

Data-Driven Collaboration:

Leveraging Data Systems to Strengthen
Partnerships and Outcomes

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California Community Colleges

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CALIFORNIA
ADULT EDUCATION
PROGRAM

CAEP Professional Development

2025-2026

Resources & Tools

- 3 Year Plan & Annual Plan Dashboard
- Noncredit inventory & Dashboard
- CAEP Fact Sheet Refresh & Webinar
- Employer Engagement Toolkit

Virtual Professional Development Events & Webinars

- Employer Engagement Webinar Series
- Innovation Showcase Virtual Session

Professional Development & Training Events

- 4 Regional Training Events

Ongoing Technical assistance

- One-on-one Technical Assistance

Leadership & Legislation

- Data & Accountability Workgroup



Today's Webinar

Session Goals

1. Provide a broad overview of **Lightcast**, the **Center of Excellence (COE)**, and explore how to **use labor market data** to design programming, connect with workforce boards, and build workforce relationships.
2. Identify key data sources, interpret regional labor market data, and apply data insights to **strengthen industry partnerships** and **student outcomes**.

Why Data Matters in Adult Education

1. Build Credibility

Data positions your program as a ***strategic partner—not just a service provider***. Employers and workforce boards respond to programs that understand regional labor demand.

2. Design Better Programs

Labor market data reveals ***which industries are growing***, what ***skills are in demand***, and where ***training gaps exist*** -- helping you align curriculum to real employer needs.

3. Drive Better Outcomes

Programs that connect participant data to labor market outcomes ***can demonstrate impact, secure continued funding, and advocate for policy change*** on behalf of learners.

Data

Insight

Action

Impact

Know What You Have – Start with internal data: enrollment, completion, employment outcomes, wages, demographics.

Know Your Region – Layer in external data: labor market information, industry projections, wage data, employer surveys.

Connect the Dots – Align your program completers to regional job openings and career pathways using real LMI data.

Tell the Story – Translate data into narratives that resonate with employers, workforce boards, and funders.

Adapted from Balance.point Strategic Services (2016). Partnership framework principles.

The Whole Picture

Student Outcome Data – Enrollment, completion, employment, wage gains, educational functioning level gains.

Program Performance Data – CAEP student outcomes, retention rates, cohort performance.

Partnership Data – Employer contacts, MOUs, advisory board members, employer participation rates.

Community Data – Demographics, poverty rates, education attainment, digital access in your service area.

Labor Market Data – Job postings, industry growth, wage levels, occupational demand (via Lightcast & COE).

Regional Ecosystem Data – Workforce board reports, EDD data, economic development plans, employer surveys.

Adapted from Balance.point Strategic Services (2016). Partnership framework principles.

Understanding Your Regions Whole Picture

1. Labor Supply

- Who is in your region?
- i.e. Demographics, education levels, literacy needs, and unemployment/
- underemployment rate, that adult education serves.

2. Labor Demand

- What positions are employers hiring for?
- Which sectors are growing?
- What credentials and skills do they require?
- Where are the wage entry points and advancement pathways?

3. System Capacity

- What training programs exist?
- Where are the gaps?
- What partnerships are active or possible?
- What funding is available to support aligned programming?

Using Data to Align Programs with Employer Needs

- Identify High-Demand Occupations
- Map Skills to Training Gaps
- Review Wage Data by Pathway
- Identify Underrepresented/Underserved Populations
- Use Data to Continuously Improve



Understanding Labor Market Information

- Labor Market Information (LMI): who is **hiring**, for **what jobs**, at what **wages**, and **where**. It includes both **real-time and projected data** about employment trends in a region.
- Maintain strong, ongoing relationships with employers between cohorts, not just during hiring periods.
- Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE)
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department
- Best practice: Use multiple data sources. No single source tells the complete story. ***Use LMI alongside your own program data and direct employer feedback.***

Lightcast

Lightcast is a comprehensive labor market data platform that aggregates job postings, occupational data, and employer information from millions of sources.

