



WORLD EDUCATION

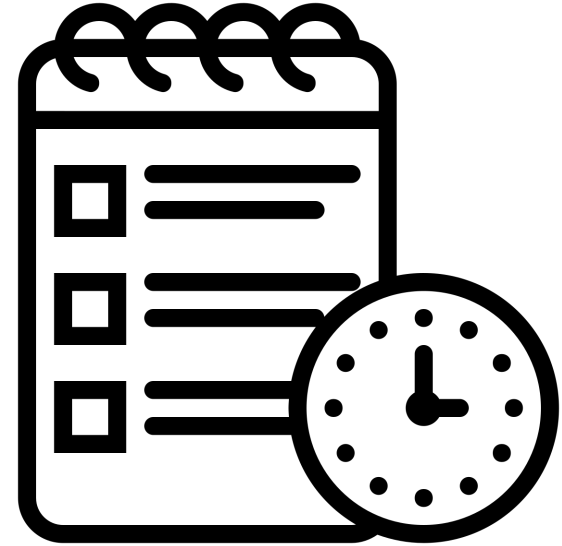
A DIVISION OF JSI

Implementing Ability to Benefit and Career Pathways to Support Adult Learners' Transitions to Postsecondary Education and Beyond



Agenda

- Introduction to ATB and career pathways
- Panel and Q&A
- Additional resources





Ability to Benefit and Career Pathways



What is **Ability to Benefit (ATB)**?



The Ability to Benefit (ATB) provision in the Higher Education Act **gives eligible adults without a high school diploma or equivalent access to federal student aid.**



Student Eligibility

To be eligible for ATB, a student has to:

1. Be enrolled in an eligible career pathway program (ECP);
2. Complete one of three options:
 - a. Pass a U.S. Department of Education-approved test,
 - b. Complete six credit hours towards a postsecondary credential, or
 - c. Be admitted through a “state defined process”; and
3. Be eligible for federal student aid.



Eligible Career Pathway Programs (ECPPs)

Students must be **concurrently enrolled in all three** of the following:

1. Adult education and literacy programming that assists adults in attaining a high school diploma or equivalent;
2. A Title IV eligible postsecondary program; and
3. Workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.



Eligible Career Pathway Programs (ECPPs)

ECPPs must also:

- Align with the skill needs of the state or regional economy
- Include academic and career counseling
- Accelerate students' educational and career advancement

(I.e., align with the federal *career pathway* definition in WIOA, HEA, and Perkins V)



Career Pathways

“A combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

- A. aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- B. prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships ...;
- C. includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
- D. includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;

(WIOA, Sec. 3 Definitions)



Career Pathways

“A combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

- E. organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- F. enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
- G. helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.”

(WIOA, Sec. 3 Definitions)



The Three ATB “Options”

To be eligible for ATB, **a student has to complete one of three options:**

1. Pass a U.S. Department of Education-approved test
2. Complete six credit hours towards a postsecondary credential
3. Be admitted through a “state defined process”



The Test Option

ATB test	Passing scores	Test publisher contact information
Combined English Language Skills Assessment (CELSA),* Forms 1 and 2 Effective Date: November 1, 2002	CELSA Form 1 (97), CELSA Form 2 (97)	Association of Classroom Teacher Testers (ACCT), 1187 Coast Village Road, Suite 1, #378, Montecito, CA 93108. Contact: Telephone: (805) 965-5704. Fax: (805) 965-5807. Email: actt@cappassociates.com .
ACCUPLACER Computer-adaptive tests and COMPANION ACCUPLACER Forms J and K: Reading Test, Writing Test, and Arithmetic Test	Reading Test (233),** Writing Test (235),** Arithmetic Test (230)**	The College Board, 250 Vesey Street, New York, NY 10281. Contact: ACCUPLACER Program. Telephone: (800) 607-5223. Email: accuplacer@collegeboard.org .
Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment—Computer-adaptive tests and COMPANION TSI Forms T and V: Reading Placement Test, Writing Placement Test, Mathematics Placement Test	Reading Placement Test (336), Writing Placement Test (345), Mathematics Placement Test (326)	

Source: [List of Approved Ability to Benefits Tests](#) (5/27/25)



