grades 9 through 12, adults, and others for the construction and building trades and prepare them for life-long learning.	9-12; GED; Adult Education	155	362	43%	\$1,060,665
Carlos Rosario International PCS	To provide education to the immigrant population of Washington, DC, to prepare them to become citizens and invested members of American society, who ultimately give back to family and community the help they initially receive.	GED; Adult Education	1941	1941	100%	\$13,282,263
Briya PCS (Formerly Education Strengthens Families)	To provide a high-quality education for adults and children that empowers families through a culturally sensitive family literacy model.	Pre-K 3; Pre-K 4; Adult Education	394	436	90%	\$2,696,142
LAYC Career Academy PCS (YS)	To engage and empower students between the ages of 16 and 24 years old by providing a college preparatory education, career training in high-growth occupations, and college-credit classes.	Adult Education	65	103	63%	\$444,795
Maya Angelou PCS – Young Adult Learning Center (YS)	To help students reach their potential and prepare for college, career, and a lifetime of success.	Adult Education	82	82	100%	\$561,126
The Next Step PCS (YS)	To provide students who face extraordinary challenges and who are not supported in traditional high schools the opportunity to continue their education.	GED; Adult Education	136	277	49%	\$930,648

Sources: School Mission and Grades Served from DC Public Charter School 2013 School Performance Reports for Individual Schools available at: <http://www.dcpcsb.org/MISC/2013-School-Performance-Reports.aspx>

Number of adults enrolled and total enrolled from the FY 2013, 2012-2013 Fall Enrollment Audit Report available at <http://osse.dc.gov/publication/2012-2013-fall-enrollment-report>

Notes: Per Pupil Adult Expenditure in FY 2013 was \$6,843 per student

Schools may receive more funds for adult students who are English language learners or special education students. Schools also receive funding for non-adult students and facilities.

YS= Youth Serving -- school limited to youth ages 16-24.

\*Enrollment audit classifies YouthBuild PCS and all of its students as "alternative" so it is not included in this count.

**Table 3 DCPS STAY Schools, FY 2013**

School	Services Provided	FY 13 Submitted Budget	Enrollment 2012-2013	Student Age Distribution 2012-2013
Ballou STAY	Traditional and accelerated diploma programs, GED preparation, external diploma, and career programs in automotive technology, barbering, cosmetology, culinary arts, and Microsoft Office.	\$2,698,897	601	18-24 yrs. old: 37% 25 yrs. or older: 60%
Roosevelt STAY	GED preparation, English language learning, and career programs in culinary arts, barbering, cosmetology, computer applications, and business administration.	\$2,151,484	652	18-24 yrs. old: 35% 25 yrs. or older: 64%
Spingarn STAY	Not Applicable due to closure	\$933,927	124	Not available

Sources: The STAY schools funding figure is based on the FY 2013 submitted budgets for each school and does not include additional support that STAY schools receive from the DCPS Central Office nor does it reflect adjustments made to school budgets after the 2012-2013 enrollment audit. FY 2013 submitted budgets for individual schools are available at <http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/About+DCPS/Budget+and+Finance/FY13+Fiscal+Report+Card/Submitted+Budgets>

Enrollment from the FY 2013, 2012-2013 Fall Enrollment Audit Report available at <http://osse.dc.gov/publication/2012-2013-fall-enrollment-report>

Note: Spingarn STAY closed in 2013. Students have right to attend Ballou STAY or Roosevelt STAY in the 2013-2014 school year.