- Lightcast pulls from millions of job postings, employer records, and occupational databases to give you real-time and projected demand data for any region in the U.S.
- It provides real-time job posting data, occupational demand projections, wage analysis, skills gap identification, and regional employer concentration data, all accessible through intuitive dashboards.
- COE (Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research) also uses Lightcast data and provides pre-built regional reports tailored to California community college and adult education programs.
- Access your Lightcast data through your CAEP PD team at WestEd



What You Can Find in Lightcast

1. **Job Postings by Occupation**
2. **Top Employers Hiring**
3. **In-Demand Skills**
4. **Wage Data by Percentile**
5. **Occupational Projections**
6. **Education Level Filters**
7. **Industry Sector Overviews Pull**
8. **Custom Geography**
9. **Export & Share**

Opportunities in High-Growth Sectors

Health Care Community College Programs To Be Offered To UDW

| Administrative/ Clerical | Caregiving | Emergency Medicine | Technical Health | Clinical Health | Behavioral Health |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Administrative Medical Assistance | Personal Care Aide/Caregiver | Paramedic | Medical Lab Technician | Dental Hygienist | Regional Behavioral Technician |
| Medical Billing/Medical Coding, Front Office Asst. | Personal Care Aide | First Aid, CPR, Basic Life Support | Phlebotomy | Nurse Asst. Acute Care/Patient Care Aide | Board Certified Autism Technician |
| Dental Assistant | | EMS/EMT | Dental Lab Tech | Registered Nurse | Community Health Worker |
| | | | Pharmacy Tech | CNA | Applied Behavior Analysis Technician |
| | | | Lactation Educator Specialist | Clinical Medical Assistant | |

Opportunities in High-Growth Sectors

Top Posted Occupations in Orange County

| Occupation | Annualized Postings | Posting Duration | Advertised Salary | Employers |
|---|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Home Health & Personal Care Aides | 5,202 | 27 | \$19.02 | 416 |
| Medical Assistants | 2,881 | 25 | \$22.65 | 670 |
| Dental Assistants | 2,394 | 27 | \$23.38 | 582 |
| Medical Secretaries & Administrative Assistants | 1,409 | 23 | \$20.92 | 520 |
| Pharmacy Technicians | 1,094 | 30 | \$21.78 | 219 |

Source: Lightcast JPA, September 2023-September 2024

Opportunities in High-Growth Sectors

Top Cities Posting for Medical Assistants in Orange County

| City | Annualized Postings | Days Posted |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Irvine, CA | 407 | 23 days |
| Newport Beach, CA | 309 | 23 days |
| Orange, CA | 295 | 24 days |
| Mission Viejo, CA | 207 | 25 days |
| Anaheim, CA | 195 | 24 days |

Source: Lightcast JPA, September 2023-September 2024

Opportunities in High-Growth Sectors

Top Companies Posting for Medical Assistants in Orange County

| Company | Annualized Postings | Days Posted | Advertised Salary |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Providence | 260 | 20 | \$27.32 |
| Hoag Health System | 169 | 26 | \$24.12 |
| University of California | 159 | 27 | \$25.72 |
| Memorialcare Health System | 58 | 29 | \$25.11 |
| Children's Health Orange County | 54 | 14 | \$26.58 |

Source: Lightcast JPA, September 2023-September 2024

Build on the Labor Market Data – Conduct An Industry Needs Assessment

The industry needs assessment is a structured, multi-method process that **produces actionable recommendations** — not a one-time report that sits on a shelf. It must **engage the decision-making body** that will use the findings, and it must be updated regularly.

Key Resources Available:

- **Current and projected job openings** by specific title and employer, not just sector aggregates.
- **Career pathways:** entry-level → journey-level → supervisory, with wage data at each step.
- **Skills and competency requirements for target jobs** — including what will change due to automation/technology.
- **Industry Sector Snapshots Quick-reference tools showing top employers, jobs, and wages by industry.**
- **Barriers to fulfilling demand:** hiring process friction, training pipeline gaps, schedule incompatibilities, cost barriers for workers.
- **Equity gaps:** gender, race/ethnicity, geographic underrepresentation in target occupations.