The Credit Hour Option

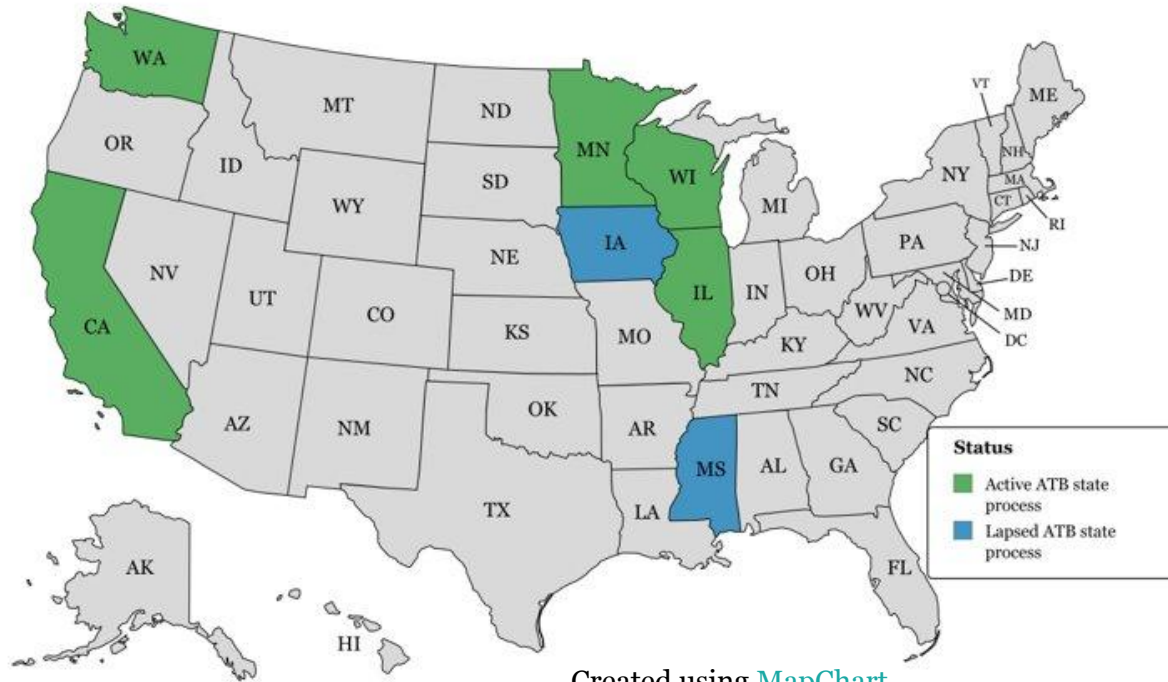
The student completes at least six credit hours, or 225 clock hours, that

- Must be **applicable toward a Title IV-eligible degree or certificate** offered by the postsecondary institution (remedial and developmental coursework don't count)
- Don't need to be applicable to the specific degree or program in which the student is enrolled (or intends to enroll)

In other words: the coursework must show that **the student has the ability to benefit from the postsecondary program** in which the student is enrolled (or intends to enroll).



The “State Defined Process” Option



Created using [MapChart](#)



Building Career Pathways that Link to ATB

- Develop pathways that utilize collaborative and concurrent learning strategies, such as integrated education and training (IET) activities
- Obtain leadership and staff support across community and technical college departments
- Provide comprehensive student services, including an ongoing focus on student goals and transitions to next steps



Panel and Q&A



Panelists



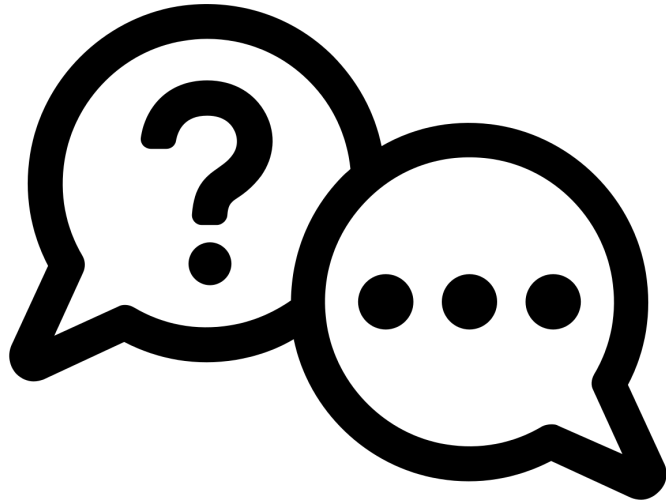
Shelley Karnz

*Adult Education Navigator,
Northeast Wisconsin Technical
College*



Wendy Scheder Black

*Director of Teaching and
Learning, Pima Community
College*



Please ask your questions
using the Zoom Q&A feature.



Additional Resources

- Watch your email for our upcoming blog post on linking ATB to career pathways
- Visit the World Education's [ATB resource page](#) for more resources on career pathways, including:
 - [Career pathway programs vs eligible career pathway programs](#)
 - [Our recent webinar on how Washington State is leveraging I-BEST for ATB implementation](#) (Passcode: LgV5V!&.)



Thank you!

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World Education



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