## Endnotes:

- <sup>1</sup> Carnevale, A., Smith N., and Strohl, J. (2010). *Help Wanted: Projections of Job and Education Requirements Through 2018*. Georgetown University Center on Education and Workforce. Retrieved from <https://georgetown.app.box.com/s/ursjbxaym2np1v8mgrv7>
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 2010-2012 for the District of Columbia*. Available from American FactFinder at <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.
- <sup>3</sup> The Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) found that among U.S. adults, 20 percent with a high school diploma have low literacy skills (level one or below) and 35 percent have low numeracy (level one or below). See Goodman, M., Finnegan, R., Mohadjer, L., Krenzke, T., & Hogan, J. (2013). *Literacy, Numeracy, and Problem Solving in Technology-Rich Environments Among U.S. Adults: Results from the Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies 2012: First Look* (NCES 2014-008). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.et al.
- <sup>4</sup> OECD. (2013). *Time for the U.S. to Reskill?: What the Survey of Adult Skills Says*, OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing.
- <sup>5</sup> Zeidenberg, M., Cho, S., & Jenkins, D. (2010). *Washington State’s Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (I-BEST): New Evidence of Effectiveness*. Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University. Retrieved from <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/i-best-new-evidence.html>. Martin, V. and Broadus, J. (2013). *Enhancing GED Instruction to Prepare Students for College and Careers: Early Success in LaGuardia Community College’s Bridge to Health and Business Program*. MRDC. Retrieved from [http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Enhancing\\_GED\\_Instruction\\_brief.pdf](http://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/Enhancing_GED_Instruction_brief.pdf).
- <sup>6</sup> Carnevale, Smith , & Strohl, 2010.
- <sup>7</sup> American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 2010-2012 for the District of Columbia.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>10</sup> Rivers, W. (2014). *High and Wide: Income Inequality Gap in the District One of Biggest in the U.S.*. DC Fiscal Policy Institute. Retrieved from <http://www.dcfpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/3-13-14-Income-Inequality-in-DC.pdf>
- <sup>11</sup> Population counted for unemployment is ages 25-64. The differences described are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. *American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 2010-2012 for the District of Columbia*.
- <sup>12</sup> Population counted for poverty is age 25 or older. *American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 2010-2012 for the District of Columbia*.
- <sup>13</sup> A “working” family is defined as: primary married-couple or single parent family with at least one child under age 18 and a family income where all family members age 15 and over have a combined work effort of 39 or more weeks in the last 12 months, or all family members age 15 and over have a combined work effort of 26 or more weeks in the last 12 months and one currently unemployed parent looked for work in the previous four weeks. Working Poor Families Project analysis of 2011 American Community Survey data.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> D.C. Department of Employment Services and D.C. Workforce Investment Council. (2012). *State Integrated Workforce Plan for Workforce Investment Act Title I/Wagner-Peyser Act and Department of Labor Programs Program Years 2012-2016*. Retrieved from [dmped.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dmped/publication/attachments/DC\\_State\\_Plan\\_2012\\_FINAL\\_Approved.pdf](http://dmped.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dmped/publication/attachments/DC_State_Plan_2012_FINAL_Approved.pdf)
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- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> This research only captured the main agencies funding adult education services. There may be other D.C. agencies providing adult education programs.
- <sup>25</sup> Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Support Act of 2011. D.C. Law 19-21, § 4052, 58 DCR 6226.
- <sup>26</sup> Pub. L. No. 105-220. §§ 201-251, 112 Stat. 1059.
- <sup>27</sup> OSSE’s data is consistently available for outcomes associated with educational functioning levels; the other outcomes are not always available because they rely on survey data that sometimes has too small a sample size to be reported.
- <sup>28</sup> The D.C. Public Charter School Board website explains that the adult education performance management framework is currently in pilot and will be publicly for school year 2013-2014. See <http://www.dcpsb.org/PCSB-Accountability/Performance-Management-Framework.aspx> For outcomes measured, see DC Public Charter School Board Staff. (December 16, 2013). *Proposal to DC Public Chart School Board Re: 2014 Adult Education Framework Floors and Targets*. Retrieved from [http://pcsb-pmf.wikispaces.com/file/view/Board\\_Proposal\\_AE\\_PMF\\_Floors\\_Targets.pdf/478054580/Board\\_Proposal\\_AE\\_PMF\\_Floors\\_Targets.pdf](http://pcsb-pmf.wikispaces.com/file/view/Board_Proposal_AE_PMF_Floors_Targets.pdf/478054580/Board_Proposal_AE_PMF_Floors_Targets.pdf)
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- <sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education. *National Reporting System Table 4: Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC*. Total Number Enrolled for Program Years 2008 - 2012. Available at <http://wdcrobcolp01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OVAE/NRS/main.cfm>
- <sup>31</sup> Program Year 2012 is from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. *National Reporting System Table 4: Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level PY 2012 for DC*.
- <sup>32</sup> According to CASAS, learners are considered to have basic skills below 6<sup>th</sup> grade if they are in the following NRS Educational Functioning Levels (EFL): Beginning ABE Literacy, Beginning Basic Education, Low Intermediate Basic Education. Learners are considered to have basic skills between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade if they have a Higher Intermediate Basic Education EFL Level. Learners are considered to have basic skills