Labor Market Data Packets to help you design programs and engage workforce partners

Alameda County



Priority Healthcare Occupations

| Occupation | Annualized Postings | Posting Duration (days) | Advertised Salary (hourly) | Employers |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| Medical Assistants | 863 | 20 | \$28.43 | 127 |
| Dental Assistants | 829 | 28 | \$27.82 | 180 |
| Pharmacy Technicians | 617 | 26 | \$25.48 | 84 |
| Nursing Assistants | 611 | 27 | \$25.23 | 125 |
| Phlebotomists | 352 | 23 | \$26.95 | 82 |
| Community Health Workers | 109 | 23 | \$25.97 | 35 |
| Social and Human Services Assistants | 75 | 25 | \$24.49 | 34 |
| Emergency Medical Technicians | 54 | 19 | \$22.89 | 19 |

Center of Excellence for LMI

- COE (Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research) also uses Lightcast data and provides pre-built regional reports tailored to California community college and adult education programs
- Review “Top Occupations”: Look for roles that match your current or planned program offerings and note their wage ranges and entry requirements.
- Use the “Top Employers” data to identify potential industry partners in your region. *This list can be a starting point for outreach.*
- Share COE data with your advisory board or employer partners as a conversation starter. Ask: “Does this match what you’re seeing on the ground?”
- Reference COE reports in grant applications, program approval requests, and annual plans to demonstrate data-informed decision making.

Connecting with Workforce Boards

- Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are regionally governed entities that oversee the public workforce system. They are critical partners for adult education programs seeking to connect learners to employment pathways.
- Develop post-placement advancement strategies to continue guiding participants' career trajectories after initial job placement.
- Local WDB Strategic Plans include regional sector priorities, high-demand occupations, and target industries. Reading your WDB plan helps you speak their language.
- LMI tools like Lightcast and COE reports can serve as shared data resources across adult education and WDB staff—creating common ground for planning conversations.

Building Relationships with Employer Partners

Know Your Audience

Understand your regional LMI data. Review their recent job postings, growth trajectory, and skills requirements.

Lead with Their Problem

“I saw that you’ve posted 14 CNA openings this quarter. Our program has placed 28 CNAs in jobs in the past year. I’d love to talk to you about a potential partnership.”

Know Your Outcomes Data

Share your program outcome data: graduation rates, employment rates, average wages at placement. Make the ROI case clear.

Reference Regional Data

Use COE or Lightcast projections to show the long-term demand. This positions partnership as a strategic investment, not a favor.

Propose a Small First Step

Ask for a site visit, a mock interview session, or one guest speaker. Build the relationship incrementally before asking for a hiring commitment.

Adapted from Balance.point Strategic Services (2016). Partnership framework principles.

1. **Start with a shared picture.** Bring regional LMI data to your first meeting with a WDB or employer. It signals that you understand their world, not just your own.
2. **Use data to diagnose challenges in real time**—low enrollment, poor completion, weak placement
3. Work with partners to **agree on goals**—employment rate, wage gain, retention.
4. **Share outcomes** updates with partners to build trust and keep them engaged, helping them see the ROI
5. Use data to ask for resources. When you can show that your graduates are filling high-demand, well-paying roles, you have the evidence to **advocate** for co-investment and expanded support.

Using Data to Strengthen and Maintain Workforce Relationships



Enrollment & Completion Data – What enrollment and completion data do you currently track and report?

Have you seen employment and wage outcome data?

Regional Knowledge – Can you name the top 3 industries in your region by employment size?

Workforce Development Board Priorities – Do you know what your local WDB's priority sectors are?

Key Data Gap – What data gap, if filled, would most change how you design programs or talk to partners?


Next Steps: What you can do today to impact tomorrow

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| This week: | Obtain labor market report for your region. Identify the top 3 high-demand sectors. |
| This month: | Review a sector snapshot for one of your target industries. |
| This quarter: | Bring a “Data Snapshot” to your next WDB meeting |
| Ongoing: | Work with your CAEP Professional Development team to explore how to use both internal outcomes and LMI data to assess program relevance and partnership priorities. |
| Year-end: | Present a data-informed annual impact report to your employer and workforce board partners. Show them the outcomes, the demand, and your shared impact. |

Key Takeaways

1. **You already have valuable data.** Start by organizing and telling your program's story.
2. **Data is the bridge** between adult education programs and workforce partners. It creates a common language and shared priorities.
3. Understanding your **regional labor market helps you design programs that are responsive, equitable, and fundable.**
4. Strong partnerships are built on **demonstrated value.** Use data to show employers and WDBs why your program is a strategic investment.





WestEd CAEP Technical Assistance is here to support your team. Reach out with questions about data tools, partnership development, or regional labor market analysis.

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