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between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades if they have EFL Levels of Low Adult Secondary Education or High Adult Secondary Education. See CASAS. *Scale Scores, NRS EFLs, and Grade Levels*. Statistics are based on EFL Enrollment. *National Reporting System Table 4: Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC*.

- <sup>33</sup> DC Workforce Investment Council. (August 13, 2013). *WIA Individual Training Accounts*. (D.C. Workforce Investment Council Policy 2013.008, Change 1). Retrieved at: <http://dmped.dc.gov/node/648922>
- <sup>34</sup> The minimum CASAS scores for most of UDC-CC's workforce development programs and courses are 231 in reading and 221 in math (high intermediate basic education EFL level). Edith Westfall, personal communication, January 10, 2014.
- <sup>35</sup> While OSSE-provided funders screen learners for potential learning disabilities, the agency does not collect data on the number of learners that may have a learning disability.
- <sup>36</sup> Figure calculated as "Number Separated Before Completed" divided by "Total Number Enrolled." *National Reporting System Table 4: Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC and for all regions*.
- <sup>37</sup> Figure calculated as "Total Number Enrolled Pre- and Posttested" divided by "Total Number Enrolled." *National Reporting System Table 4: Educational Gains and Attendance by Educational Functioning Level PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC and Table 4b: Educational Gains and Attendance for Pre- and Posttested Participants PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC*.
- <sup>38</sup> *National Reporting System Table 4b: Educational Gains and Attendance for Pre- and Posttested Participants PY 2008 to PY 2012 for DC and for all regions*.
- <sup>39</sup> Pass rate is only calculated for those who have completed the full GED test. GED Testing Service. (2008-2012). *GED Testing Program Statistical Report*. All reports retrieved from <http://www.gedtesting.com/educators/historical-testing-data>
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>41</sup> Clymer, C. (2012) *Preparing for the New GED® Test: What to Consider Before 2014*. The Working Poor Families Project. Retrieved from [http://www.workingpoorfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/WPFP-fall-brief\\_2012.pdf](http://www.workingpoorfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/WPFP-fall-brief_2012.pdf)
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- <sup>43</sup> Calculated by dividing the total amount of PY 2012 D.C. federal and local AEFLA grants given by OSSE by the total number of adult learners enrolled in PY 2012 AEFLA-funded programs.
- <sup>44</sup> Working Poor Families Project analysis of PY 2011 National Reporting System data.
- <sup>45</sup> OECD, 2013.
- <sup>46</sup> CLASP. *Alliance for Quality Career Pathways*. Retrieved from <http://www.clasp.org/issues/postsecondary/pages/alliance-for-quality-career-pathways>
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- <sup>48</sup> Accelerating Opportunity is a community college initiative of Jobs for the Future, with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kresge Foundation, and the Open Society Foundations, and in partnership with Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the National Council for Workforce Education, and The National College Transition Network. See [www.acceleratingopportunity.org](http://www.acceleratingopportunity.org)
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- <sup>53</sup> Martin, and Broadus, 2013.
- <sup>54</sup> Rutschow and Crary-Ross, 2014.
- <sup>55</sup> OECD, 2013.
- <sup>56</sup> D.C. Department of Employment Services and DC WIC, 2012.
- <sup>57</sup> Workforce Intermediary Task Force Establishment Second Emergency Act of 2011, A. 19-167, 58, D.C. Reg. 8900 (Oct. 21, 2011).
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- <sup>61</sup> See "The EARN Maryland Program" at [www.dlir.state.md.us/earn/](http://www.dlir.state.md.us/earn/)
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